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INGLÉS**

English language students and their motivation to learn the language

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to God, who has given me the light of my life in many unmeasurable aspects that have become instruments of success.

To my wife Angelica and my daughter Isabella that have provided endless love and have supported the collateral damage of my stressful days and nights but have always been my engine to continuously aim a better future for all.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am in debt with all the personnel that made and still are part of the UTPPL family who kept alive and never diminished my willingness to become not only a great professional but also a better human being.

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Abstract

The study, English language students and their motivation to learn the language has as purpose to learn about students' perceptions in relation to their motivation to learn English inside the classroom. This research was conducted in one Catholic high school in the city of Macas, province of Morona Santiago. The sample was twenty students from five different courses which made a total of 100 participants. To gather the data the participants were given questionnaires to answer eight different questions. Furthermore, five different lessons were observed. All participants accumulate five hours, forty minutes each during the week and used the English textbooks given by the Ministry of Education of Ecuador adopted and guided by the common European framework of reference for languages. Both the questionnaires and the observation sheets were the research instruments chosen.

As a result of this investigation it can be concluded that the aspects that motivates students to learn English in class the most are to improve their English level and the teachers' attitude. Contrarily, the main aspect that hinders their motivation is the type of the textbook used.

Key words: Students' motivation, English learning, teachers' attitude.

Resumen

El estudio, los estudiantes de idioma Inglés y su motivación para aprender el idioma, tiene como finalidad conocer las percepciones de los estudiantes en relación a su motivación para aprender Inglés en el aula. Esta investigación se llevó a cabo en una escuela secundaria católica en la ciudad de Macas, provincia de Morona Santiago. La muestra fue de veinte estudiantes de cinco cursos diferentes que hicieron un total de 100 participantes involucrados. Para recopilar los datos de los participantes se entregó cuestionarios para responder ocho preguntas diferentes. Además, se observaron cinco clases con diferentes aspectos que tanto los estudiantes como los profesores mostraron durante las clases.

Todos los participantes reciben cinco horas de cuarenta minutos cada una durante la semana y utilizan los textos gratuitos de inglés propuestos por el Ministerio de Educación de Ecuador y guiado por el marco europeo común de referencia para los idiomas.

Como resultado de esta investigación se puede concluir que los aspectos que motiva a los estudiantes a aprender Inglés en la clase son para mejorar su nivel de Inglés y la actitud de los profesores. Por el contrario, el aspecto principal que dificulta su motivación es el tipo de texto utilizado.

Palabras clave: motivación de los estudiantes, aprendizaje de Inglés, actitud de los maestros.

Introduction

In today's globalized world, English has become one of the most spoken and used language and it is known as the international language. Additionally, there is no doubt that endless opportunities will open up in different fields for a person who speaks English as a foreign language in fields such as science, commerce, medicine, traveling, and business. In Ecuador, it has been noticed that learning English as a foreign language has been crucial and hard to achieve in the classrooms. But the questions are; what motivates students to learn English? What hinders students to learn English? Therefore, in order to find answers to what causes such problems, this research will be based on the questions before mention. This topic is consider as a very important issue to investigate because it will lead to a better understanding about students motivation to learn English and will contribute to English educational programs for the country.

It is important to mention that several studies have been carried out about students' motivation to learn English. Wong (2008) developed an investigation with the purpose to find out how age influences Chinese students in their motivation to learn English. One of the main outcomes of this investigation shows that older students are more motivated to learn English in comparison to the younger ones. Another study conducted by Bahous, Bacha, & Nabhani (2011), with the aim to find out teachers and students views about what aspects hinder students English language learning in the classroom showed that all teachers agree that there are some problems that hinder students' progress in the English classroom. Among such problems were lack of motivation, weak background of the students, culture, material used, and language teachers who did not make the courses interesting. Additionally, Bernaus, Wilson, and Gardner (2009) researched about teachers' motivation, strategies used in the classroom and students' motivation to second language achievement. The findings obtained from this study suggest that, teachers' motivation has a substantial relation to the use of

motivating innovative strategies, which is proved to increase students' achievement in English learning

Throughout this investigation, school administrators, students, parents, and teachers will benefit of the information that can lead to the educational society and find new perceptions and strategies that can motivate students to learn English as a second language.

One limitation encountered was the fact that the students made a lot of mistakes filling the questionnaires and had to be continuously explained on how to fill in the questionnaire, extra copies had to be provided so the questionnaires would not have corrections made all over.

It can be concluded that, further research is recommended to observe better perspectives on how students and teachers act in class.

Literature Review

The analysis of this investigation will demonstrate the necessity to understand the different theories about motivation, strategies, approaches, methods and roles of a teacher that can guide teachers and learners to achieve a better understanding of the factors that lead to a successful process of learning English.

Motivation

According to Harmer (2011), there are two types of motivation that influences people to either have an internal or external factor that could awake our willingness to achieve something; they are known as extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. This author states that extrinsic motivation is considered as any external factor that pushes a person to accomplish a task. For instance, a person who may want to learn English or perhaps not learn could only become interested due to the fact that it is only a school requirement or simply the learner is most likely to be interested in achieving a grade or a result in a test. Similarly, the necessity to achieve an award pushes students towards a learning process. On the contrary, intrinsic motivation is considered to be an internal desire to improve the skills or knowledge of doing or learning something. Furthermore, Nation and Macalister (2010) also share the same ideas about the two types of motivation. However, both authors consider that intrinsic motivation is the best type to accomplish a task. Such motivation has the strength to redefine the learner changing his or her points of view towards learning English. At the same time, they agree that extrinsic motivation can lead a person to become interested and wake the need to do something. But to do this it is important to become familiar or look for strategies that will enhance their desire and interest to overcome any obstacles that might hinder their willingness to learn a language.

