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Students' perceptions on the factors that affect their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL classroom in Ecuadorian high schools.

TRABAJO DE FIN DE TITULACIÓN

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Mgs.

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DEDICATION

       I dedicate this research project to my parents, to my children and to my wife because they have given me all the support to achieve my goal of becoming a professional. They are the priority in my life, and I am doing this for them and for myself.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Eternal thanks to the Supreme Goodness for the wonderful gift of life and my family, to my thesis advisor: Mgs. Gina Karina Camacho Minuche, for her patience and effort; to the Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja, to its teachers, and directors.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

The topic of this research is about the "Students' perceptions on the factors that affect their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL classroom in Ecuadorian high schools", and its purpose was to know students' perceptions on the factors that affect their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL. This research was done in five classrooms in a high school in the city of Buena Fe, Los Rios, Ecuador.

Qualitative and quantitative methods were used in this research, instruments such as class observation sheets and questionnaires were applied to students in five observed English classes. The sample selected was students from 9th and 10th years and from 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years of senior high school.

The data obtained from class observations and the questionnaire applied to students was used to tabulate, analyze, and interpret the results through a quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Through this study, it was observed that students voluntarily participated and enjoyed working in pairs or groups; the type of activity, personality, the topic, grades, and proficiency level influenced and motivated them to take part in speaking activities.

KEYWORDS: perceptions, EFL teachers, students, classroom, personality.

RESUMEN

El tema de esta investigación es acerca de las " Percepciones de los estudiantes sobre los factores que afectan su disposición de comunicarse oralmente en Inglés como lengua extranjera en el salón de clase en colegios del Ecuador", el propósito es conocer la percepción de los estudiantes sobre los factores que afectan su disposición a comunicarse oralmente utilizando el idioma Inglés. Esta investigación se desarrolló en la en cinco aulas de la ciudad de Buena Fe, provincia de Los Ríos, Ecuador.

Los métodos utilizados fueron cualitativo y cuantitativo; la recolección de datos se hizo a través de hojas de observación de clase y cuestionarios aplicados a los estudiantes en cinco clases de Inglés que se observaron. La muestra seleccionada fueron estudiantes de noveno y décimo año de educación básica y de primero, segundo y tercer año de bachillerato. Los datos obtenidos a través de las observaciones de clase y el cuestionario aplicado a los estudiantes, fueron tabulados, analizados y argumentado mediante un análisis cuantitativo y cualitativo.

A través de este estudio se pudo observar que los estudiantes participaron voluntariamente y disfrutaron el trabajo en parejas o grupos. El tipo de actividad, la personalidad, el tema, calificaciones, y el nivel de Inglés influenciaron y motivaron a los estudiantes a participar en las actividades orales.

PALABRAS CLAVE: percepciones, docentes EFL, estudiantes, aula de clase, personalidad.

INTRODUCTION

There is an important amount of students who enter the University with basic level in speaking skills in Ecuador. In consequence, many young people do not have opportunities to succeed in their academic and professional lives. This constitutes a serious problem since being able to speak in English is a necessity nowadays as it is considered a world language. Speaking English gives access to improve educational and professional opportunities both nationally as internationally. This research titled "Students' perceptions on the factors that affect their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL classroom in Ecuadorian high schools" has been carried out to analyze students´ perceptions on the factors that affect their willingness to speak English in class.

The purpose of this study is to know the students' perceptions on the factors that influence their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL classroom through the following questions; how does motivation influence student's willingness to orally communicate?; how does proficiency level influence student's willingness to orally communicate?; how does personality influence student's willingness to orally communicate?

This study is important because through this, we can know the factors that affect the students willingness to use English in the classroom and take some action in order to improve their quality of speaking.

Previous researches related to the theme have been conducted in different countries to analyze various aspects concerning students' perceptions on the factors that affect their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL. An study related to this topic was done by, Xie (2011) its purpose was to explore the extent to which rural Chinese secondary school students are willing to communicate in English and also aims to investigate the factors that might influence Chinese learners'L2 in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) rather than ESL

(English as a Second Language). In addition, limitations were that the sample involved in the observations and interviews was very small. These data obtained represent a sample of just four learners; therefore, it was not possible to adequately address the research questions except as they relate to these learners, or to generalize the findings to a wider L2 population.

The second study was the one done by Knell & Chi (2012), the purpose of this study was to investigate the affective learner characteristics of upper primary school children enrolled in English immersion along with another comparable group of children who go to the same school, live in the same neighborhood, and study English as a core subject. During the research of the study, the author did not find any limitations.

Finally, the third study was done by Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide & Shimizu (2004) whose purpose was to examine whether Japanese learners' willingness to communicate results in L2 communicative behavior in intercultural contact situations both inside and outside the classroom and to examine variables that affect willingness to communicate in the L2 and communicative behavior in this context. During the research of the study, the author did not find any limitations.

It is also necessary to point out that this research project tries to be a contribution to English teachers, students, authorities and Ecuadorian public high schools, since it identifies students´ perception on the factors that affect their willingness to orally communicate in EFL in class. This study will allow educational attainments and a better quality of English language learning in Ecuadorian high schools, so that Ecuadorian students have a formation that not only allows them to be competent in both the national and international environment, but also allows them to be a treasured contribution for future research.

Finally, it is important to mention that there was a limitation in this research; it was the lack of classroom observations. Only one observation does not provide enough evidence

about the activities used in class, so for further research on this topic it could be advisable to observe more classes.

DISCUSSION

Literature Review

The English language teaching-learning process requires teachers to have an advanced level of communicative ability in order to be able to involve students in authentic real-world and meaningful activities that develop oral communication. However, even though teachers have the willingness and the skills to incentive students´ participation and interaction in the class, the students do not want to use English during speaking activities.

Many teachers think that the willingness of the students to use the English language is a key factor when they are learning/doing some speaking activity.

In Ecuador, most teachers try to get students involved in speaking practices but the students are not willing to use the English language in class. As a result, Ecuadorian students have a basic level in the speaking proficiency. Furthermore, this lack of speaking practice is hindering the normal processes of English language teaching in our students in class.

English teachers are interested in knowing why learners are not willing to use the English language in the classroom. The present study pretends to know what are the Ecuadorian students' perceptions on the factors affecting their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL classroom.

Motivation

Motivation is a factor that can make a great difference between learners, and how they can learn the English language. The students also can be motivated in different ways, as an example: a kind of interesting materials and games can challenge the student´s capacity of learning.

