

Is Comprehensible Sexuality Education (CSE) integrated in the EFL classroom in seventh grade at state-run primary schools in Rosario and Grand Rosario? An exploratory research on teachers perceptions and experiences on CSE in the EFL classroom

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Resumen

Este trabajo tiene como objetivo conocer las percepciones de los y las docentes sobre la inclusión de la ESI (Educación Sexual Integral) en el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera (EFL) en Rosario y Gran Rosario. Para ello, nos centramos en los y las docentes que trabajan en séptimo grado en escuelas públicas de la ubicación mencionada, ya que nuestra preocupación genuina surgió de la práctica real en este entorno. Creemos que los y las docentes de EFL en las escuelas públicas de Rosario y Gran Rosario experimentan sentimientos de aislamiento en las directrices para incorporar la ESI en su práctica, a pesar de que ha sido un tema presente durante casi dos décadas en todos los planes de estudio en Argentina debido a la ley 26.150 (Ley Nacional de Educación Sexual). Siguiendo un diseño de investigación exploratoria, el trabajo comienza explicando los conceptos y normativas principales pertinentes a la ESI en Argentina y Santa Fe, así como conceptos relacionados con la enseñanza de EFL. A continuación, el trabajo resume los hallazgos de otras investigaciones relevantes en el campo, destacando los beneficios y desventajas encontrados. Toda esta información se aplicó luego al diseño de artefactos como fuentes para la recolección de datos reales, cuyos resultados fueron analizados cualitativa y cuantitativamente. Finalmente, la conclusión abarca todos los hallazgos y las implicaciones pedagógicas de este estudio.

Palabras clave: Educación Sexual Integral, inglés como lengua extranjera, translenguaje, perspectiva intercultural, educación primaria.

Abstract

This paper aims at learning about teachers' perceptions on the inclusion of CSE (Comprehensive Sexuality Education) in the EFL classroom in Rosario and Grand Rosario. For that matter, we focus on teachers working at seventh grade in state-run schools in the location mentioned above since our genuine concern arised from real practice in this environment. We believe that teachers of EFL at state-run schools in Rosario and Grand Rosario experience feelings of isolation in the guidelines for incorporating CSE into their practice even though it has been an issue present for almost two decades in all curricula in Argentina due to law 26.150 (Ley Nacional de Educación Sexual). Following an exploratory research design, the paper begins by explaining major concepts and normatives pertinent to CSE in Argentina and Santa Fe as well as concepts related to the teaching of EFL. Next, the paper summarises findings from other relevant investigations in the field, outlining benefits and drawbacks encountered. All this information was then applied to the design of artefacts as sources for collection of real data whose results were qualitatively and quantitatively analysed. Finally, the conclusion encompasses all the findings and the pedagogical implications of this study.

Keywords: comprehensive sexuality education; EFL; translanguaging; intercultural perspective; primary education.

Introduction

It is impossible to separate language from culture. Following Brown (1994) "Culture is a way of life. It is the context within which we exist, think, feel and relate to others (163)". Therefore, culture becomes highly important in the teaching and learning of a foreign language. Comprehensive Sexuality Education, understood from a Human's Right and Gender perspective, is a lens that allows us to reflect critically upon the culture we are immersed in and the practices we engage in to be able to go beyond stereotypes and naturalisations and to become agents of change towards greater inclusion and diversity in education.

Since the creation of the national programme on Comprehensive Sexual Education (Ley 26.150) in 2006, the enforcement of CSE into the foreign language classroom at all levels of the educational system has been a challenge. A review of the literature available on its implementation offers valuable insight on how CSE is included by language teachers in different settings in Argentina.

The background of this research lies in the belief that there are still many obstacles which hinder the implementation of CSE in primary schools. Our teaching experience in primary schools in Rosario has given us an insight into the actual state of affairs: CSE is not taught systematically, if ever taught.

The aim of this research is to describe the current situation with regards to the inclusion of CSE in the primary EFL classroom in Rosario and Grand Rosario, bearing in mind three main aspects of our context. First, English is a curricular subject only in seventh grade¹. Second, children are between 11 and 14 years old. Last but not least, children's language ability, which could be

¹ Ley Federal de Educación 11.531 (1997).

described as belonging to the PRE-A level². To fulfil this aim, we believe that the opinions, perspectives and experiences of the teachers responsible for carrying out the implementation of CSE are key to achieving a better understanding of the current situation.

This paper has been organised into three parts. The first section consists of the development of the most important concepts related to CSE theoretical and normative framework and key concepts concerning the teaching of a foreign language within our context. The second section deals with the analysis of different research papers related to our concern. The third and final section discusses the results of data collection tools qualitatively and quantitatively.

Theoretical and Normative Framework

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE)

Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) is an educational approach that goes beyond traditional sex education. It is based on values and human rights and it emphasises gender equality and the importance of a safe and healthy learning environment. CSE encompasses a wide range of topics such as power in relationships, attitudes towards sexuality, sexual diversity, gender roles, the body, puberty, reproduction, and social pressures related to being sexually active like consent, sexual coercion and violence. CSE also provides scientifically accurate information about sexual and reproductive health and it includes training in communication and decision-making skills.

In consonance with the definition offered, The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2018) campaigns on behalf of CSE, emphasising its role in promoting critical thinking, citizenship, social and life skills, and a pedagogy of collective care. CSE is described as a continuous

² According to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)

process that considers sexuality as a dimension of human development from birth, aiming to foster holistic life skills essential for personal growth and global citizenship.

Argentina also advocates for the inclusion of CSE. By means of Law 26.150 (Congreso de la Nación Argentina 2006), the Argentinian educational system is required to implement CSE compulsorily across the curricula in all levels and modalities. The National CSE plan (Consejo Federal de Educación 2009) focuses on five main axes: recognition and inclusion of a gender perspective, respect for diversity, valuing affectivity, exercising sexual and reproductive rights, and promoting body and health care. To aid the enactment of these axes, the National Ministry of Education created curriculum guidelines with basic, common and obligatory CSE contents (Consejo Federal de Educación 2018). For primary level, these are:

- The human body as a whole with needs for affection, care and appreciation
- The processes of growth, development and maturation
- The sexual characteristics
- The changes seen and felt during puberty
- Equality for men and women in games and motor and intellectual activities
- Family configurations in different times and cultures
- Diversity: physical appearance, sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Analysis of beauty body stereotypes
- Overcoming prejudices and discriminatory attitudes
- Contraceptive methods

- Pregnancy: biological, social, affective and psychological aspects
- Prevention of sexually transmitted infections
- The concept and the right to privacy and respect for the privacy of others
- The violation of rights: sexual abuse, gender violence and human trafficking
- Grooming prevention
- The refusal of inappropriate interactions with other people
- Don't keep secrets that make them feel uncomfortable, bad or confused
- New forms of masculinity and femininity within the framework of gender equality

The document also highlights the need to educate teachers on the complexity of sexual development and the various dimensions of comprehensive sexuality education.

With the implementation of CSE, the Argentinian government aims to provide a comprehensive and holistic approach to education, ensuring that students develop the skills and attitudes necessary for responsible decision-making, empathy, and respect towards others, regardless of various factors like race, social status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex characteristics.