Activities or strategies that motivate students to learn English

Crookes and Schmidt (1991) have studied some strategies that have been proved to increase students' motivational level. These authors indicate that, "lessons that always consist of the same routine, patterns, and formats have been shown to lean to a decrease on attention and an increase in boredom" (p.65).

Herrell and Jordan (2012) state that activities such as: predictable routine, preview/review, visual scaffolding, small groups and partners, scripting and multiple intelligences strategies are effective ways to combine which surely will motivate students in the process of learning a second language.

Teaching approaches and methods

Different approaches and methods for second language learning have emerged over time in order to make language acquisition easier to accomplish for the learner. One of them is the Communicative approach. Cook (2003) explains how the communicative approach has been one the most successful methods when it comes to learn a second language. According to this author, communicative language teaching emphasizes more on teaching how to communicate effectively rather than concentrating on syntax, grammar or even perfect pronunciation. In other words, if the learner is able to use the language to communicate effectively, the goal has been reached.

Furthermore, Harmer (2007) explains that there are two basic principles in the communicative approach. The first one describes as the language not being only a structure of grammatical rules and sequences but it also serves in a functional purpose such as "inviting, agreeing, disagreeing, suggesting, etc". It is easy to see that communicative method clearly emphasizes more on learning how to interact and do things with the language rather than to focus on form.

Moreover, the second principal that the author states is that language exposure is extremely important in learning a second language. In other words, the more exposure to the target language the learners have, the easier and faster the process of learning will be. At the same time, opportunities to use the language will motivate the students to keep learning and developing a substantial progress in their language growth. In the same way, grammar and language structure will eventually be internalized by the learners when they get a lot of communicative exposure.

The author also states that communicative language method has helped teachers to remember that when people want to learn a language, it is mainly for communication and interaction purposes, rather than learning about its form and grammatical rules; this approach guides the lessons towards learning for real life situation.

Another method is the Cooperative language approach. Richards and Rodgers (2001) explain how this approach method involves the learner to be responsible for his or her own learning process throughout group or pair work. Moreover, language input comes from the other members of the group and the exchange of information is the base of learning.

Similarly, Herrell and Jordan (2012) state that cooperative language learning is the result of many other methods in which students work collaborative to accomplish a task or reach an objective. These authors mention that good cooperative work does not happen instantly. In other words, a few aspects that must be followed when working to achieve a good cooperative learning work are among working productively with the group, monitoring their interaction and checking their progress in order to obtain the desired results. Such valuable steps cannot be taken away if the quality of the work has high expectations in regards of the learning process. As a matter of fact, cooperative method helps students to learn

how to interact in a group and how to accomplish certain tasks, rather than just learning language content.

Following this further, Richards and Rodgers (2001) refer to content based instruction as an approach that bases on the topic or content needed to be learned instead of focusing on the linguistic part of the topic. They state that “Although content is used with a variety of different meanings in language teaching, it most frequently refers to the substance or subject matter that we learn or communicate through language rather than the language used to convey it” (p. 204).

In a like manner, Lightbow and Spada (2006), refer to task-based language as an approach that is “a natural extension of communicative language teaching” (p. 51), where learning takes place by working on specific activities using the language in the real world. After the task has been accomplished, the learners can go back to analyze their performance and correct grammar or pronunciation mistakes that might had occurred. According to the authors, task-based method consists of three steps that should be followed for a successful completion. First, there is the pre-task stage where the learners are told what the task will be. Second, students gather together to collect the information and the vocabulary needed to do the task. Finally, students present the task finished to the teacher and classmates. In this method, production is one of the first points to be valued rather than the last one. In addition, Cook (2003), explains that the key to task- based approach success is to concentrate on meaning instead of concerning on structure.

Furthermore, grammar translation method is one of the oldest method in the history of language learning. Lightbow and Spada (2006) state that this method arose in the 1780’s and it is still used today in language learning. After all, every learner at some point in their learning process translates from its mother tongue to the target language in order to find

meaning. However, according to these authors, concentrating on grammar translation too much inhibits students from learning the language naturally and does not allow them to use their knowledge for real time situations since they are always comparing their target language with their native one. Furthermore, grammar translation method helps learners to obtain knowledge about the language, but does not help them to learn how to communicate with it effectively.

Similarly, Cook (2003) points out that with the grammar translation method, learners only receive a set of difficult grammar rules measuring their progress by the quality of the translation and the effectiveness of using those grammar rules; rather than measuring it by their capacity of communication and interaction. Not to mention that, grammar translation method focuses on saying things slow and structurally correct instead of saying them fluently even if some mistakes are made.

And last but not least, there is also the total physical response method developed by the authors James Asher. Lighthown and Spada (2011) talk about this method and manifest that with this approach, learners are given a serial of commands in the target language and they have to execute the correct move in order to demonstrate their comprehension competence they have acquired in their learning process. At the same time, learners are not required to produce any oral interaction at the beginning of their lessons. Asher demonstrated that learning through a total physical response method is a very good way to start for beginners because it allows them to get enough input from the language before they feel ready to produce it.

Herrell and Jordan (2012) describe this method as being very productive and effective to introduce any piece of vocabulary at any level of English and it is a very useful tool that will definitely help children and young students achieve great results with very little

knowledge of the language. This is due to the fact that language is learned within a very relaxed environment where there is not rush to speak the language right away, instead it concentrates more in enhancing their comprehension. “Teachers can introduce vocabulary and have students respond by drawing, pointing, putting pictures in order, or any other physical response that encourages active involvement and verify understanding” (p.86).

Roles of a teacher

One of the most significant aspects in language teaching is the role of the teacher during the learning process. Harmer (2001) affirms that a teacher who is able to change from one role to another according to the activity or topic being taught, he or she will more likely accomplish a successful lesson. Some of the roles mentioned by the author are: controller, promoter, resource or tutor, and they at some point work as facilitators which will help the students enhance the process of learning.