Concerning to classroom environment, Richards & Renandya (2002) mention that teachers have to influence and motivate unmotivated students. Sometimes students can be off-

task; for example, they are in class but during the lesson, they are in silence, or they distract to their classmates by talking off the topic.

Teachers can encourage to students by using both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Many students often have a very strong intrinsic motivation because they know the benefits of learning a particular language, in this case, the English language. When the teachers use different techniques or teaching method, the students are more motivated to learn. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation can come through rewards, society, family or classmates.

Furthermore, teachers find many difficulties to motivate students to speak English in the classroom. There are several activities that teachers can use to motivate students to speak English in small and large classes, regard to this, Richards & Renandya (2002, p. 42) suggest some activities to increase students´ motivation, these are "Role-play, with one student taking the role of a foreigner, native-speaking visitors answer questions on specific topics, pen friends, by mail or e-mail, interclass debates, and speech competitions".

In addition, Liu (2009) argues that if teachers demonstrate positive attitudes in class, this certainly will motivate students to learn and use the spoken English; furthermore, when students are motivated they get to hold positive attitudes towards English and the oral English class. Positive attitudes and high motivation often help students become less anxious when speaking English in class. This also help students become more willing to speak English and socialize with others during the entire English class.

Personality also had an impact on students` feelings when speaking English; for example, introverted and shy students tend to become more anxious when speaking English in class and less willing to be risk-takers. By contrast, extroverted students tend to be high risk-takers, feel more relaxed and willing to speak English with others classmates in class.

Proficiency level

Proficiency level has to do with the spoken interaction and production and the different levels of English that the students have in the teaching-learning process.

Regarding spoken interaction, Common European Framework (2001) mentions several levels; for example, A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, and C2. In the A1 level the students can interact in a simple way, they are also prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help them formulate what they are trying to say. Learners also can ask and answer simple questions on very easy topics.

In the A2 level the students can communicate in basics and routines tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities; furthermore, they can handle very short social exchanges, even though they cannot usually understand enough to keep **on** the conversation.

In the B1 level, the students can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst traveling in an area where the language is spoken; besides, they can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life, for example, family, hobbies, work, travel and current events.

In the B2 level, the students can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. They can also take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining their views.

In the C1 level, the learners can express themselves fluently; furthermore, they can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes and they can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.

In the C2 level the students can take part in conversations or discussions and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. They can also express themselves fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If students do have a problem they can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.

Regarding **to** spoken production, Council of Europe (2001) also mentions that in the A1 level the students can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where they live and the people they know.

In the A2 level the students can use many phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms their family, people, and living conditions, their educational background and their present or most recent job.

In the B1 level the students can join phrases in order to describe experiences and events, their dreams, hopes and ambitions. They can give short reasons and explanations for opinions and plans, narrative stories of a book or film and describe their reactions, write simple letters and text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest.

In the B2 level the students can present detailed descriptions related to their field of interest; furthermore, they can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

In the C1 level the students can present detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing singular points and rounding off with an adequate conclusion

Finally, in the C2 level the students can present a smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style unique to the context and with a logical structure which this helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.

Personality

In a world filled with unique individuals, when it comes to personality there are only four different temperaments and sixteen types of people. Understanding these personality types and mastering your own can be the keys to achieving your goals.

According to Keirsey (1984) there are 16 types of personalities which are divided in four groups. The first group has to do with the artisans who have a natural ability to excel in any of the arts; besides, not only the fine arts such as painting and sculpting, or the performing arts such as music, theater, and dance, but also the athletic, military, political, mechanical, and industrial arts, as well as the art of the deal in business.

Four types of artisans can be found in the first group: promoter executor, analyzer operator, motivator presenter, and composer producer. These four personality types share several core characteristics.

Promoter executor has to do with people what are very associated with matter-of-fact, more importantly, they do not worry or hurry, and people enjoy whatever comes along. In the promoter executer personality, these people tend to like mechanical things and sports. They may be a bit blunt or insensitive, can do math or science when they see the need. It must be taken into account that people who have a promoter personality dislike long explanations; they are also good at working with real things that can be worked, handled, taken apart or put together, they are talented at negotiating, they like to act as counselors and take care of their family and friends, they feel disappointed when dealing with disrespectful people.

Analyzer operator refers to the type of people who are cool onlookers – quiet, reserved, observing and analyzing life with detached curiosity and unexpected flashes of original humor. These people are usually interested in impersonal principles, cause and effect, they want to know how and why mechanical things work. People who are analyzer operator

try not to exert themselves no more than they think necessary, because any waste of energy would be inefficient. These people actively solve problems and need to be independent and can act intuitively.

Motivator presenter is concerned with the outgoing, easygoing, accepting, and friendly, these people enjoy everything and make things more fun for others by their enjoyment. They find remembering facts easier than mastering theories. In addition, they are good at managing situations that need common sense and practical ability. They are talented at presenting things in a useful way. Besides all this, they respect freedom and take risks, but sometimes these people misinterpret the intentions of others.

Composer producer has to do with the retiring, quietly friendly, sensitive, kind, and modest about their abilities. They run away of the disagreements, they do not force their opinions or values on others. These people who are composer producer usually do not care to lead but are often loyal followers. They also take advantage of opportunities and these people are creative problem solvers and have their own personal style. They are often relaxed about getting things done because they enjoy the present moment and do not want to spoil it by undue haste or exertion.

The second group has to do with the guardians who are the cornerstones of society, they are the temperament given for serving and preserving our most important social institutions. Guardians have natural talent in managing goods and services--from supervision to maintenance and supply - and they use all their skills to keep things running smoothly in their families, communities, schools, churches, hospitals, and businesses. Within this group there are four personality types: implementor supervisor, planner inspector, facilitator caretaker, and protector supporter.

Concerning implementor supervisor, the people are practical, realistic, and matter-of-fact, with a natural head for business or mechanics, they are not interested in subjects they see no use for, but can apply themselves when necessary, they also like to organize and run activities, they are talented at bringing in chaotic situations. People who are implementor supervisor are self-educated and have a working attitude. These people may make good administrators, especially if they remember to consider others' feelings and points of view.

Planner inspector has to do with people who are serious, quiet, earn success by concentration and thoroughness, they are also practical, orderly, matter-of-fact, logical, realistic and dependable, they see to it that everything is well organized, they make plans, take the responsibility, and they cultivate good qualities and do the right things. They like to make up their own minds as to what should be accomplished and work toward it steadily, regardless of protests or distractions.