Although based on the national guidelines, at a provincial level, CSE is only a programme called “De ESI se Habla” [CSE is spoken of] (Ministerio de Educación de Santa Fe 2008). An article by Equipo ESI Santa Fe (2019) comments on the development of the programme. It started in 2008, and

subsequent provincial decrees (527/10, 528/09 and 529/10) have helped progressively adequate the institutional framework to enable the inclusion of CSE. Since its beginning, the programme has included various training initiatives for teachers and school administrators of all levels of the educational system. The training sessions focus on providing teachers with the necessary tools, materials and knowledge to include sexual education in the classroom and cover a wide range of topics related to sexuality, gender equality, and rights. It promotes critical thinking, challenges stereotypes, and addresses issues such as sexism, homophobia, and discrimination. Overall, the Comprehensive Sexuality Education Program in Santa Fe has made significant attempts in promoting gender equality, empowering students, and fostering a more inclusive and informed approach to sexual education in schools. Through ongoing training, curriculum development, and collaboration with various stakeholders, the program continues to contribute to the creation of a more equitable and rights-based educational environment.

The Implementation of the CSE Programme in Argentina

An extensive feedback study was carried out in Argentina by the National Ministry of Education from 2008 to 2015 (Faur et al 2015) to evaluate the implementation of CSE in the educational system and to understand the perspectives of teachers and school administrators on sex education in schools, previous to the mass training called “Es parte de la vida, es parte de la escuela” [It is part of life, it is part of school] and afterwards, during the “Jornadas Institucionales” [Institutional days] specifically dedicated to work on the topic. In the latest, groups of teachers, supervisors and directors of the schools are brought together with the people that attended the workshops, who are in charge of transferring what they have learned during mass training.

The study sheds light on teachers' opinions and perspectives about CSE during the first moments of the workshops. "Resistance" to CSE is expressed through various concerns which are grouped into a typology in order to understand the variety of reasons which lie behind their views (pp. 17-18):

Operational resistance: It reflects the concerns of teachers regarding the extent to which CSE content may affect their planning (workload) and their classwork (neglection of subject contents). As a presupposition, this kind of resistance indicates the notion that sexual education should be offered by specialists, without affecting the curriculum of their subjects or school logic.

Moral resistance: it refers to concerns which are mainly ideological and / or religious. Teachers object to the contents and approaches that are proposed as part of the CSE programme. The doctrine that supports this perspective considers that "positive" sexual education is limited to the one which understands sexuality as a way of expressing and living love. According to this criterion, sexual education should promote premarital chastity, fidelity and expression of love within marriage. This approach is based on an essential vision of biology, which attributes specific functions to men and women and understands that marriage should be established by a heterosexual couple. It is a normative approach in relation to sexuality: *what it should be*.

Resistance due to fear of the families: In this case the difficulty expressed is transferred to the relationship between school and community. Parents may perceive as a "threat" what school offers since those families do not share the same perspectives or maybe because they believe sexual education is a presumed family responsibility. This fear is expressed, especially, among teachers of denominational schools (mainly Catholic), but also among those who work in rural communities, or schools with high prevalence of indigenous populations. In these cases, teachers seek to justify the absence of the CSE in

rural or intercultural schools as part of the logic of “relativismo cultural” [cultural relativism] where, according to the teachers, the implementation of CSE would collide with the values and the beliefs that they perceive in the community. The resisters are placed outside the school institution and, from this point of view, the teaching positioning would be part of “respeto” [respect] for another's culture. It would be the families (and not the teachers) who prefer CSE not to be taught.

Resistance related to not considering themselves competent to address CSE: this concern is related, in this case, to teachers' own capacity to work on topics for which they do not feel trained or which make them feel insecure. Implicitly, this manifestation alludes to a certain level of reflexivity including a review of their own teaching positioning and recognition of personal limits as part of their own subjectivity, rather than operational limitations or moral tensions.

The study also measures to what extent, through massive training and further articulation with institutions, these resistances are overcome or, at least, diminished. This is reflected in the significant number of teachers who modified their lesson planning considerably as well as their appreciation and commitment to the inclusion of CSE. Ultimately, the study addresses the importance of the development of monitoring and evaluating actions from the State as a challenge that contributes to the institutionalisation of comprehensive and collaborative work and to a renewed construction of collective processes, generating conditions for reflections and interventions that accompany the development of educational policies.

The Implementation of the CSE Programme in Santa Fe

It's worth mentioning that the province of Santa Fe did not take part in the previous study given that the Santa Fe Ministry of Education developed and founded its own training program for teachers and coordinators called “De ESI

se habla” [CSE is spoken of]. We have not been able to find any similar studies carried out by the provincial government to monitor and evaluate the efficacy of the provincial initiative. It would be interesting to count on such an account on teachers' perspectives, especially in the area of our concern.

The Implementation of the Programme in the EFL Classroom

With regards to the inclusion of CSE into the EFL classroom, an enlightening contribution has been made by Megna, G. and Mussi, L. (2022). According to the authors, various obstacles have been found to hinder application of National Law No. 26,150. At the national level, there are no specific tools providing proposals for integrating Comprehensive Sexuality Education into English classes (p.219). There is a perceived lack of knowledge among English teachers in this regard. The authors conclude that it is essential to raise awareness about the importance of curricular guidelines for this subject area, to serve as a guide for the transversal implementation of CSE in the English curriculum. Moreover, it is also necessary to raise awareness about the content of instructional materials in English to promote respect for diversity, fostering equal treatment and opportunities for the entire educational community.

It could be inferred that teachers' perceptions and concerns correlate with a new type of *resistance* related to the specific nature of teaching EFL which cannot be embedded into the typology mentioned above. This new *resistance* will be called *Resistance due to lack of CSE curricular guidelines for EFL*.

Language Teaching

The goal of teaching foreign languages in the formal education system is to enable learners to develop a comprehensive sociocultural and critical identity through an intercultural and plurilingual perspective.

The Intercultural Dimension

According to Byram (2002), the intercultural dimension in language teaching implies both, the acquisition of the linguistic competence required to communicate in speaking or writing and the development of their intercultural competence, meaning *“their ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities, and their ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities, and their own individuality”* (Byram, 2002, p.10). The author emphasises that teachers do not need to be native speakers or have in-depth knowledge of the target culture. Instead, they should focus on facilitating discussions and comparisons between learners' own culture and the target culture emphasising critical analysis and avoiding stereotypes and prejudices. Byram also addresses the necessary use of authentic materials in teaching and the importance of promoting intercultural skills and understanding through various types of activities, such as role-plays and simulations. Under this approach, teachers are urged to incorporate vocabulary related to cultural diversity, to modify the curriculum to include intercultural perspectives and to assess and provide opportunities for self-assessing not just knowledge, but also the ability to understand and engage with different cultures.

It could be concluded that the development of a critical intercultural competence involves being sensitive to power relations between languages and cultures, as well as the contradictions and conflicts present in society. It aims to find common ground to promote the ongoing construction of dialogues, encounters, and shared knowledge. The critical intercultural perspective values individuals and groups based on their differences both, within a society, and in relation to foreign languages and cultures, and fosters a relationship of respect, legitimacy, symmetry and equality.

Translanguaging

For decades, the didactics of foreign languages has been based on the assumption that languages are not only the content of teaching, but also the means through which they must be taught. This monolingual approach (native speakers as role models) operated to the detriment of native languages, which were excluded from the foreign language class, reducing learners' possibilities for reflection, exchange, subjectivation, and metalinguistic analysis that come from using two or more languages to enhance each other. According to Vogel and García (2017), translanguaging theory offers a new perspective on language use and education, advocating for the recognition and empowerment of diverse linguistic practices to foster equitable learning environments and support the linguistic development of individuals in multilingual societies. The theory of translanguaging in terms of language pedagogy arises from the understanding that language is action and as well as practice and not simply a system of structures and specific skills. Therefore, it advocates for the acknowledgment and utilisation of students' diverse language practices in educational settings, which means that the language that best fulfils the purpose of interaction is selected.