Harmer (2007) points out the different roles that the teachers should adopt in class. He describes a few roles on how they can appropriate or inappropriate be useful depending on the task. For example, a teacher can adopt the role of controller when grammar explanations are needed. Another role can be prompter when the teacher aims to make the students construct the information on their own by feeding them with bits of information and pushing them to achieve better results. In the same way, teachers become assessors by telling the students how well they have achieved a task and providing them the results. Similarly, teachers should be able to function as a resource in which students can ask for information, consult about grammar structure or any piece of vocabulary. Equally important, the role of a tutor should be present at all times because learners should be given constant direction and should be advised on how well they are doing and what the next step will be.

This first part of the issues concerning the literature has been complemented with studies related to the subject in order to use the present investigation with the theoretical support to enhance better understanding.

One of these studies was developed by Wong (2008) with the purpose to investigate how age influences Chinese students in their motivation to learn English. For this study 109 participants between the ages of 13 and 19 were chosen. The conclusions obtained from this investigation, shows that older students in fact are more motivated to learn English in comparison to the younger learners. Likewise, younger learners should be more encouraged by the teachers and peers in order to reach a higher degree of motivation. On the other hand it was found that teachers should provide extra attention in the amount of feedback given since it is very important for students' progress of learning. By providing the feedback needed, it was showed that students become more self-confident in learning English.

Another study by Cluck and Hess (2003) was developed in order to find out whether intrinsic motivation can be taught or learned by using the multiple intelligence approach. Participants at this investigation were 471 students and five teachers in Chicago Illinois. As a method used for this investigation, the five teachers taught five classes, four days a week and one day for monitoring a study hall. Students were taught common classes and they were pull out of their lesson to receive intensive ESL classes. Students' progress was assessed from surveys and teachers' check lists filled during observation sessions. In order to make the lesson more interesting for the students, teachers made multiple intelligences classes with a variety of material and cooperative work tasks. Conclusions showed an increase in their motivation in completing their assignments, in participation, and in their engagement in to the lessons. In addition, students were able to choose the way they wanted to learn. More likely, students enjoyed their lessons when they had the opportunity to choose their favorite activity

from all the multiple intelligence activities. What was more interesting, parents noticed their children's enthusiasm when they talked about their lessons at home. As for the conclusions, the authors found out that teachers who used different multiple intelligences tasks will surely activate the learners' motivation bringing up outrageous results for their own benefit.

Bahous, Bacha and Nabhani (2011) developed a study about students and teachers point of view about the aspects that hinders motivation in English language classrooms. The sample chosen for this investigation were thirty students between the ages of 18 and 21 attending an ESL program at the university and they were studying different careers. Students that were taking the ESL course were not happy with their results and the contents learned due to the fact that they found the activities developed were too repetitive and at some extent inefficient. Also, teachers often complain about students' low performance and incapacity to reach the objectives imposed in the course syllabus, which, with no doubt, hindered students' motivation. Researchers used both qualitative and mixed- method to gather information thorough out interviews and semi structural surveys. In the same way, students' and teachers' comments were recorded when they mentioned the subject matter. As a result of this study, researchers found that some of the students did not feel the need to learn English and that it did not help them with the other subjects of their career. In fact, the only skill that it was mentioned by the participants was writing, leaving aside the other three main skills (reading, listening, and speaking). Furthermore, the majority of students did not want to have these courses as a mandatory subject. In fact, some of them prefer to have them as an optional class. To sum up, teachers and students were very unhappy with the outcomes of the English program at the university. Students' lack of motivation in the subject were due to the fact that the courses focused a lot more on writing for academic purposes not giving enough importance to the other skills and its necessities. On the other hand, teacher believed that,

students did not appreciate learning how to write properly. Furthermore, teachers stated that the material used for this course was not interesting and did not catch the students' attention.

Moreover, Bernaus, Wilson and Gardner (2009) conducted a research about, "students' motivation and achievement in English and their relation to teacher's motivation and strategy used in the classroom". The samples picked for this study were 694 students and 31 English teachers in a city of Spain. As a method, researchers used a questionnaire for the teachers. In the first part of the survey, 26 of the strategies that the teacher may use in the classroom were listed and teachers had to rate frequency from never to always. Twelve of those items referred to strategies to activate better communicative competence which were considered to be the most innovate strategies. The other fourteen items referred to strategies that focused on language form and were considered as traditional strategies. In the second part, students were asked to answer a questionnaire by rating how frequent teachers develop the 26 strategies mentioned in the teachers' questionnaire. Third, students were asked to develop two achievement tests; one to evaluate their listening skills and the other one their reading skills. The findings emerged in this study, confirmed that motivated teachers will use innovate strategies in their lessons which will enhance students' motivation and their achievement will increase its level. In other words, teachers' and students' motivation to learn English go right handed with the use of effective and interesting strategies which will automatically improve students' performance in the target language.

In a like manner, Noels, Clemet and Pelletier (1999) conducted a similar research about students' perceptions on teachers' communicative style and how it relates in their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. For this study, 79 Anglophone students whose age ranged from 18 to 36 in Canada were chosen as the sample. As a method for this research, a questionnaire was used divided in three sections. The First part focused more in measuring the students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The second part, measured the different variables

and their importance in second language learning. Lastly, the third part, consisted on measuring students' perceptions about their teachers. The result found, indicated that strong intrinsic motivation relates to positive learning results and even high sense of self competence. Students who were motivated intrinsically did not show high levels of anxiety during the leaning process. Furthermore, students' perception of the teaching style performed by the teacher, related to students' intrinsic motivation in the way that teachers who were controllers of the class and providing little information, hindered the learners' intrinsic motivation.