Facilitator caretaker has to do with the warm-hearted, talkative, popular, conscientious, born cooperators, and active committee members. They need harmony and may be good at creating it. They are always doing something nice for someone. People who are facilitator caretaker, they work best with encouragement and praise. They demonstrate little interest in abstract thinking or technical subjects and their main interest is in things that directly and visibly affect people's lives.

Regarding to protector supporter, people are quiet, friendly, responsible and conscientious. They work devotedly to meet their obligations and serve their friends and school. Besides this, these people are thorough, painstaking, and accurate. They may need time to master technical subjects, as their interests are usually not technical. Most interesting thing about this personality is that people are patient with detail and routine. In addition, they are loyal, considerate, concerned with how other people feel.

The third group is mentioned by Keirsey (1898) which has to do with rationals, within this group there are four personality types: strategist mobilizer, conceptualizer director, explorer inventor, and designer theorizer. Besides, the people who are rationals, they are the problem solving temperament, particularly if the problem has to do with the many complex systems that make up the world around them. Rationals might tackle problems in organic systems such as plants and animals, in mechanical systems such as railroads and computers, or in social systems such as families, companies and governments. Whatever systems fire their curiosity, Rationals will analyze them to understand how they work, so they can then figure out how to make them work better.

Concerning to strategist mobilizer, the people are hearty, frank, and able in studies, leaders in activities. They are usually good in anything that requires reasoning and intelligent talk, such as public speaking. People are usually well-informed and enjoy adding to their fund of knowledge. People who have this personality, may sometimes be more positive and confident than their experience in an area warrants.

Conceptualizer director has to do with the people who usually have original minds and great drive for their own ideas and purposes. In fields that appeal to them, they have a fine power to organize a job and carry it through with or without help. They are also skeptical, critical, independent, determined, and often stubborn. They must learn to yield less important points in order to win the most important. They imagine reasons behind things that happen and they are also independent and it is difficult for them to interact with others.

Concerning to explorer inventor personality, the people are quick, ingenious, and good at many things. They are always alert, outspoken, and stimulating company. Besides, they may argue for fun on either side of a question. In addition, the people who are inventor, they are resourceful in solving new and challenging problems, but they may neglect routine

assignments. They can apt to turn to one new interest after another. The most important is that they are skillful in finding logical reasons for what they want.

Designer theorizer has to do with people who are quiet, reserved, and brilliant in exams, especially in theoretical or scientific subjects. They use the logical to the point of hair-splitting. People who have this personality, are usually interested mainly in ideas, with little liking for parties or small talk. They also tend to have sharply defined interests. They need to choose careers where some strong interest can be used and useful.

The fourth group mentioned by Keirsey (1998) is concerning to idealists, these people are relatively rare, but there are few around the world. Yet their ability to inspire people with their enthusiasm and idealism has given them influence far beyond their numbers.

In addition, idealists are spiritual, intuitive people who can enjoy spending a great deal of time and energy working toward a better understanding of who they are. The ultimate hope of this group is to attain true wisdom. For the most part, Idealists are enthusiastic individuals who can find joy in meaningful relationships as well as the world around them. People of this temperament can pride themselves on being loving, kindhearted, and authentic. Other fine traits include being more giving and trusting than many around them. An often-passionate temperament that yearns for romance. Idealists' desire is to help others make their journey as well. Idealists are naturally drawn to working with people and whether in education or counseling in social services or personnel work, in journalism or the ministry, they are gifted at helping others find their way in life , often inspiring them to grow as individual and fulfill their potentials.

There are four types of idealists: envisioneer mentor, foreseer developer, discoverer advocate, and harmonizer clarifier. These four personality types share several characteristics.

Concerning to envisioneer mentor, people are responsive and responsible. Generally they feel real concern for what others think or want, and try to handle things with due regard for other people's feelings. Besides, they can present a proposal or lead a group discussion with ease and tact. People who are envisioneer mentor, are sociable, popular, and active in school affairs, but put time enough on their studies to do good work.

Foreseer developer personality refers to the type of people who try to succeed by perseverance; besides, they have originality and desire to do whatever is needed or wanted. They put their best efforts into their work. They are quietly forceful, conscientious, concerned for others. People who are counselors, they have a great respected for their firm principles. Likely to be honored and followed for their clear convictions as to how best to serve the common good.

Regarding to discoverer advocate, people are warmly enthusiastic, high-spirited, ingenious, and imaginative. They are able to do almost anything that interests them, and they are also quick with a solution for any difficulty and ready to help anyone with a problem. Often rely on their ability to improvise instead of preparing in advance. People with champions personality, they can usually find compelling reasons for whatever they want.

Concerning to harmonizer clarifier, people are full of enthusiasms and loyalties, but seldom talk of these until they know you well. They care about learning, ideas, language, and independent projects of their own. They also tend to undertake too much, then somehow get it done. They are friendly, but often too absorbed in what they are doing to be sociable and they are little concerned with possessions or physical surroundings.

Teaching speaking

Regard to teaching speaking, Meng & Burns (2012, p. 223) state "Gaps are common in real-life communication. In information-gap tasks, learners are given different sets of

information for a task. They need to work together in pairs or small groups to share the information". They also mention that in order to do a pre-define goal, the teachers can take into account the followings steps: understand the information that they have, explain to one another the type of information they need, orally communicate with their classmates in the group the information they have processed, ask many questions to confirm what part of the explanation is not clear, ask for several repetitions as often as necessary, and complete the gap in the information in whatever form that is required.

In addition, the information given to each learner may be presented in different ways, including printed handouts, recorded audio or video texts, short reading texts, pictures, diagrams, and printed texts with illustrations. The teachers also can compare the information-gap task with a jigsaw puzzle. In the speaking tasks; learners have different pieces of the puzzle that they have to present through the spoken language. Using the information that they have, learners have to speak to one another to complete the task collaboratively, but using the English language only.

According to what has been mentioned before, Harmer (1998) argues several activities to teach speaking in class. These activities are; information gaps, surveys, discussion, and role-play. The information gap activity is used in an elementary or intermediate level; furthermore, in this activity two people have different parts of information making up a whole, the students have different information, that is to say that there is a gap between them.