Language Teaching at the National Level

The teaching of foreign languages in Argentina is included in Chapter III, Section 3, Article 15 of the National Education Law No. 26.206. This article highlights the importance of teaching foreign languages as an essential part of the curriculum, recognizing its relevance in the current global context. The core learning objectives for foreign languages were outlined by means of Resolución del CFE N° 181/12, which created the "Núcleos de Aprendizaje Prioritarios (NAP)" [priority learning nuclei] to integrate the teaching of German, French, English, Italian, and Portuguese in the school context,

considering the intercultural and plurilingual perspective. Additionally, there is a proposed organisation of four possible routes of different durations, considering different levels of complexity of the learning associated with the school cycles. The proposed axes for NAP include oral comprehension, reading, oral production, writing, reflection on the language being learned, and intercultural reflection.

Language Teaching at the Provincial Level

A work by Raguso et al. (2022) analyses the situation at the provincial level. Most Argentinian provinces elaborated provincial education laws after the enactment of the National Education Law (Ley de Educación Nacional) in 2006, including the teaching of foreign languages. However, the province of Santa Fe has not undertaken such a process yet. To the present day, the teaching of foreign languages is still within the framework of Law 11.531 (Ley Federal de Educación), enacted in 1997. Therefore, with the exception of Escuelas Normales³ [Normal Schools], the inclusion of EFL is limited to two class hours in the 7th grade and to the Foreign Language space in schools with extended hours.

In connection with the new resistance aforementioned (Resistance due to lack of CSE curricular guidelines for EFL) another type of resistance could be identified in the work by Raguso et al. (2022). The authors arrived at the conclusion that the coverage of the teaching of foreign languages at the public primary level of the province of Santa Fe is scarce. In addition, the lack of curricular designs for primary education is another significant obstacle, reflecting the absence of jurisdictional policies in the field of Foreign Languages. Therefore, another kind of resistance is needed to reflect EFL

³ Escuelas Normales [Normal Schools] teach EFL from kindergarten to 7th grade, a 40 minute class per day.

teachers' concerns: *Resistance due to scarce coverage (only in 7th grade) and lack of provincial curricular design for EFL.*

Literature Review

This literature review discusses various research projects and initiatives related to the integration of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms in Argentina. It highlights the challenges faced by teachers and students in incorporating CSE, the use of current teaching practices like Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), Translanguaging and Task-Based Learning (TBL), and the positive outcomes observed in terms of student engagement, language proficiency, critical thinking, and gender sensitivity. Additionally, it emphasises the importance of teacher training, collaboration, and the development of gender-inclusive materials in the curricula.

In connection to our exploration and the challenges teachers face when having to deal with the inclusion of CSE in their lessons, Banegas (2020) conducted a two-year action research project (2017-2018) supported by the Ministry of Education in the province of Chubut to help teachers in one secondary school include CSE in the EFL classroom through CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning). According to Coyle, Hood, and Marsh (2010:1), CLIL is "a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language." The goal was to develop innovative language teaching practices, based on critical pedagogy to respond to the Law 26.150 and, at the same time, to offer an account as a base for further research. The first part of the project (2017) consisted of a four-lesson plan in a group of learners aged 15-16 with an A2 level of English according to CEFR. There were some challenges for both the teacher and students. As for the teacher, challenges revolved around teaching

without a coursebook, selecting suitable materials, adjusting time management, confronting her religious beliefs, among others. As for the students, they often lacked vocabulary and sometimes felt reluctant to address personal issues in class. However, the project was successful in the sense that students were not only able to learn about gender, sex and identity but were also able to develop their language skills in a meaningful way. Thanks to the positive outcome of this research, a new syllabus was designed by the class teacher, including a gender perspective (2018). Also, as requested by the Ministry of Education in Chubut, an online bank was created with new materials to help teachers in the inclusion of CSE.

Although this project was aimed at the secondary level, we believe it is a good example of what teachers and governments can do to foster the effective inclusion of CSE in the EFL classroom. We were also able to identify many of the challenges faced by teachers as well as the role of teachers as active participants in the creation of materials and syllabuses.

Supporting the previous evidence, we found another relevant piece of work elaborated by Ana Paez (2019), from the province of La Pampa. Following the current line of transversality in Education, the investigation was carried out in a 3rd- year course at a state-run secondary school in Santa Rosa, as part of a scholarship investigation programme awarded by UNLPam. Action research was chosen as the medium to explore the teaching and learning of grammar and lexis together with CSE contents and a gender perspective. The grammar content proposed in the curricula was the practice of different types of verb tenses. The categories taken from CSE were gender, naturalisation, trivialization and stereotypes. To develop their critical thinking skills, students were taught to review some High school course books and other resources (narrations / descriptions). They discovered that the different materials analysed mostly portrayed a heteronormative view of society. As a next step,

they were asked to redesign alternative didactic materials. These took into account both, the contents of the curricula and the students' experiential culture. All throughout this creative process, students were able to question the hegemonic discourses critically, and consequently to build relevant knowledge related to CSE. Additionally, the ultimate goal was to potentiate the emancipation of students to take control of their own lives. Not only students benefited from this approach but also the teacher who could reflect upon her practices and her preconceptions and beliefs related to sexuality and gender at the same time that she professionally improved her role as an investigator. Even though most of the discussions were held in Spanish due to the students' low level of English, the activities motivated students to keep involved in the tasks.

Similar results can be found in the proposal by Paola Cossu and Gabriela Brun (2021), implemented by the teacher later mentioned. This experience was also conducted at a state-run secondary school in Junin, province of Buenos Aires. Students, aged 14 - 15, showing A1 / A2 level of English (according to CEFR) were exposed to a series of different tasks framed within CLIL. The aim of this research was to describe a pedagogical experience in which CSE and the English language were integrated by means of a four-class plan following the 4 Cs of CLIL pedagogy (Content, Culture, Cognition and Communication) Language contents were modals, subject specific terminology (sexual orientation) and phrases to express opinion while CSE topics were gender roles, critical thinking, normatives and social expectations. Discussion and reflection followed each of the lessons and some results were shared on social media. The impact was positive not only for the students involved but also for the teacher. Students found the inclusion of CSE content "pertinent, meaningful and interesting" (p, 9) as well as practical to develop their language proficiency. Wider implications to be pondered were the need to include CSE

systematically to be more gender-sensitive to detect inequalities. In order to do so, the authors highlighted the importance of including CSE contents in initial teacher education programmes along with spaces for reflection on lesson planning and choice of materials together with the importance of incorporating continuing professional development programmes for in-service teachers, school superintendents and administrators.

Another research worth mentioning was carried out in a private catholic school (low-middle/middle class) in Buenos Aires City during the first term of 2020 (lockdown) through Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT). Accardo (2020), intends to “provide tools and help other EFL teachers carry out similar practices” (p. 9). According to the author, EFL teachers are not exempt from addressing CSE and working collaboratively with other teachers and areas. So, as part of a broadened initiative among schoolteachers from different levels and areas, a cross-curricular project was carried out to address gender equality in the primary level. Following a Task Based Learning (TBL) approach, two-joined courses of seventh graders were exposed to a variety of authentic materials (non-fiction stories about important women in history) and videos created by the teacher. Through online lessons, both synchronous and asynchronous, students were engaged in real world problems and given the chance to put the input in use through oral discussions and project work. Finally, they were allowed to reflect critically upon their own learning and concluded that they had been able to learn more about the topic. Even though the level of English of these students was not clearly stated, it could be inferred from the output (p. 13) that they were between A1 / A2 level according to the CEFR. Additionally, it could also be inferred that students were allowed to use their L1.