Method

Setting and participants

This research was done in an Ecuadorian catholic high school in the city of Macas Province of Morona Santiago. The sample of the population chosen was a total of one hundred students and five teachers from the eighth to the third year of senior grade. The students' age ranged from 11 to 18 years old.

Procedures

The research and selection of the bibliographic information to substantiate scientifically research work for this process were books and studies as primary sources.

During the process of this investigation, qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect information. Out of all the institutions visited, one school was chosen in which five different courses were selected randomly to be part of this process. Twenty students from each course were asked to answer a questionnaire regarding their motivation towards English lessons.

Additionally, five classes were observed in order to obtain extra information that could contribute to this study. The instruments used to collect the necessary data were students' questionnaires and observation sheets. Once all the information was gathered, the data collected was tabulated by hand and then it was transferred to an excel table in order to come up with statistical results.

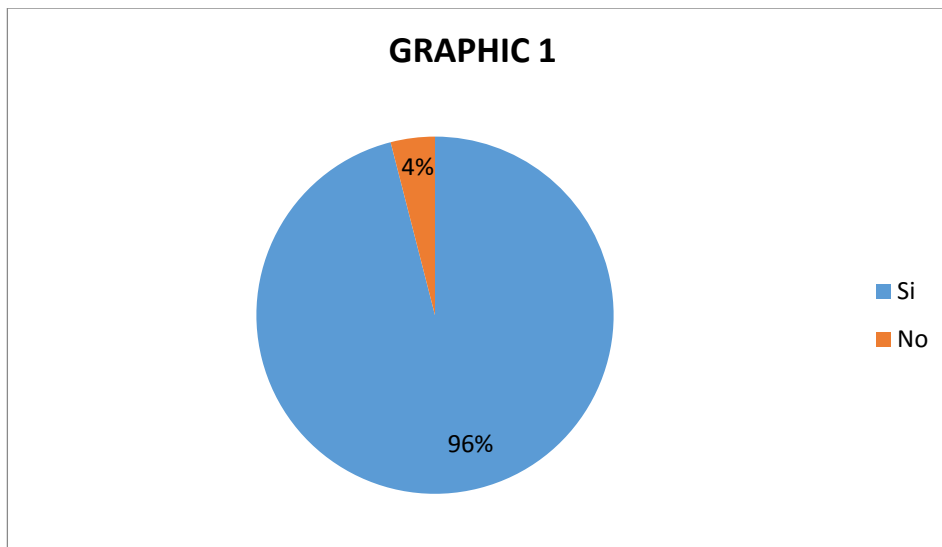
The data collected was individually tabulated on excel sheets with its statistical percentages and graphics. Each graphic was described, analyzed and interpreted supporting the results obtained from the students' questionnaires and the observation sheets. Moreover, all the results were analyzed and supported.

Discussion

Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

What do you think motivates students to learn English?

Do you like to learn English?



Author: Jose Jara

Source: Students' questionnaire

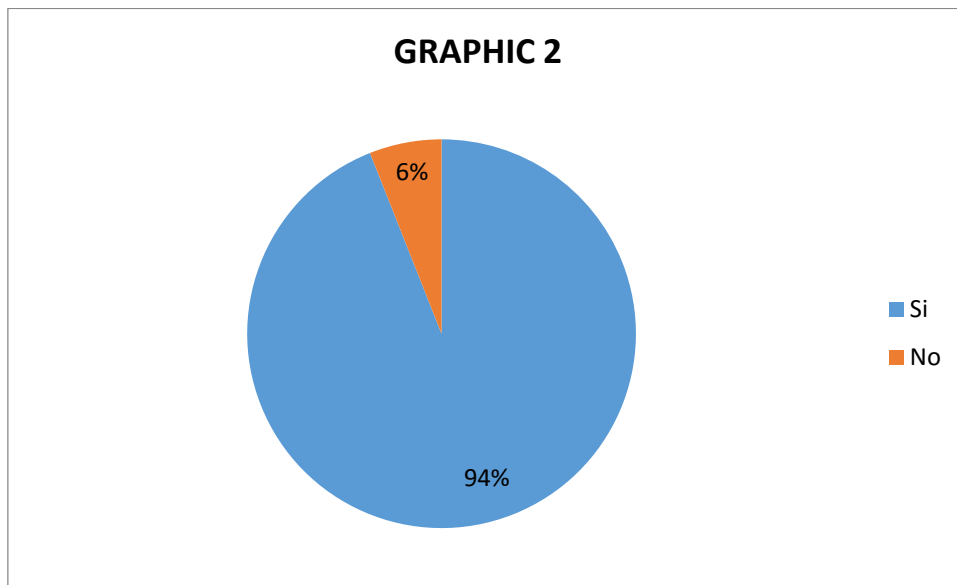
As it is shown in graphic one, it can be seen that 96% of the students stated that they like to learn English. The main reasons that participants described were that they are aware of the importance of learning a second language and for the opportunities that learning English will bring to their lives in the future. This result relates with Harmer (2011) who states that “extrinsic motivation is caused by any number of outside factors, for example, the need to pass an exam, the hope of financial reward, or the possibility of future travel” (p.51).

On the other hand 4% of the students' affirmed that they do not like to learn English because they feel it is a difficult language to learn, it is boring or they just do not feel it is necessary.

Likewise, during four out of the five lesson observations, students seemed to be motivated to learn the language and very interested in the activity taking place. This

motivation is due to the fact that the topics being taught were of the students' interest such as fashion, famous people, etc. and most importantly they most likely seemed motivated.

Are you motivated to learn English in class?