The teachers also can use information-gap activity in class by using describe and draw. In this activity one student has a picture which can be a surrealist painting, empty doorways on beaches, trains coming out of fireplace, but he/she must not show it to his or her partner. What the students have to do is show the picture without looking at the original, so the one with the picture will give instructions and describes, and the other will ask questions.

On the other hand, survey activities provoke conversation and opinion exchange, where students conduct questionnaires and surveys. If the students plan these questionnaires themselves, the activity becomes even more useful.

Discussions are also used to promote students to speak English in class; furthermore, teachers are able to organize discussion sessions in their classroom, particularly if the exchange of opinions provokes spontaneous fluent language use. Teachers must take into account that people need time to assemble their thoughts before any discussion; furthermore, discussion activity help to be spontaneous and articulate opinions using the English language in class.

Another activity that encourages students to practice speaking is role-plays; this can be used in an upper intermediate or advanced level. These activities are carried out when students are asked to imagine different situations and act accordingly. Teachers can tell them to role-plays being guests at a party, travel agents answering customer questions or participants in a public meeting about a road-building project for example (Harmer, 1998).

In the following pages, a brief description of five previous studies regarding teachers and students´ perceptions of teaching English in small classes will be presented. The first study was the one by Javad (2012) whose purpose was to elicit EFL learners' perception of the factors that contribute to the willingness to speak English in language classrooms.

The method used was qualitative which used a semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven English language learners as a foreign language in a private language institute.

The conclusions based on the interview data showed that a number of factors were perceived by the learners to have an impact on their will to speak in English classes.

As demonstrated in this study, willingness to speak is influenced by a range of factors. Thus, teachers should take into account that there are many factors that influence the willingness to speak English in class such as personality or shyness, teachers also need to be aware of the factors that could encourage or discourage communication among learners. Therefore, it is really necessary for language teachers to promote factors that facilitate communication and remove those that hinder communication. They should also be mindful of the interactions between variables while planning learning activities. Furthermore, the results of the study demonstrated that different learners displayed different behaviors according to contexts and that their preferences were not uniform. As an example, some were more willing to speak with their teacher, while others preferred to speak in pairs or groups. Such differences clearly support the necessity of practicing a wide range of activities in language classrooms, for example pair or group activities, as well as individual practices.

The second study was the one done by Knell & Chi (2012) the purpose of this study was to examine the roles of motivation, attitudes towards learning English, willingness to communicate, perceived competence, and language anxiety. This study used qualitative method. In this method the students participated in both group testing and individual testing, and all of the testing took place in a large conference room located in the school. The individual test battery included an oral proficiency test, vocabulary measure, and a word identification assessment. During the testing time, the students were given the affective attitudes questionnaire followed by a reading comprehension test. The questionnaire was always administered prior to the test so that students' perception of their performance on the test would not influence their answers on the questionnaire. The students had as much time as they wanted to complete the questionnaire and the reading comprehension test. The individual and group testing time combined took approximately one hour.

The conclusions showed that the students from the early English immersion program at the Shi Da Fu School in Xi' appeared to be more advanced than their non-immersion peers on tests of English reading and oral language, but they are also significantly more willing to communicate in English, have higher levels of perceived communication competence, and lower language anxiety levels. These same affective variables appear to be significantly tied to achievement in English.

The third study was the one by Xie (2011) the purpose of the present study was to explore the extent to which rural Chinese secondary school students are willing to communicate in English. The study also aimed to investigate the factors that might influence Chinese learners'L2 in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) rather than ESL (English as a Second Language) context. Several research techniques and instruments were used in this study: questionnaires, classroom, observation, and interviews. Next, data reliability and the validity of the research instruments were discussed.

The researcher randomly selected 4 students from the 124 students who had completed the questionnaire to take part in the classroom observations and individual interviews. The sampling procedure for the observations and interviews in which each of these 124 students had an equal and independent chance of being selected.

The observations and interviewed participants were randomly selected by the researcher. It was hoped that the researcher would be able to observe or interview both willing and less willing-to-communicate students, but with only 4 randomly selected participants this could not be engineered.

The Oral English class was offered once per week in a forty-five-minute session taught by native Chinese English teachers, who are all professionally qualified. Therefore, the observational data from the present study were collected once weekly in the oral English class

using the observation scheme. Interview data were collected in a lounge in the last week on an MP3 recorder.

The instruments employed in this study included a L2 WTC questionnaire, classroom, observations, and semi-structured interviews as detailed below.

The conclusions of the present study have revealed that the selected rural Chinese students' self-report WTC did not necessarily predict their WTC behaviour in the whole class setting, and as such provides empirical evidence for conceptualizing L2 WTC as a situational variable and not simply as a trait disposition in classroom interactional contexts.

This study has correlated rural Chinese learners' self-report and their perceptions of the factors impacting on their situational with classroom observations of their behavior. The discrepancy between their self-report and behavioral confirms the distinction between desire and willingness in model that is, having the desire to communicate does not necessarily imply willingness to communicate. One aspect of the current study which differs from most of those previously undertaken is that this study identifies factors that influence L2 in the classroom from the point of view of learners rather than merely revealing the antecedents of via self-report survey.

The fourth study was the one by Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, &, Shimizu (2004) whose purpose was to answer the followings questions; to examine whether Japanese learners' WTC results in L2 communicative behavior in intercultural contact situations both inside and outside the classroom, examine variables that affect WTC in the L2 and communicative behavior in this context. In doing so, the relationship between the construct international posture, confidence in L2 communication, and L2 learning motivation will be explored.

This study used a set of questionnaires with attitudinal/motivational measures. The homeroom teacher distributed the questionnaires to students and instructed them to take their

time answering the questions at home before returning them to the teacher. When the questionnaire was administered, students had studied in the program for 3 months. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)–Institutional Testing Program (ITP) was administered in April right after matriculation.

The conclusions of the study were the students´ perceptions about the competence seem to be strongly related to how willing they are to communicate in EFL. Self-confidence, which is a combination of perceived communication competence and a lower level of anxiety, is crucial for a person to be willing to communicate. Those who have more interest in international affairs and a desire to be involved in international vocation/ activities seem to be more willing to communicate in English and voluntarily engage in communication more frequently.

Finally, the fifth study was the one by Liu (2013) whose purpose was to investigate the factors affecting students' English speaking skills at secondary level.

In this study two questionnaires were used (Three point Likert type scale) for students and teachers were developed respectively. Each questionnaire was consisting of ten statements. The questionnaires were tried out and piloted before finalization. After tryout and piloting questionnaires were reviewed by three experts and five doctoral research fellows.