Despite the fact that the contexts in which the research projects aforementioned were developed differs from the reality in primary state-run

schools in Rosario, they exemplify the value of collaboration at an institutional level to secure continuity and coherence in the integration of CSE. As for research done in primary schools in Santa Fe, we were not able to find any initiatives so far.

Research Design

This exploratory study employed the qualitative research approach focusing on interpreting and analysing data. This research approach allows researchers to investigate problems that are not clearly defined or, in our case, a topic that has not been studied in-depth yet to answer our research question.

The qualitative data was obtained through both, primary research and secondary research. For the former, the data was obtained through the use of interviews. To aid interpretation, the qualitative analysis was supported by quantitative data obtained by means of an on-line questionnaire. For the latter, we reviewed some research papers related to our concern from which we extracted some a priori categories for analysis and derived some more categories a posteriori.

Data Collection Tools and Procedures

Both, the interview and the questionnaire were aimed at teachers of English with experience in teaching in seventh grade at primary state-run schools in Rosario and Grand Rosario, where English has been for the most part since 2006, the language chosen to be included as a curricular subject. According to the latest survey found, there are approximately 250 primary state-run schools in Rosario and Grand Rosario.

Interview

It would have been nearly impossible to interview teachers of English from every school in order to find out about their perceptions. Therefore, seven interviews were carried out, in Spanish, over a period of two weeks (of a minimum of five interviews suggested by our teacher trainer). The interviewees consisted of teachers (A to G) known to have taught or currently teaching in seventh grade in state-run schools in Rosario and Grand Rosario. The teachers agreed to answer a series of open ended questions and were assured their identity was not to be revealed. We hoped this anonymity would allow them to speak up their minds on a topic that has proven to be controversial, to say the least. A pilot interview was tested first on one of the teachers, from now on, teacher A. The feedback, both positive and negative, and the data obtained from this teacher helped us restructure and right tune the questions we later asked to the rest of the teachers (B to G). The interviews were performed individually via WhatsApp audios and the answers to the interview questions were transcribed and analysed (see Appendix 1) . The verbal chains were organised in a table so as to find common concepts among each answer and to trace the categories for analysis (See Appendices 3, 4 and 5).

Questionnaire

A pilot Google Form was designed in English and tested by a fellow teacher. Her feedback helped us modify it and correct some mistakes. The final Google Form consisted of thirteen questions with multiple options and was answered by 45 teachers over a period of two weeks (See Appendix 2) It allowed us to reach more respondents and provided the study with quantifiable data in a short period of time.

Data Analysis

To begin to answer our research questions, we concentrated on two main aspects. In the first place, we traced the data concerning the implementation of CSE in the EFL classroom, to be able to extract valuable information with regards to how and what is being taught. Secondly, we analysed the data to be able to uncover the reasons teachers offer for the non inclusion of CSE. Finally, through data source triangulation, we sought to address the complexity of the phenomenon studied to develop a comprehensive understanding of it (Patton, 1999).

Interview Analysis

The interviewees were selected taking into consideration their experience in teaching but also the location of the school or schools they work in, trying to cover most of the geographical areas of our context to avoid underrepresentation. Teachers' working experience in seventh grade at primary state-run schools in Rosario range from five to 20 years approximately. Most teachers deliver 80 minute lessons once a week and only one works in a school where English is taught during the extended working hours.

As regards teachers' awareness of CSE (contents and theoretical framework), most teachers manifested they were scarcely familiarised with CSE topics and regulation. As for the CSE training instances they participated in, five out of seven teachers reported to have received some instruction of CSE at school, as part of mandatory courses offered by the Ministry of Education (in-service training) or as part of training conferences such as *Escuela Abierta* [Open School], in which CSE normatives and contents were treated superficially and never related to the EFL classroom. In some other cases, a few teachers explained the training instances were reduced to an informative talk, an informative article or school newsletter. Just one out of

seven teachers claimed to have been given material by school's authorities/administrators and by other teachers who also shared teaching proposals to integrate CSE. Only one teacher said she is completely unacquainted with CSE and she has not taken any actions to be informed.

In general, teachers are not fully aware of the way CSE is included at the institutional level. They assume or believe that CSE is treated mostly by grade teachers in subjects such as Social Science, Natural Science, Language or PE. In many cases, they manifest they are not quite sure if CSE is integrated by means of special classes or by means of a random talk with specialists or health care professionals from the neighbouring community health centre. In other cases, teachers acknowledge that CSE is not dealt with in their school or that it is dealt with poorly, just to comply with school administrators and ministerial regulations. Two out of seven teachers claim that CSE is implemented across all school subjects.

When consulted on the inclusion of CSE in their area, three teachers expressed they include it whereas four teachers manifested they do not, even though during the interview, three of them claimed to have dealt with CSE related topics on occasion. Only one teacher does not actually include CSE.

Interviewees do not integrate CSE in their annual plan nor are required to do so by school administrators. The great majority of teachers deal with CSE topics when an issue arises in class. The topics overtly mentioned were: vocabulary connected to different family configurations, vocabulary related to feelings, gender reference (differences between Spanish and English pronouns), body parts and how to take good care of the body, identity, children's rights, sexuality and sexual relations during pregnancy. Two teachers did not mention any topics.

Only two interviewees mentioned the use of teaching materials. One of them, revealed to have used posters or drawings and the other, to have received material and teaching proposals shared via WhatsApp by a group of primary teachers.

Teachers did not refer explicitly to the use of current teaching practices or approaches in foreign language teaching and learning to integrate CSE in their classroom, like Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) or Task-Based Learning (TBL). However, by analysing teachers' answers, it was possible to trace, in most teachers, the use of Translanguaging as a strategy which facilitates the learning of CSE related vocabulary in English. Teachers commented they resort to Spanish, mostly due to students' poor level of English. It was also possible to trace, in a few teachers, some practices pertinent to the inclusion of the Intercultural Dimension, such as active listening, valuing diversity, respecting students' opinion and feelings, facilitating debates, and comparing and contrasting today's and yesterdays' family configurations and gender reference in Spanish and in English.

Resistance to the inclusion of CSE in the EFL classroom at primary schools was expressed through various concerns which were analysed and grouped according to six categories in order to understand the variety of reasons which lie behind their perceptions:

Operational resistance: three teachers consider CSE should be best taught by other more qualified people, specialists with ample knowledge or grade teachers, due to the bond they share with their students.

Moral resistance: It was not possible to detect in teachers' speech, any resistance due to teachers' own beliefs in connection to their religious ideology or any other moral deterrent based upon a conception of

heteronormativity, as it is described in the study by the National Ministry of Education (Faur et al 2015).

Resistance due to fear of the families: one of the interviewees manifested to feel insecure and afraid of parent's reactions. According to this teacher, the geographical area in which schools are located also reduces the chance of CSE being included, this is true especially in schools located in peripheral areas. Another teacher expressed a similar concern and stated that sometimes, CSE is a sensitive topic to be dealt with because the community is not yet completely open to discussion, so there are families who are reluctant to let their children hear about CSE. No teachers expressed to have received support from families and only two commented they are not aware of families' point of view.

Resistance related to not considering themselves competent to address CSE: four teachers claimed not to be prepared to teach CSE, either because they have not taken part in any training instances, because they are not sure about the regulation, or, in most cases, because they are not interested or don't like talking about CSE related issues.