Author: Jose Jara

Source: Students' questionnaire

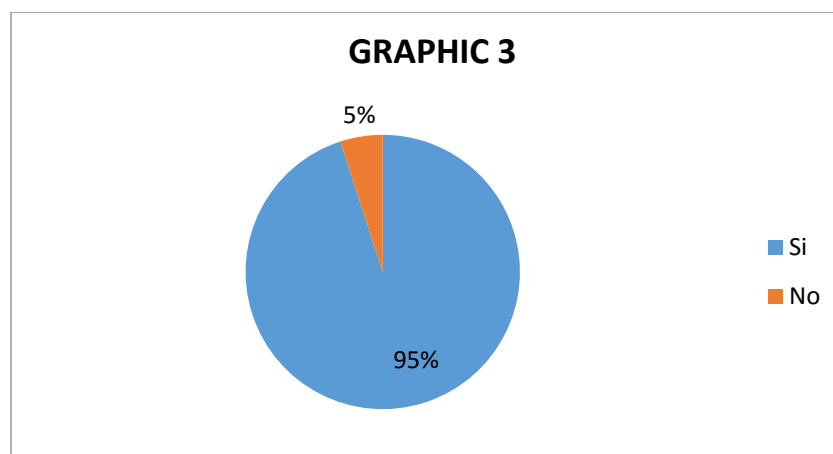
As the graphic above shows, 94% of participants affirmed they are motivated. Most students agree that the teachers and the dynamics used during the class enhances their motivation to learn the language. At the same time, their desire to be talking English fluently in the future triggers their motivation to practice and learn more. In fact, during the lessons observed it was noticeable that students from higher school years, such as second and third year of high school, are more interested and motivated in learning the language.

Such analysis agrees with the researchers Nation and Macalister (2010) who state that "motivation is a very important determinant of the amount of time, involvement and effect that learners give to learning" (p. 50).

However, 6% of the participants stated that they do not feel motivated to learn English. This percentage it is almost the same as the number of students who stated that they

do not like to learn English in item number one. According to their responses, they do not feel motivated because they do not understand the subject and have a hard time getting involved with the contents and activities.

Do you like your teacher's way of teaching English?



Author: Jose Jara

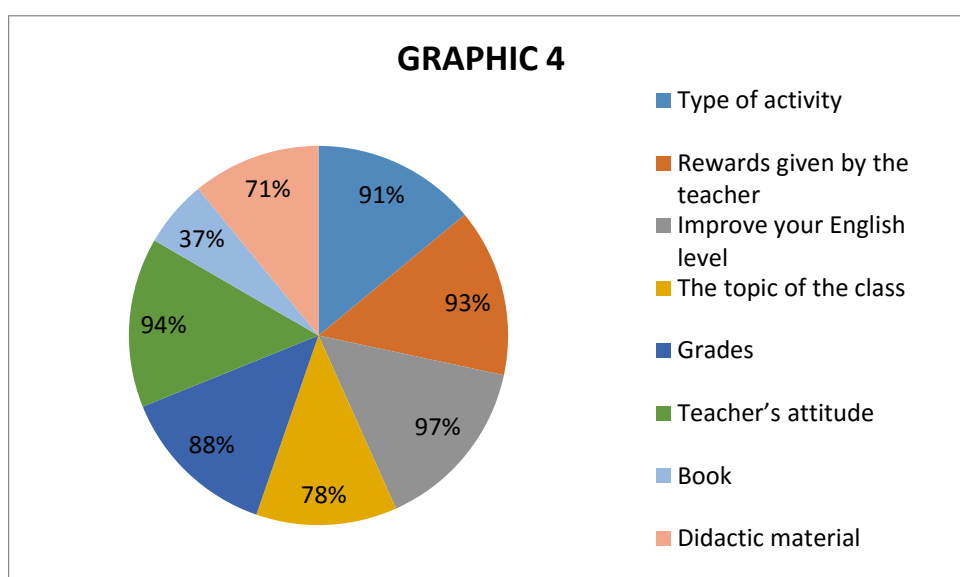
Source: Students' questionnaire

As it can be observed in graphic 3, 95% of participants stated that they like their teachers' style of teaching. Some characteristics about their teacher that students mentioned the most were: dynamic, innovative, patient, creative, fun, collaborative and most importantly motivational. In the same way, in the lesson observed it was evident that the teacher handled the class very efficiently. Students were very attentive, participative, and motivated in the lesson given. Most teachers in general conducted the class in a very significant way. Some of them had very unique ways to compensate their students for their participation and enthusiasm with motivational phrases. Some others were very dynamic using creative strategies to keep students involve in the class development. Such findings relate with Harmer (2001) who affirms that "with the classroom a role may change from one activity to another, or from one stage of an activity to another. If we are fluent at making these changes

our effectiveness as teachers is greatly enhanced” (p. 57). In other words, teachers’ attitude and approaches are of vital importance for better English language acquisition.

Different from the results mentioned above, 5% of the participants affirmed that they do not like how their teachers conduct the class. According to their answers, they feel that the teacher is not dynamic and they do not understand the topics being taught.

Do the following aspects motivate you to learn English in class?