Ten data collectors were trained for data collection. Each data collector collected the data from two schools. The teachers and students were given questionnaires which were duly filled in the presence of the data collectors. Therefore the data was collected in same from all schools. The data was arranged in the tabular form and percentage of each frequency was calculated.

The conclusions were that more than half of the teachers use English as a medium of instruction. Students also reported the same. Both teachers and students are using interactive

technique for teaching-learning process. Teachers were also using mother language during instruction. Teachers and students are promoting questioning and answering in English. Teachers are using helping material for their effective teaching.

METHOD

Setting and Participants

This study was conducted in five classrooms from a public high school in the city of Buena Fe, in the province of Los Rios, Ecuador. The participants were one hundred students; these were 20 students from each course of five different grades from 9th year of basic education to 3rd year of senior high school. There were girls and boys from 13 to 17 years old.

Procedures

This research started with the investigation of the literature about topics related to the theme. It was also required to investigate five previous studies related to the researched topic. The information was obtained from several sources as journals, Google books, books from different authors and the didactic guide provided by the university.

The methodology applied in this study was qualitative and quantitative. The data obtained was described, analyzed, and interpreted to reach the objective previously stated in this investigation. The instruments used for this study were survey, observation, and note-taking. To gather the data a questionnaire was administered for each student surveyed. The student's questionnaire contained seven questions. It was also necessary to observe a class in which the corresponding observation sheet was filled in. The information obtained from these sources was described and analyzed

The analysis of the results includes the analysis of the seven questions given in the students' questionnaire. These seven questions were classified according to certain factors that affect the willingness to orally communicate in the EFL classroom in Ecuadorian high Schools. At the end, conclusions were drawn as well as some recommendations.

Discussion

Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results.

In this section quantitative and qualitative results collected in the field research are going to be analyzed. The quantitative and qualitative analysis summarized in the graphs below indicate how motivation, proficiency level and personality influence student's willingness to orally communicate. In addition, this analysis includes information about what are the factors that students consider more relevant to orally communicate.

Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

How does motivation influence student's willingness to orally communicate?

Do you feel motivated to speak English in class?
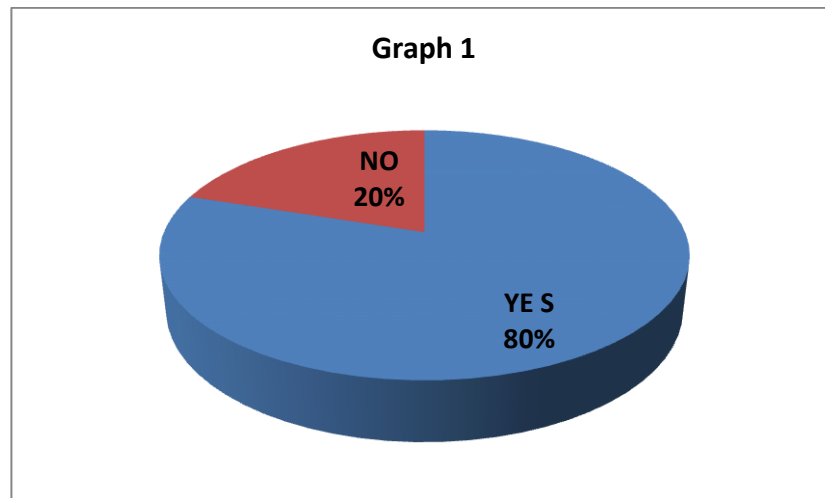
Author: Herrera Cruz Gonzalo
Source: students from 8th and 9th of basic and 1st, 2nd, 3rd of high school

Graph 1 shows the results obtained from the sample in relation to this question. Eighty percent of them indicate that they totally agree, some of the most relevant students' answers were that they feel motivated because they want to learn more, they think English is interesting, and also because they think that English is valuable for their future. Whereas that, twenty percent disagree. The most predominant answer was that they do not feel motivated to

talk in class because they do not understand this language. These results reveal that the majority of students feel motivated to participate in classroom. Nonetheless, a big amount of the students in two classrooms did not show to be motivated to talk in class according to the observation class which contradicts with the low percentage of the negative results.

The mentioned above is corroborated with the observation performed since it was evident that the students were self-motivated to speak English. When the teacher asked them to raise the hand to participate, they did it, of course taking into account their English level. Teacher also motivated them to participate and thanked them by speaking in English. A little group of students did not participate in the lesson, they did not feel motivated to participate or speak English during the developing of the class.

Regard to this fact, Richards & Renandya (2002) mention that to create a good classroom environment, teachers have to influence and motivate unmotivated students. Sometimes students can be off-task; for example, they are in class but during the lesson, they are in silence, or they distract to their classmates by talking off the topic.

Also, the authors mentioned above argue that in language learning, motivation is more specific than in a content-based subject. Teachers encourage language use through both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation that comes from inside an individual. Besides, this motivation comes from the pleasure one gets from the task itself or from the sense of satisfaction in completing or even working. In some cases, many students have strong intrinsic motivation, because students know the benefits of learning a particular language.

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation refers to motivation that comes from outside an individual. It can be through rewards such as money or grades. These rewards provide satisfaction and pleasure that the task itself may not provide.

In the study carried out by Liu (2009) he mentions that positive attitudes certainly motivate students to learn and use spoken English , highly motivated students had positive attitude during the oral English activities in class. Besides, positive attitudes and high motivation often help students become less anxious when speaking English in class. In addition, this helps students become more willing to take risks when speaking the target language and socialize with others in class.

Do you feel motivated to speak English with your classmates?

Graph 2
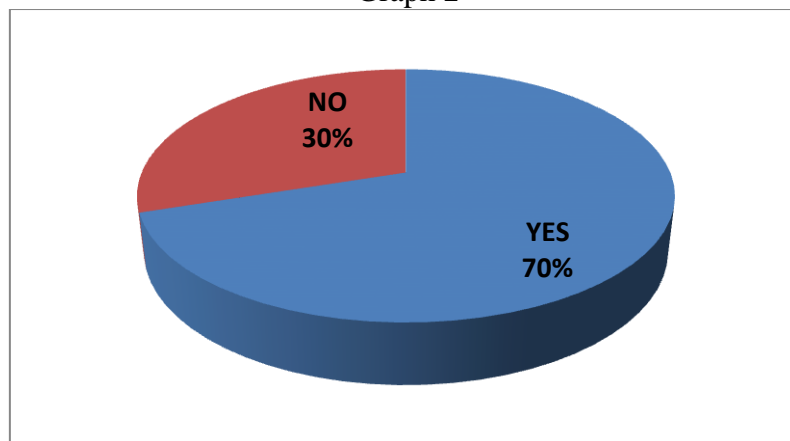
Author: Herrera Cruz Gonzalo
Source: students from 8th and 9th of basic and 1st, 2nd, 3rd of high school

Graph 2 shows that the 70% of students mentioned that they feel motivated to speak English with their classmates and the 30% of students said that they do not feel motivated to speak English with their classmates in class.