Resistance due to lack of CSE curricular guidelines for EFL: four teachers alluded to the lack of curricular guidelines. For example, one teacher commented she was not quite sure how to include CSE as she has not received any guidance to integrate it in her classroom. In her opinion, teachers do what they can to adapt. Another teacher questions the training and the lack of availability of information and material to teach CSE in English. One teacher even suggested there should be annual training for teachers of English, to have clear concepts and be able to transmit them to the students. Another teacher insisted upon the fact that CSE is not included at all in English

or if it is, it is dealt with poorly, superficially and just to comply with school authorities.

Resistance due to scarce coverage (only in seventh grade) and lack of provincial curricular design for EFL: this particular resistance is strongly felt by many interviewees. In most cases, they manifest not to be able to deal with CSE topics due to lack of time. They claim that the content children acquire having English only in seventh grade for 80 minutes a week is very little and that that amount of time is hardly enough to work on anything apart from their subject. One teacher expressed that as a consequence of this, English as a curricular subject is undervalued in all schools, especially in primary schools, and that in many opportunities teachers of English are not made participants and are often told to teach the minimum. Another teacher claims the situation would be different if English were a curricular subject starting in fourth grade, as teachers and students would have more tools to work with CSE in English. The lack of curricular guidelines makes it even harder for teachers to include CSE, as they barely know what to teach in their own area or how to teach it. As a consequence, teachers do their best without any control or guidance over the content of their teaching or the teaching approach to follow.

Questionnaire Analysis

The questionnaire reached teachers of English and was answered by 45 teachers with various degrees of experience, as shown in table 1.

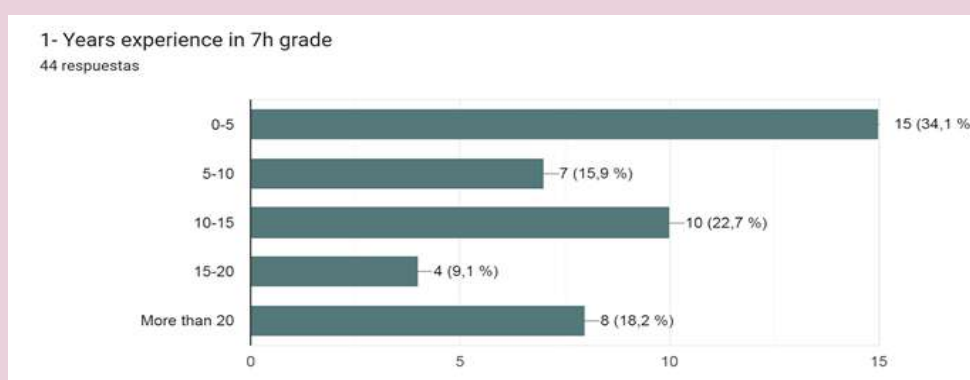


Table 1

The population expressed to work either in Rosario or in Grand Rosario, with only five teachers working in state-run schools in both locations, as portrayed in table 2.

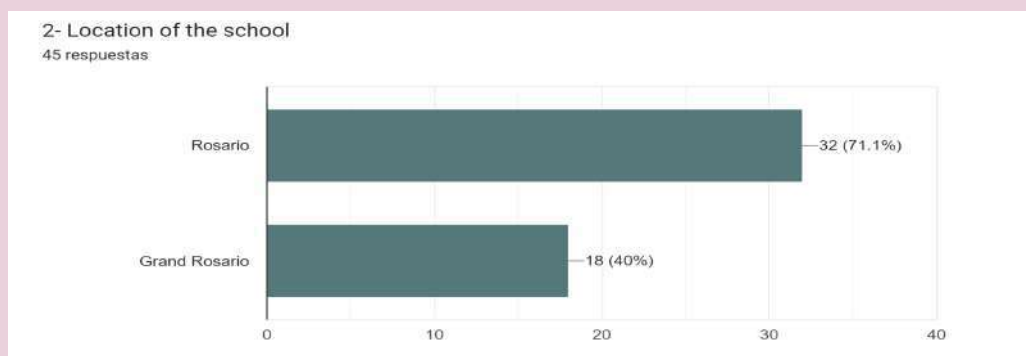


Table 2

Similar results were found with regards to the teaching hours, with the vast majority of teachers working 80 minutes a week and with five teachers also teaching in schools with extended working hours, as shown in table 3.

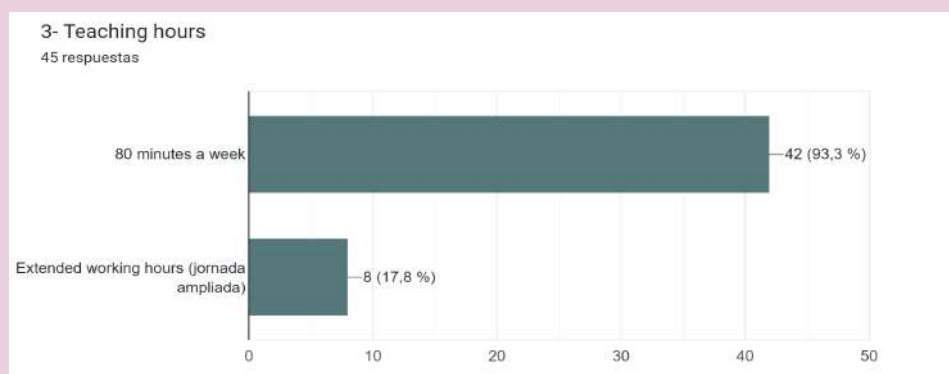


Table 3

When consulted about their awareness on CSE, 44 of the 45 respondents answered. Their answers reflect that more than 50 % of the respondents are slightly familiarised (45.5 %) or not familiarised (11.4 %) with CSE contents and regulations. Contrarily, 38.6% claimed to be moderately informed while only

less than 5% of the teachers expressed to be highly familiar, as shown in table 4 below:

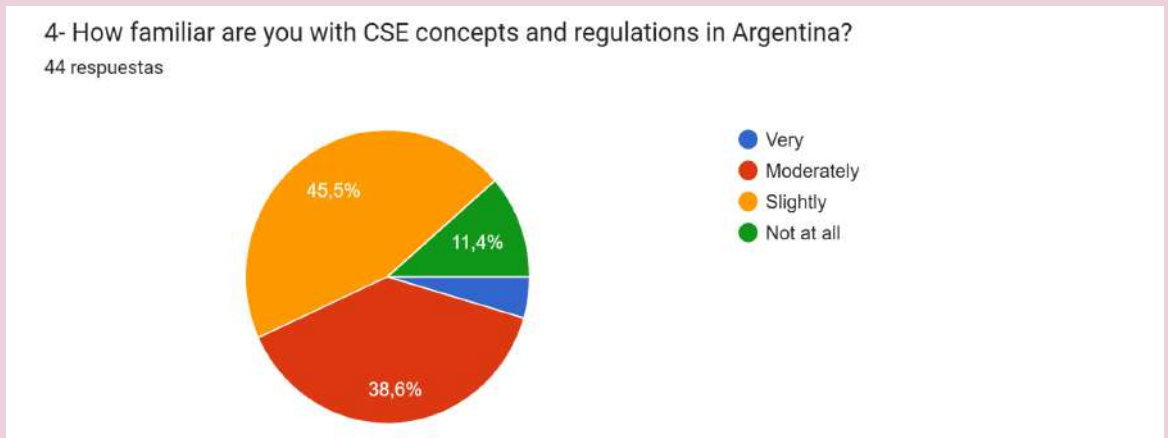


Table 4

As regards the CSE training instances, 20% of the teachers surveyed expressed not to have participated in any training instances while the majority of teachers (80%) claimed to have received instruction in CSE. Among them, the most voted instances were the mandatory ones, such as the courses dictated by the Ministry of Education, learning instances at Teacher Training College and Training Conferences at schools. To a lesser degree, teachers took courses on their own. See table 5 below.