Author: Jose Jara

Source: Students’ questionnaire

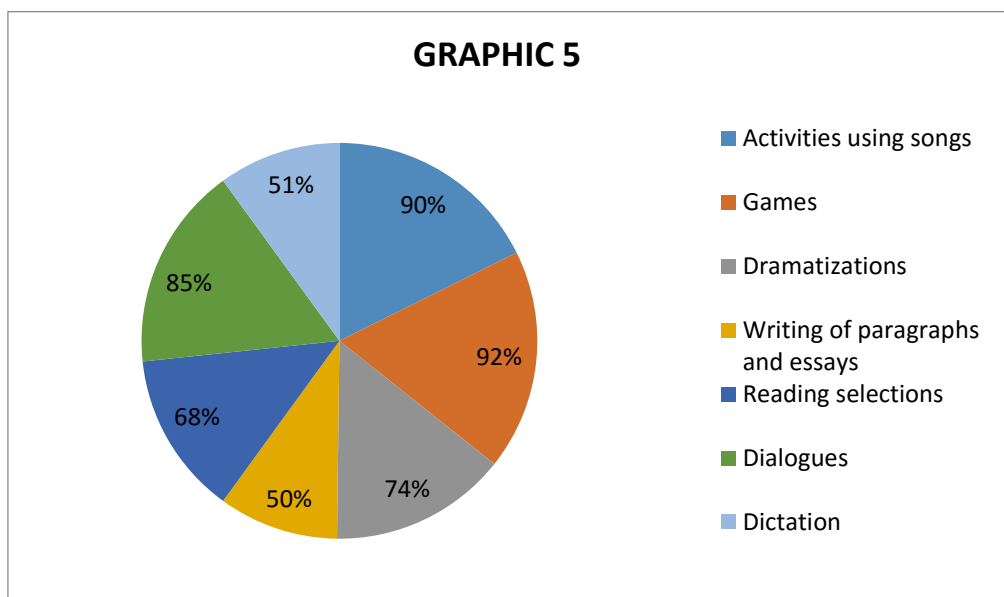
In the question number four, students were allowed to mark different aspects that they considered important in order to motivate them to learn English. The type of activity, rewards given by the teacher, improve your English level and teachers’ attitude were the four aspects that most students agreed were important in order to motivate them to learn English in class.

The results above relate to Nation and Macalister (2010) who affirm that in order to have students involved with the lesson, teachers should “make the subject matter of the lesson relevant and interesting for them” (p. 52). In the same way, the two authors mention that “reward learners’ effort in a class through praise and through attention from the teacher, is

very important to keep students motivated” (p. 52). Likewise, as it can be observed in graph 4, the aspect students find that motivate them the most is to improve their English level. This result relate with Harmer (2011) who affirms that “the desire to achieve some goals is the bedrock of motivation and, if it is strong enough, it provokes a decision to act” (p. 20).

During the lesson observations, it was evident that the aspects that contributed to the students’ motivation the most were the teachers’ attitude and the activities developed. The combination of these two qualities in the lessons certainly increased the motivation among students because it maintained the class fluent and vivid.

Do the following activities motivate you to learn English?



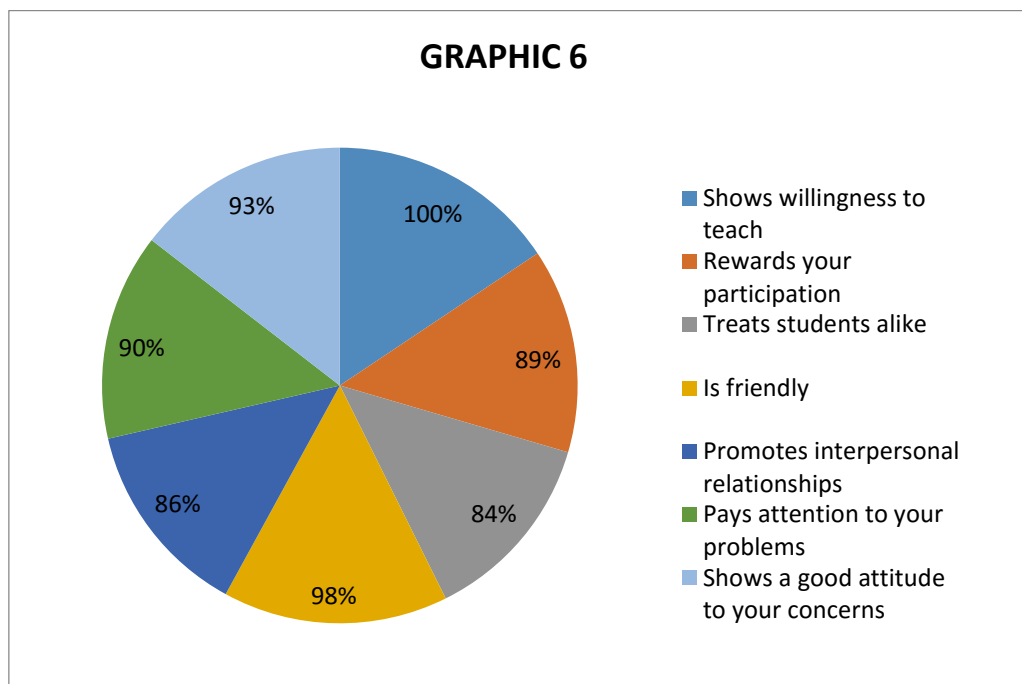
Author: Jose Jara

Source: Students’ questionnaire

As it is shown on graphic 5, students agree that games, activities using songs and dialogues are among the activities that motivates them to learn English the most. Such selections prove that students prefer activities in which they have the opportunity to learn in an interactive and fun manner.

For example, in an observed class one of the teachers developed an activity with karaoke in which the participants were allowed to choose a song in English and sing it in front of their classmates. With this activity, students showed a very low level of anxiety and seemed to be engaged with the activity taking place and they were definitely enjoying the class a lot. Such experience relates with Harmer (2011) who affirms that “intrinsic motivation comes from within the individual. Thus a person might be motivated by the enjoyment of the learning process” (p. 51).

What is your teacher’s attitude in class?