Comparing the mentioned data above with the observed classes, these demonstrate that most of the students felt motivated to speak English with their partners in the class. It was also observed that most of the time they used second language with their classmates when they were working in pairs or groups.

Regarding to this fact, Liu (2009) argues that if teachers demonstrate positive attitudes in class, this certainly will motivate students to learn and use the spoken English; furthermore,

when students are motivated they get to hold positive attitudes towards English and the oral English class. Positive attitudes and high motivation often help students become less anxious when speaking English in class. This also helps students become more willing to speak English and socialize with others during the entire English class.

Do you voluntarily participate in speaking activities during the English class?
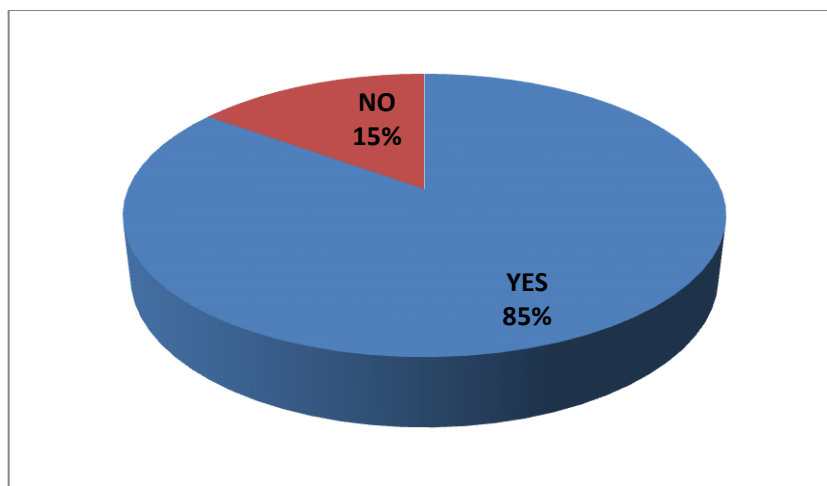
Author: Herrera Cruz Gonzalo
Source: Students from 8th and 9th of basic and 1st, 2nd, 3rd of high school

Statement number three has to do with the students´ participation in speaking activities in the English classroom, it was obtained that an 85% of students said that they actively participate in speaking activities. On the other hand, a 15% of students said that they do not participate.

In the class observation done, it was evident that the students actively participated in speaking activities in the English classroom. Furthermore, when the students did not understand any activity, they asked and the teacher explained them the activity again. It was very interesting to see that all the students actively participated in speaking activities.

Concerning to this regard, Liu (2009) mentions that the teachers must have positive attitudes to motivate students to speak in class because ,when students are motivated they voluntarily participate at any speaking. Again positive attitudes and high motivation help

students become less anxious when speaking English in class. Motivation helps students to become more willing to take risks when speaking the target language and socialize with others classmates in class.

On the other hand, Richard & Renandya (2002) argue that the students who know the benefits of learning a particular language; that is to say, the students who have a strong intrinsic motivation, voluntarily participate in speaking activities. Nevertheless, some students need to be supplied with interesting additional reading materials and videos to follow a difficult task, or invite guest speakers so that they voluntarily participate in speaking activities.

Which of the following aspects do motivate you to participate in speaking activities?
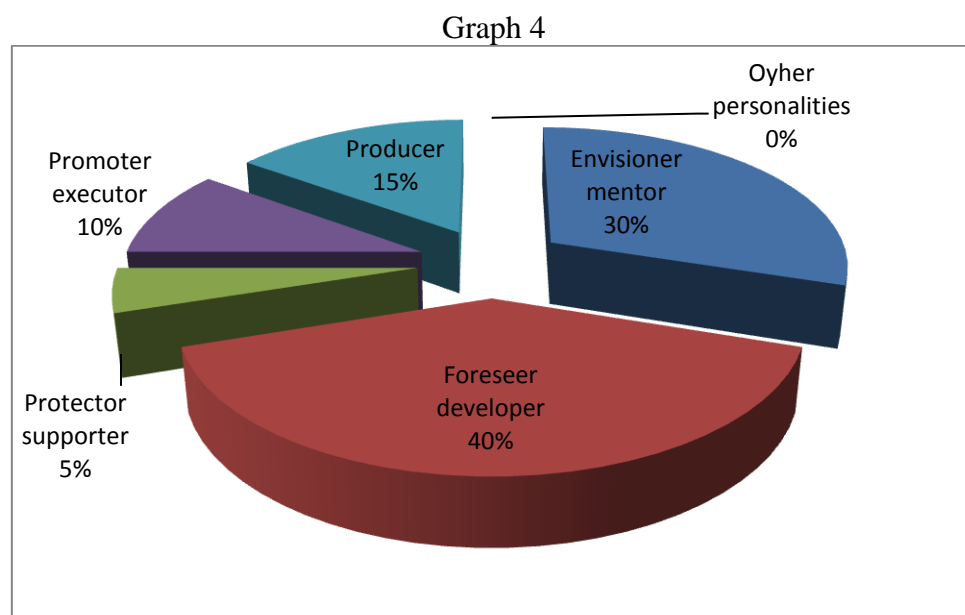
Graph 4

Author: Herrera Cruz Gonzalo
Source: Students from 8th and 9th of basic and 1st, 2nd, 3rd of high school

Concerning to what motivates the students to participate in speaking activities, graph 4 shows that a 50% of students say it is the type of activity which motivates them to participate, a 30% of students, mentioned that it is the topic, and a 20% students stated that it is the grades what motivate them to participate in speaking activities.

The other aspects concerning teachers´ attitude, the topic of the lesson, the knowledge, and English level which were 0% of the total of the sample were not chosen by the students.