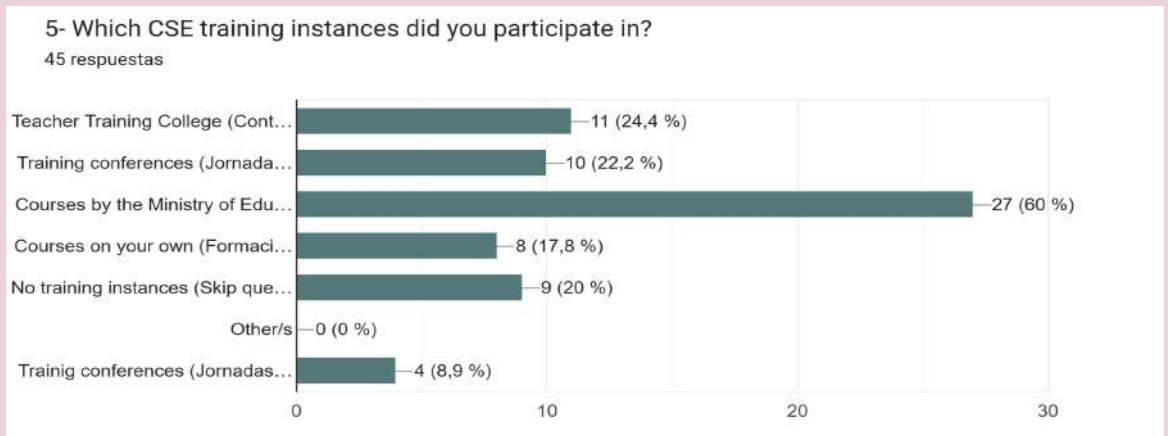


Table 5

(Erratum: Training Conferences appears twice in the graphic analysis due to a mistake in the correction of spelling during the ongoing survey process. This alteration duplicated the option and as a consequence the percentages had to be added since some respondents chose the first version and the others the corrected one)

Of a total of 45 respondents, 38 expressed their opinion on the pertinence of the training instances. We assume that the two teachers who answered "I don't know", did not actually participate in any training instances; thus adding to the seven teachers who skipped the question because they manifested not to have participated in any training instances, and reaching a total of nine teachers (20%) from the previous question. Taking this situation into account, 14 teachers (38.8%) qualified the training instances as good, 10 teachers (27.7%) valued them as fair and 12 teachers (33.3%) expressed the training instances had been poor. See table 6 below:

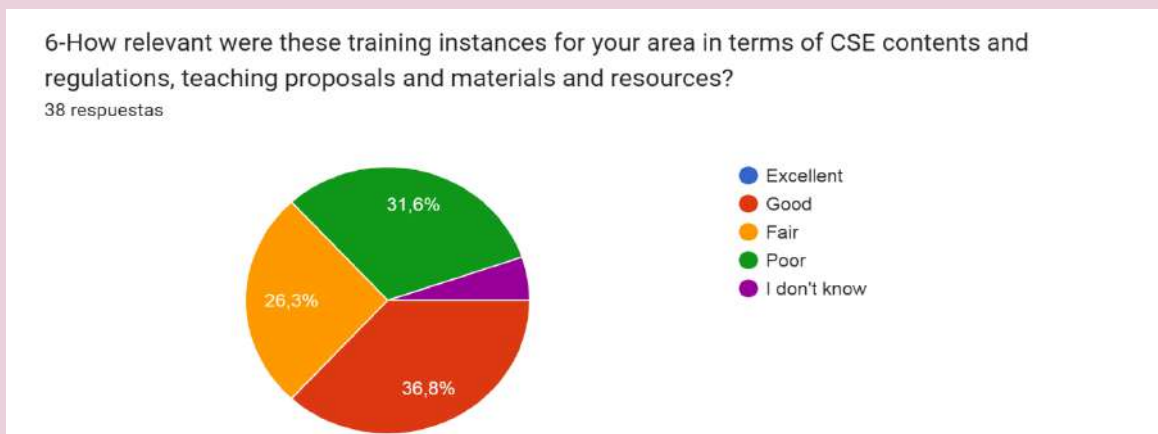


Table 6

Of the 18 topics included by the National Ministry of Education (Consejo Federal de Educación 2018) in the National Curricular Guidelines for primary education, the most relevant were, in the first place, "The human body as a whole with needs for affection, care and appreciation" (29 votes). In second place: "The concept and the right to privacy and respect for the privacy of

others" (20 votes) and "Grooming prevention" (20 votes). Right below and sharing the third place with 19 votes: "Diversity: physical appearance, sexual orientation and gender identity ", " Overcoming prejudices and discriminatory attitudes" and "The violation of rights: sexual abuse, gender violence and human trafficking".

A few issues that were also considered to be treated but not as pertinent as the previous ones were "Analysis of beauty stereotypes" (18 votes), "Equality for men and women in games, motor and intellectual activities" (16 votes), "Family configurations in different times and cultures" (12 votes) and "New forms of masculinity and femininity within the framework of gender equality" (12 votes).

Some of the issues which were paid less consideration for the EFL classroom (or at least not to be treated in seventh grade) were "The sexual characteristics", "Pregnancy: biological, social, affective and psychological aspects", and "Contraceptive methods".

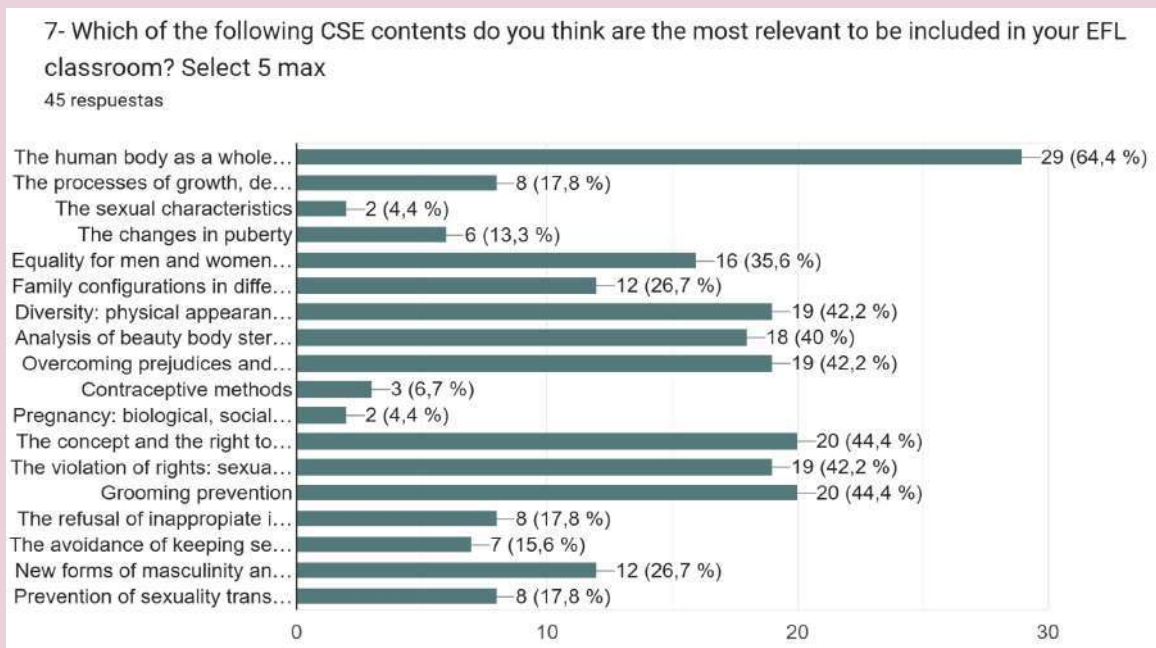


Table 7

By analysing the data from table 8 below, it could be derived that teachers' opinion favours the inclusion of CSE in the EFL classroom, with 75% of teachers claiming CSE should be necessarily and strongly necessarily included, a little over 20% only fairly necessarily included and only one teacher claiming CSE should not be included in the EFL classroom.