Author: Jose Jara

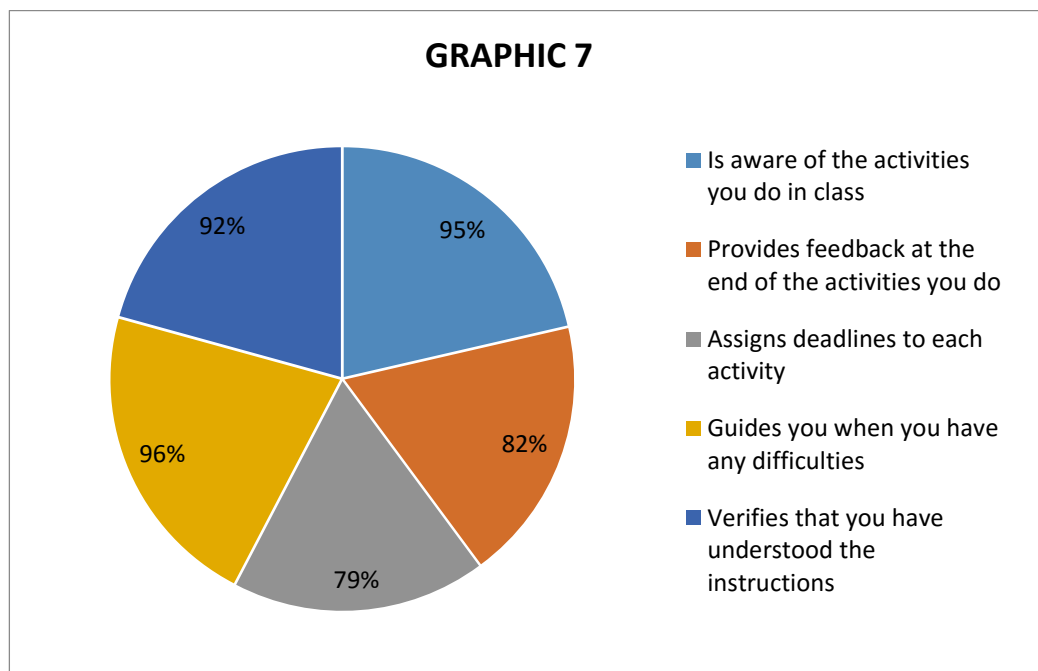
Source: Students’ questionnaire

As it can be observed in graphic number 6, students have a very good opinion about their English teachers. 100% of students believe that their teacher shows willingness to teach. 98% feel that their teacher is friendly and 93% agreed that their teacher shows a good attitude to their concerns.

Such results were easily observed during the class observations where most teachers were very dynamic and it could easily be seen that they had a very good relation with their students. In fact, all teachers had a very friendly attitude even with the less participative ones.

Such qualities of a teacher relate with Ryan and Cooper (2010) who state “Many people believe that the teachers’ personality is the most critical factor in successful teaching. If teachers have warmth, empathy, sensitivity, enthusiasm and humor, they are much more likely to be successful than if they lack these characteristics” (p. 171).

What is the role of your teacher in class?



Author: Jose Jara

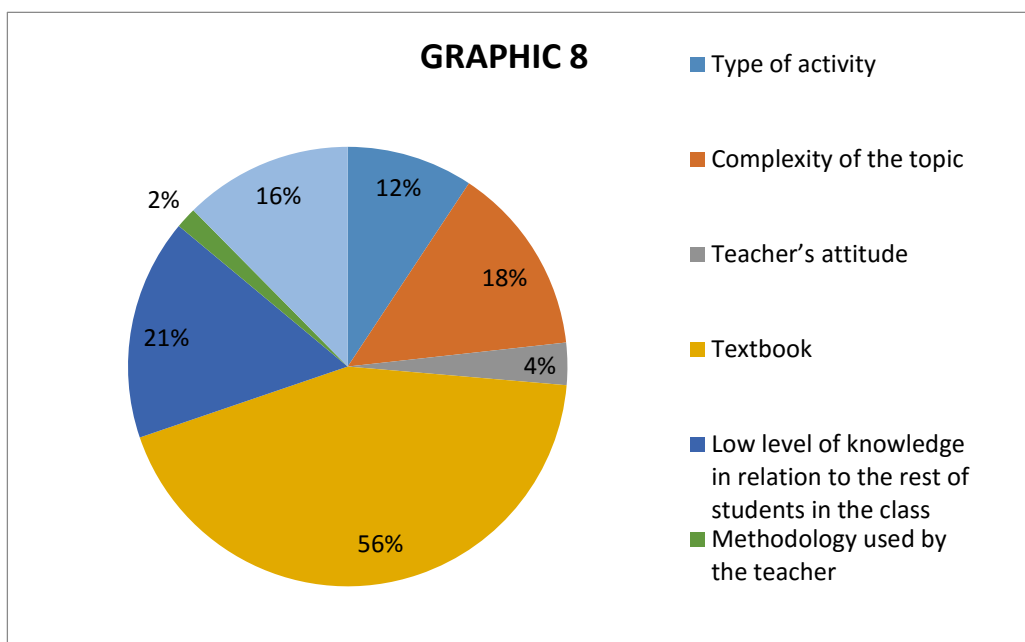
Source: Students' questionnaire

For question number seven, participants were able to mark more than one option. The graph 7 shows that 96% of the students affirmed that the teacher guides them with the topic when they have difficulty. Furthermore, 95% stated that teachers are aware of the activities done by the students during class. At the same time, 92% feel that their teacher verifies that they have understood the instructions given. With a lower percentage, 82% of the students

coincide that the teachers provides feedback at the end of the activities, and last but not least 79% marked that the teacher assigns deadlines to complete any activity. These findings demonstrate that English teachers have a clear knowledge about the different roles that a teacher should have in order to maintain students' motivational levels increasing. Harmer (2001) suggests that the role of a teacher can greatly enhance if he or she adopts the following roles: controller, organizer, assessor, prompter, participant, resource, tutor, and observer. All these roles should be adopted depending on the activity taking place but, according to this author, knowing when to use them is the key to succeed at teaching and have motivated students. Despite the fact that it can be difficult to view all those qualities in a teacher during one lesson observation, it was very visible that teachers have a very competent way to manage their classes.