The information mentioned above is corroborated with the observation performed since it was evident that the type of activity was the factor that motivated the students to participate in speaking activities the most. For example, when the teachers used activities as information gaps, surveys, discussion, and role-play, the students were motivated and participated during the entire lesson. Other aspects such as teachers' attitude, the topic of the lesson, the knowledge, English level which were 0% of the total of the sample were not chosen here.

Furthermore, the teachers used printed handouts, recorded audio or video texts, short reading texts, pictures, diagrams, and printed texts with illustrations. The teachers also compared the information-gap task with a jigsaw puzzle. Learners had different pieces of the puzzle that they had to present through the spoken language. Students had to speak to one another to complete the task collaboratively, but using the English language only.

According to what has been mentioned before, Harmer (1998) proposes several activities to teach speaking in class, these activities are; information gaps, surveys, discussion, and role-play. The information gap activity is used in an elementary or intermediate level; furthermore, in this activity two people have different parts of information making up a whole, the students have different information, that is to say that there is a gap between them.

On the other hand, survey activities provoke conversation and opinion exchange, where students conduct questionnaires and surveys. If the students plan these questionnaires themselves, the activity becomes even more useful.

Discussions are also used to promote students to speak English in class; furthermore, teachers are able to organize discussion sessions in their classroom, particularly if the exchange of opinions provokes spontaneous fluent language use.

Another activity that encourages students to practice speaking is role-plays, this can be used in an upper intermediate or advanced level. These activities are carried out when students are asked to imagine different situations and act accordingly. Teachers can tell them to role-play being guests at a party, travel agents answering customer questions or participants in a public meeting about a road-building project for example (Harmer, 1998).

How does proficiency level influence student's willingness to orally communicate?

Do you think that your English proficiency level influences your participation in speaking activities?

Graph 5
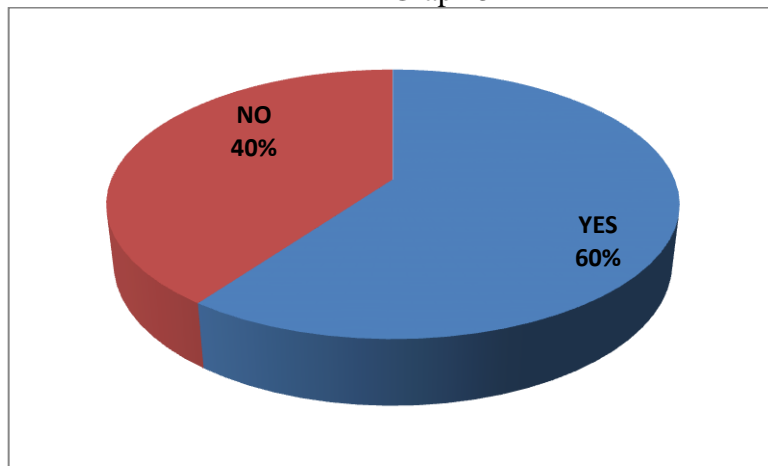
Author: Herrera Cruz Gonzalo
Source: Students from 8th and 9th of basic and 1st, 2nd, 3rd of high school

Graph 5 shows that 60 students (60%) answered positively about if the English level influences on their participation in speaking activities and 40 students (40%) answered negatively about the English level in class.

During the observed classes, it was seen that an average of 70% of the students had an intermediate English level (B1 User) and a 30% (30 students) had a Basic English level (A1

user). The students whose English level were intermediate, they participated actively during the entire lesson. These learners could speak using the target language; they asked questions to teachers, answered teachers´ questions and helped students whose English level was low. These last students could not communicate with their classmates because they did not understand what the teacher said, as a result, they did not participate in speaking activities.

Regarding this fact, Common European Framework (2001) mentions that in the level A1 (Basic User); those at this proficiency stage are supposed to produce and understand common everyday expressions, talk about personal information, and communicate in an elemental basis given their interlocutors accommodate their speech to their level. On the other hand, the level B1 (Intermediate User): the students can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events; furthermore, they can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

How does personality influence student's willingness to orally communicate?
What type of personality do you have?

Graph 6
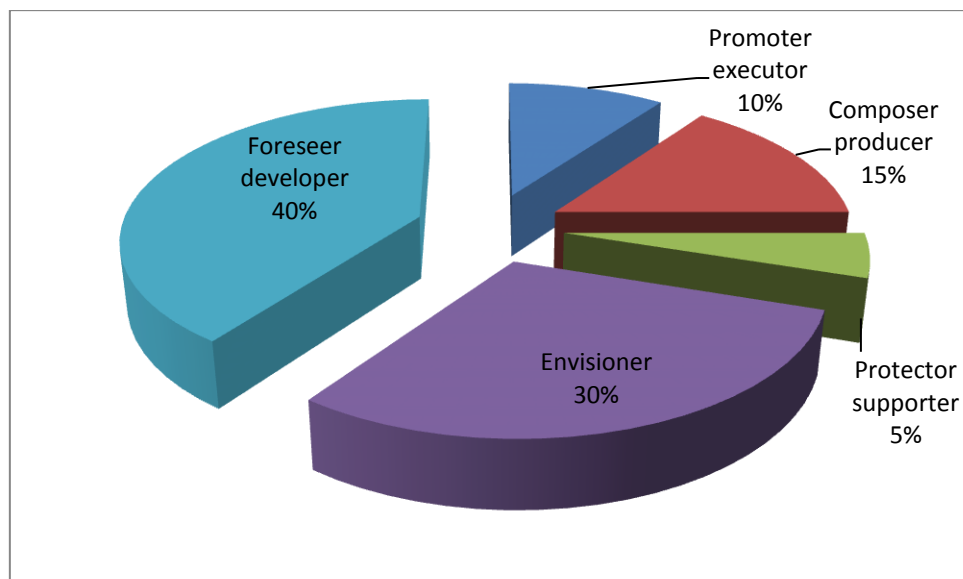
Author: Herrera Cruz Gonzalo
Source: Students from 8th and 9th of basic and 1st, 2nd, 3rd of high school

31

Concerning to the students' type of personality, graph 6 shows that 40 students (40%) said that they have a foreseer developer personality, 30 students (30%) mentioned that they have an envisioneer mentor personality, 15 students (15%) stated that they have a composer producer personality, 10 students (10%) said that they have a promoter executor personality, and 5 students (5%) have a protector supporter personality.

During the observed classes, it was evident **that** most of the students (90%) had an envisioneer mentor personality because the learners were externally focused, showing altruistic, and a positive attitude with their classmates. They also placed utmost importance on helping others during the lesson. The students were optimists and possessing excellent language skills, they did well in leadership role.

Regarding to envisioneer mentor, Keirsey (1984) argues that with this personality types, people are responsive and responsible. Generally people feel real concern for what others think or want, and they try to handle things with due regard for other people's feelings. Besides, people can present a proposal or lead a group discussion with ease and tact. They are sociable, popular, and active in school affairs, but put time enough on their studies to do good work.

Other 10% of students had **analyzer** operator personality because students were cool onlookers – quiet, reserved, observing and analyzing life with detached curiosity and unexpected flashes of original humor. These people are usually interested in impersonal principles, cause and effect, they want to know how and why mechanical things work. Many students could actively solve problems; they also need to be independent and acted intuitively on the developing of the class (Keirsey, 1984).

Other personality types were not mentioned by the students which had a 0% percent of the total of the sample. The personality types that had a positive percent were harmonizer

clarifier, discoverer advocate, conceptualizer director, designer theorizer, strategist mobilizer, explorer inventor, planner inspector, implementor supervisor, facilitator caretaker, analyzer operator, and motivator presenter. It is important to mention that the possible reason for which all personality types were not observed during the lesson was because of the observer´s presence on the performance of the class, which really affects, not in all cases, to discover the personality types that each student has and also one hour of observation is not enough to detect all students´ personalities. It is necessary to point out that in conversation with the teachers, they mentioned that when there is the presence of an observer, the students act in different way during the English class.

Do you think that your personality influence your participation in speaking activities?

Graph 7
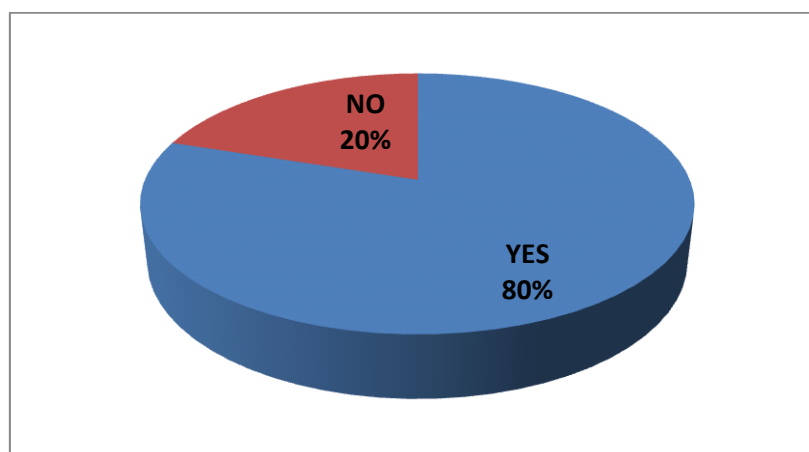
Author: Herrera Cruz Gonzalo
Source: Students from 8th and 9th of basic and 1st, 2nd, 3rd of high school

Concerning this question, graph 7 shows that 80% of students answered that the type of personality influences in speaking activities and a 20% of students answered negatively.

Based on the observation done, it was evident that the personality characteristics influenced in teaching of speaking in class. For example, many students were extroverted and other were introverted. The students who were extroverted showed to be good to learn by the characteristics associated with extraversion, these students participated actively during the

33

entire lesson making many questions and answering what the teacher asked them, such as active attitude and the ability to take risks. Furthermore, students who were introverted did not speak much by feeling fear of failure while introverted students did not participate at all.

Based on the influence of personality in speaking activities, Richards & Renandya (2002) mention that extroverted students are typically energetic, social individuals whose energy source comes from being around other people; they usually have many friends and are enthusiastic, moreover; these students know how to express their opinions and enjoy doing so. Extroverted students participate actively in class. On the other hand, introverted students are people who prefer to be quiet. They usually prefer to take their time to process their thoughts and enjoy their loneliness. In classes, during the entire the lesson, they do not participate and their energy is derived from themselves.

Additionally, Liu (2009) mention that personality also have an impact on students´ feelings when speaking English. Introverted and shy students tend to be more anxious when speaking English and do not like to take any risk. In contrast to introverted, extroverted students tend to take risk, and feel more relaxed and willing to speak English with others in class.

Conclusions

After having completed this research work the following conclusions have been drawn:

The students are self-motivated to participate in speaking activities during the entire lesson of English. Because, most of them had an intrinsic motivation and it helped them to act positively and be able to speak in English with their partners in class.

The students' English level influence on their participation in speaking activities. During the observed classes it was seen that a 70% of students had an intermediate English level and a 30% of students had a Basic English level.

The students' type of personality influence on their participation in speaking activities. During the observed classes, it was evident that most of the students (90%) had an envisioneer mentor personality; other (10%) of students had analyzer operator personality.

Most of the students agree that motivation plays an important role when practicing speaking activities during the English class. The reasons which motivate the students are: because, they want to learn more, they think English is interesting, and valuable for their future.

Most of the students voluntarily participated in speaking activities in the English classroom. It was clear that; there was a good rapport between teachers and students.

Aspects such as grades, rewards, and type of activity motivate students to participate in speaking activities

Recommendations

While planning, teachers should take into account the students´ type of personality because this influences students´ willingness to speak English in the classroom.

It is also suggested that teachers take into account the feelings and necessities of the students when planning their lessons. The teachers must act with empathy, and not betray the students´ hope.

It is suggested that teachers use different techniques to help students to increase their proficiency level to communicate more easily in English with their classmates.

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Annexes

RESUMEN:
 The topic of this research is about the "Students' perceptions on the factors that affect their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL classroom in Ecuadorian high schools", and its purpose was to know students' perceptions on the factors that affect their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL. This research was done in five classrooms in a high school in the city of Buena Fe, Los Rios, Ecuador.

 Qualitative and quantitative methods were used in this research, instruments such as class observation sheets and questionnaires were applied to students in five observed English classes. The sample selected was students from 9th and 10th years and from 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years of senior high schools.

 The data obtained from class observations and the questionnaire applied to students was used to tabulate, analyze, and interpret the results through a quantitative and qualitative analysis.

 Through this study, it was observed that students voluntarily participated and enjoyed working in pairs or groups; the type of activity, personality, the topic, grades, and proficiency level influenced and motivated them to take part in speaking activities.
KEYWORDS: perceptions, EFL teachers, students, classroom, personality.