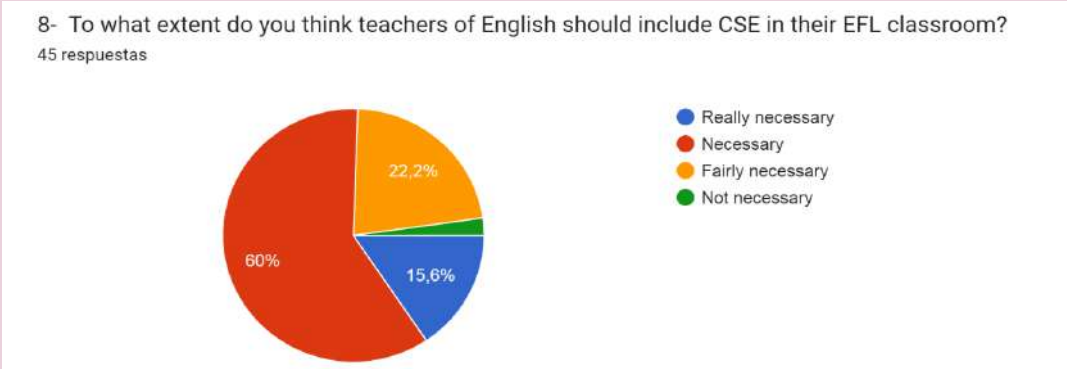


Table 8

When consulted about certain factors which may hinder the inclusion of CSE in the EFL, teachers agree and strongly agree with the presupposition that both, the fact that English is only a curricular subject in seventh grade and the lack of curricular guidance for EFL in Santa Fe province, have a negative impact on the integration of CSE, as portrayed in table 9 below. Similarly, teachers agree and strongly agree with the perception that the lack of National Curricular Guidelines impacts negatively on the inclusion of CSE in the EFL classroom, as reflected in table 10.

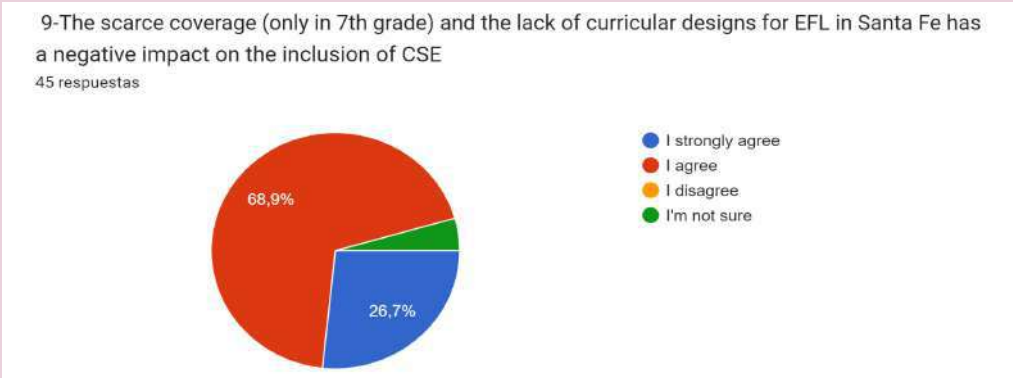


Table 9

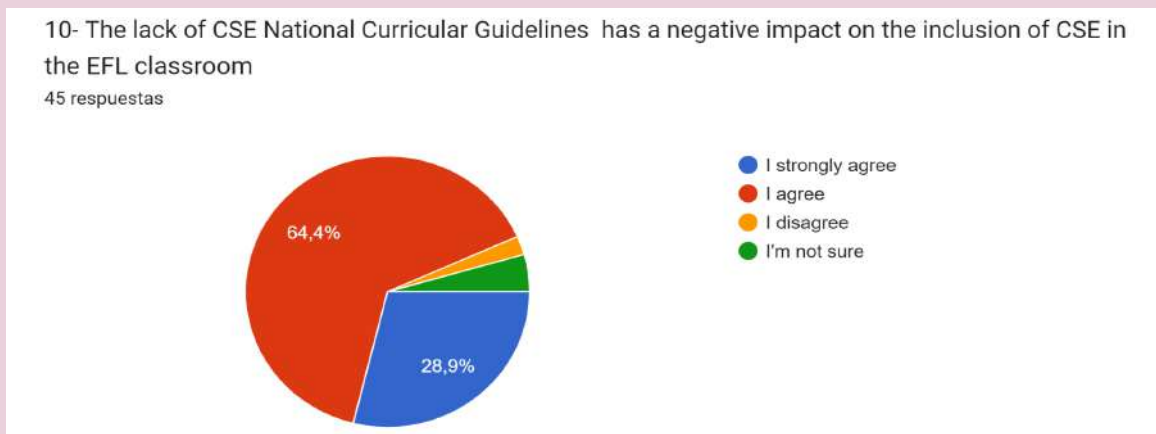


Table 10

With regards to the implementation of CSE at the institutional level, it is a noteworthy fact that 15.6% of the population admit they don't know what is done as regards CSE in the school or schools they work in. Within the remaining 84.4% of the population, a significant majority voted that CSE is mainly included transversally in each subject (29 votes). Notable minor choices were the talks with specialists (12 votes), workshops on CSE topics (seven votes) and other kinds of implementation (six votes). See table 11.

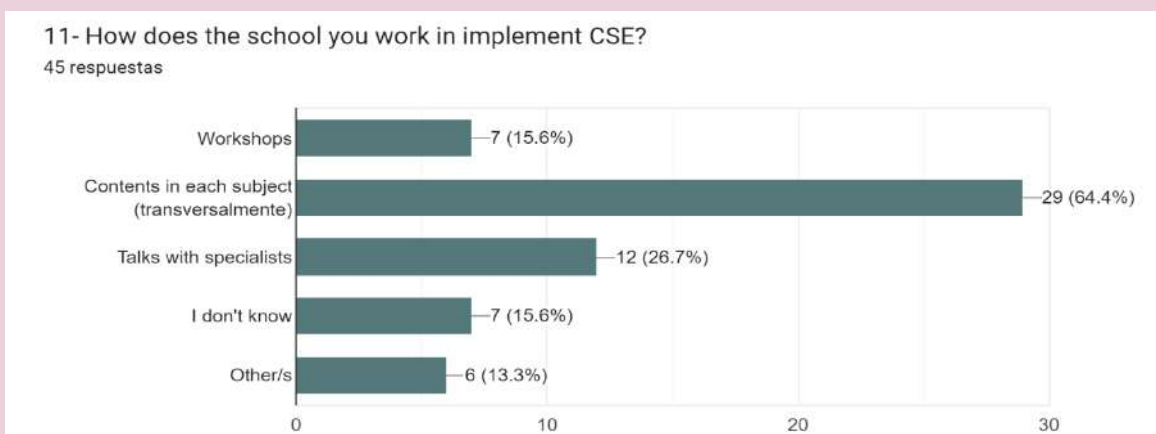


Table 11

Narrowing down the scope and connected to the institutional level of implementation, the following question aimed at knowing about the integration of CSE in the EFL classroom. The results show that most EFL

teachers do not include CSE in their classes (23 votes) and if they do, it is mainly when an issue arises (17 votes) and, to a lesser degree, systematically (four votes) or in other ways not specified (three votes). No teachers claimed to have delivered a special class on CSE. See table 12.

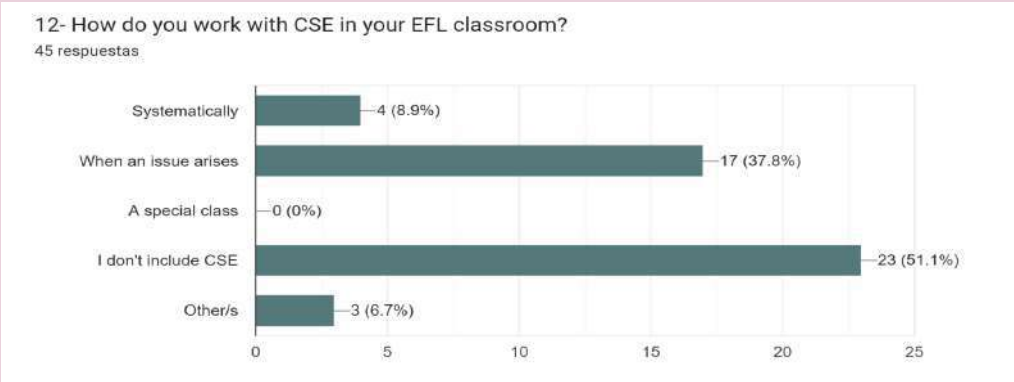


Table 12

Following the striking majority of teachers who do not include CSE in their classrooms, the population's opinion converges on the lack of training as the main justification behind teachers inaction, with 29 votes. Sharing the second place and with 24 votes come ignorance of the law and official documents and lack of time. Another three largely chosen answers were the students' language ability (19 votes), lack of or insufficient resources and materials available in English (16 votes) and conflicts with parents and/or students who uphold moral / religious principles (12 votes). Last but not least important to mention, the less voted options justifying teachers' decision not to integrate CSE were due to conflicts with or lack of support from other actors involved such as school authorities, administrators and / or other teachers (10 votes). Also, due to conflicts with their own moral or religious principles (seven votes) and only one teacher pointed out another reason not specified.

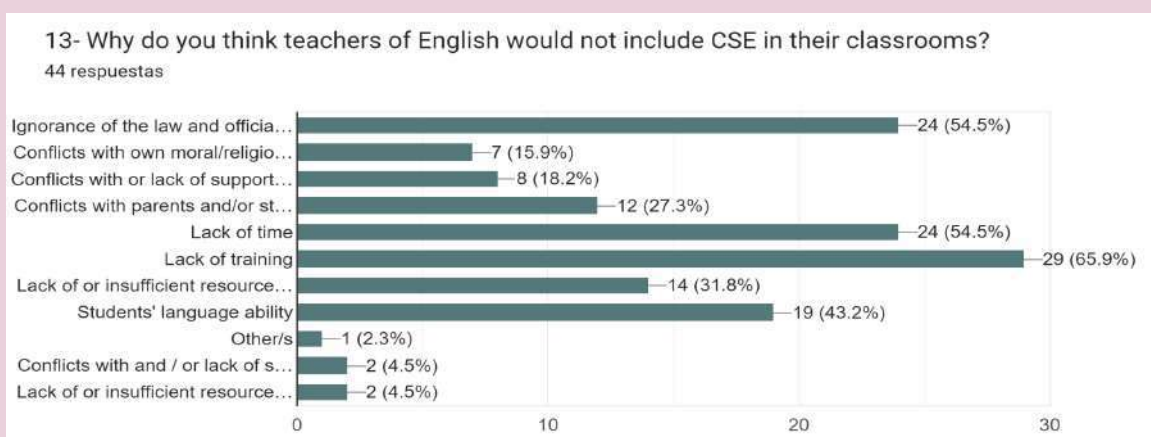


Table 13

(Erratum: Lack of or insufficient... and Conflicts with or lack of support... appears twice in the graphic analysis due to a mistake in the correction of spelling during the ongoing survey process. This alteration duplicated the option and as a consequence the percentages had to be added since some respondents chose the first version and the others the corrected one)

Conclusion

After having analysed the information gathered, we came to the conclusion, along with Banegas (2020), that the inclusion of comprehensive sexual education (CSE) in English language teaching is at an “embryonic stage”(p.3) within our context and that, as one teacher put it, “hace agua ESI en inglés”.

To begin with, we discovered that in general, teachers think CSE should be taught in the EFL classroom (75%), but in practice, only a few teachers actively include it in their teaching. We also discovered that the implementation of CSE is generally poor and unsystematic, that it is not typically part of annual plans and that CSE topics are addressed sporadically, often in response to specific issues that arise in class. In addition, we observed that specific materials for CSE in English are almost non-existent, and in most cases, there is a lack of

integration with modern teaching practices, with the exception of the occasional inclusion of the Intercultural Dimension and Translanguaging practices to facilitate CSE learning.

Secondly, we found that there is uncertainty among teachers about how CSE is integrated at the institutional level and that the teaching of CSE is often seen as the responsibility of people other than themselves, whom they consider to be more qualified. Drawing on teachers' opinions, there's a perceived need for a more comprehensive knowledge of CSE topics and regulations as the current training on CSE has been minimal, often superficial and unrelated to English (more than 50%). Also, we identified the lack of resources as another major drawback.

Thirdly, we were able to determine that the students' low English proficiency constitutes a significant barrier to the teaching of CSE. In connection to this last finding, we discovered that teachers agree on the fact that the scarce coverage of English in primary schools (only 80 minutes a week in seventh grade) negatively affects the inclusion of CSE. They believe that starting English education earlier (from fourth grade) would provide more opportunities to incorporate CSE effectively. We were also able to confirm, according to teachers' views, that the lack of provincial curricular design for English and the lack of national curricular CSE guidelines for our area have negative implications and further complicate teachers' efforts, leading to inconsistent and superficial coverage of CSE topics.

In addition, we confirmed teachers fear negative reactions from parents, which affects their willingness to teach CSE. Significantly, the openness to CSE varies by the geographical location of schools, with peripheral schools being less receptive.

Overall, the integration of CSE in schools faces several challenges, including insufficient training, lack of clear guidelines, and resistance from both teachers and families. Addressing these issues through comprehensive training, better resources, and clear curricular guidelines would improve the implementation of CSE in schools in Rosario and Grand Rosario.

Ultimately, this study underscores the role of the State in monitoring and evaluating educational policies as a crucial aspect in the integration of CSE, as it would help ensure that such policies are effectively implemented and can adapt to changing needs. We believe that, by institutionalising comprehensive and collaborative work among the various actors involved, the State can foster collective processes that support continuous reflection and intervention, eventually enhancing the quality of EFL education as a whole, and not just within the scope of our research.

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