What do you think hinders students to learn English?

Mark with an X the aspects that hinder your English learning. State the reasons of your responses.



Author: Jose Jara

Source: Students' questionnaire

The last question on the students' questionnaire provides very important information regarding the aspects that hinders participants' motivation to learn English. According to the results obtained, 56% of students stated that the aspect that does not contribute to their willingness to learn English as a foreign language is the textbook established by the Minister of Education of Ecuador. The most common reasons mentioned by the students were that the textbook is not detailed enough for them, it is not appealing in content, it confuses them, it is found boring and not as interesting as other books they previously have used and, in fact, some teachers and students have found grammar errors.

This result is very interesting because choosing an appropriate textbook for the learners is as important as choosing a good teacher. Harmer (2007) states that "with a good course book, there is a strong possibility that the language, content and sequencing in the book will be appropriate, and that the topics and treatment of the different language skills will be attractive" (p. 146). This result matched with most of the classes observed as when the teachers asked to take their books out it was very noticeable that hindered the students' motivation. Therefore, the teachers did not use the textbook very often because of the students' negative attitude towards the text.

Conclusions

- Most students like and are motivated to learn English as a foreign language because they are aware of the importance.
- The main aspect that motivates students to learn English is the desire to improve their English level.
- English teachers' attitudes and strategies used in the classroom contribute positively to students' willingness to learn the English as a foreign language.
- Students feel motivated to learn English by using dynamic activities such as songs, games and dialogues.
- The textbook used in the classrooms is the main factor that hinders students' motivation.
- The low level of knowledge in relation to the rest of students in class is an aspect that hinders the students' motivation to learn English.

Recommendations

Continuous motivation to students on the importance of improving their English level for their future.

Find ways to analyze the students' textbook and choose a book that may be appealing to the students.

Teachers should make the lesson relevant and interesting for the student so they are always motivated to learn English.

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Annex 1



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad
Católica de Loja

OPEN AND DISTANCE

MODALITY ENGLISH

DEGREE

Dear student,

The aim of this brief questionnaire is to obtain information concerning *your opinion about the aspects that motivate you to learn English.*

The information provided will be strictly used in academic/research purposes. Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible.

Informative data: Please fill in the information below

Name of institution :			
Type of institution:	Public ()		Private ()
Year:	8 th	9 th	10 th
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd
City:			

Instructions: Mark with an X the response that best reflects your personal opinion. Indicate the reason of your response.

1. Do you like to learn English?

YES	NO
WHY?	

2. Are you motivated to learn English in class?

YES	NO
WHY?	

3. Do you like your teacher's way of teaching English?

YES	NO
WHY?	

4. Do the following aspects motivate you to learn English in class?

Aspects	YES	NO
Type of activity		
Rewards given by the teacher		
Improve your English level		
The topic of the class		
Grades		
Teacher's attitude		
Book		
Didactic material		

5. Do the following activities motivate you to learn English?

Activities	YES	NO
Activities using songs		
Games		
Dramatizations		
Writing of paragraphs and essays		
Reading selections		
Dialogues		
Dictation		

6. What is your teacher's attitude in class?

The teacher:	YES	NO
shows willingness to teach		
rewards your participation through stimuli and encouragement expressions		
treats students alike		
is friendly		
promotes interpersonal relationships		
pays attention to your problems		
shows a good attitude to your concerns		

7. What is the role of your teacher in class?

The teacher:	YES	NO
is aware of the activities you do in class		
provides feedback at the end of the activities you do		
assigns deadlines to each activity		
guides you when you have any difficulties		
verifies that you have understood the instructions		

8. Mark with an X the aspects that hinder your English learning. State the reasons of your responses.

Type of activity		Why?
Complexity of the topic		Why?
Teacher's attitude		Why?
Textbook		Why?
Low level of knowledge in relation to the rest of students in the class		Why?
Methodology used by the teacher		Why?
Number of students in the class		Why?

Thank you!

Annex 2



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja

OPEN AND DISTANCE MODALITY
ENGLISH DEGREE
Observation Sheet

INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
YEAR:	

1. Students feel motivated to learn English in class.

YES	NO
Why?	

2. Mark which of the following aspects motivate the subset of students observed to learn English in class.

Aspects	YES	NO
Type of activity		
Rewards		
The topic		
Teacher's attitude		
The book		
The material		

Notes:

3. Students' attitude in the class

The students:	YES	NO
voluntarily participate		
are attentive to the teacher's explanations		
interact with their classmates		
show interest in the proposed activities		
engage in other activities		
interrupt their classmates		
look for excuses to leave the class		

4. Teacher's attitude in the class

The teacher:	YES	NO
shows willingness to teach		
rewards students' participation		
treat each student equally		
is friendly		
promotes interpersonal relationships		
pays attention to the students' problems		
shows a good attitude to the students' concerns		

5. Teacher's role in the class

The teacher:	YES	NO
is aware of the activities students do in class		
gives feedback at the end of the activities		
assigns a time limit to each activity		
is friendly with the students		
guides the students when they have any difficulty		
verify that students have understood the instructions		
is fair with all the students		
provides confidence for the students to voice their concerns		

6. The following activities motivate the students to learn English.

	YES	NO
Activities using songs		
Games		
Dramatizations		
Writing of paragraphs and essays		
Reading selections		
Dialogues		
Dictation		

Others:

7. The following aspects hinder students to learn English.

	YES	NO
Type of activity		
Complexity of the topic		
Teacher's attitude		
Textbook		
Low level of knowledge		
Methodology used by the teacher		
Number of students in the class		

Others:
