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“Students’ perceptions on the factors that influence their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL classroom in Ecuadorian high schools”

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

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Febrero, del 2016

APROBACIÓN DEL TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

Doctora.

María Olivia Arias Córdova.

DOCENTE DE LA TITULACIÓN

De mi consideración:

El presente trabajo de titulación: “Students’ perceptions on the factors that influence their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL classroom in Ecuadorian high schools” realizado por Guarnizo Rosillo Ángel Esmeli, ha sido orientado y revisado durante su ejecución, por cuanto se aprueba la presentación del mismo.

Loja, febrero de 2016

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DECLARACIÓN DE AUTORÍA Y CESIÓN DE DERECHOS

“Yo, Guarnizo Rosillo Ángel Esmeli, declaro ser autor(a) del presente trabajo de titulación: “Students’ perceptions on the factors that influence their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL classroom in Ecuadorian high schools”, de la Titulación de Ciencias de la Educación mención Inglés, siendo la Dra. María Olivia Arias Córdova directora del presente trabajo; y eximo expresamente a la Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja y a sus representantes legales de posibles reclamos o acciones legales. Además certifico que las ideas, conceptos, procedimientos y resultados vertidos en el presente trabajo investigativo, son de mi exclusiva responsabilidad.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to God, to my lovely parents, and, also to my dear sons, who strongly supported me during this challenging path in order to reach my goals.

Ángel

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I would like to say thanks God, who gave me faith and strength to continue and achieve this purpose.

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Abstract

The study “Students’ perceptions on the factors that influence their willingness to orally communicate in the EFL classroom in Ecuadorian high schools” is aimed to analyze students’ insights about the different aspects that affect speaking skills in educational institutions in Ecuador where English is taught.

To facilitate the process of investigation, the qualitative and quantitative approaches were used. The qualitative method was applied to gather information, as well as to describe and interpret the results. The quantitative approach was utilized for statistical and numerical data. The sample was taken by applying questionnaires to 100 students belonging to 5 English classrooms in a public night school in Quito. Pupils’ age ranged between 17 to 36 years old.

The analysis of the results evidenced that although oral communication is a willing task where most of the students participate, one third of the surveyed learners avoid doing it, due to the fear of making mistakes in front of their peers and being teased. The outcomes also showed that some pupils are not able to practice this skill because of their low level of proficiency.

Key words: EFL Students’ Perceptions, Willingness to communicate, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Ecuadorian High Schools.

Resumen

El estudio "Las percepciones de los estudiantes sobre los factores que influyen en su disposición a comunicarse oralmente en aula EFL en las escuelas secundarias del Ecuador" está dirigida a analizar las apreciaciones de los alumnos acerca de los diferentes aspectos que afectan la habilidad de comunicación en las instituciones educativas en Ecuador donde se enseña el idioma Inglés.

Para facilitar el proceso de investigación se utilizaron los enfoques cualitativo y cuantitativo. El método cualitativo se aplicó para recopilar información, así como para describir e interpretar los resultados. El enfoque cuantitativo se utilizó para los datos estadísticos y numéricos. La muestra se llevó a cabo mediante la aplicación de cuestionarios a 100 estudiantes de diferentes clases de inglés en colegios secundarios nocturnos en la ciudad de Quito. La edad de los estudiantes oscilaba entre 17 a 36 años.

El análisis de los resultados evidenció que a pesar de que la comunicación oral es una tarea en donde la mayoría de los estudiantes participan, un tercio de los alumnos encuestados evitaron hacerlo, debido al temor a cometer errores frente a los demás y de ser objeto de burla. Los resultados también mostraron que algunos alumnos no son capaces de practicar esta habilidad debido a su bajo nivel de competencia.

Palabras claves: Percepción de Estudiantes de Inglés, Disposición para Comunicarse, Inglés como Idioma Extranjero (EFL), Colegios Ecuatorianos.

Introduction

Speaking English has become a necessity in our globalized world, since most of the scientific information, business affairs, scholarships and other programs are conducted in English. The process of teaching-learning English language implies that educators have a high level of proficiency that includes communication skills to make that students get involved in interesting tasks that improve interaction among all the participants into the class.

In spite of the fact that many teachers are able to get students' motivation to be involved in speaking activities pupils during English lessons in high schools in Ecuador, students are not able to acquire the desire knowledge to communicate in the target language (Toro, 2014).

To this concern, the Ministry of Education of Ecuador has implemented some projects in order to make that English teachers acquire the language proficiency (B2) according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and, also learn new teaching techniques to be applied into the classroom that will improve students' English language competences (Mosquera, 2012).

The main purpose of this study is aimed to establish the students' perceptions on the aspects that affect their disposition to speak English inside and outside the classrooms through three important inquiries: How does motivation influence students' willingness to orally communicate? How does proficiency level influence students' willingness to orally communicate? And, how does personality influence students' willingness to orally communicate?

There have been some studies worldwide that have analyzed the possible factors that inhibit students to develop speaking activities during English lessons. One of them was the one developed by Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide and Shimizu (2004), which main objectives were

to find out attitudes and willingness of Japanese English learners to orally communicate in the foreign language in different environments as well inside and outside the classroom, and to analyze the aspects that affect communicative behavior in order to explore deeply students' learning motivation and confidence to communicate effectively in the target language.

Among the limitations, the authors mention that the study's extent was not enough in order to elucidate if there was connection between learners' confidence and L2 competences. They also mention that the methods used in the study were not reliable and the variables used during the research need to be restructured.

The second study that was taken into account was the one directed by Dörnyei & Kormos (2000) which principal goal was to explore how motivational affairs influence quantitative and qualitative learners' performance to orally communicate during pair work activities.

There were some limitations when developing this project: it was found that students had better capacity of discussion when the tasks were developed in their mother tongue. It did not happen during the activities in the second language. The incidence of the intervention was also relative to the quantitative methods of debate and the use of pragma-linguistic indicators.

A third study was the one conducted by Juhana (2012) which was focused on the psychological aspects that interfere with students' disposition to speak in the target language during the English classes; and then, to find out and implement the ways to surpass the problem.

During the investigation, the researcher encountered some limitations: students had a poor vocabulary which caused that they experiment stress and a high level of inhibition to develop speaking activities during the lesson time and fulfill the questionnaires.

The development of the current thesis project is intended to help people involved in

teaching English as a foreign language or second language as: English teachers; English area coordinators; high school headmasters, educational researchers and also it will serve as a basis for future investigations related to the English teaching-learning process and its competences.

Additionally, it is to say that the present research presented some limitations: Students experienced some difficulties to understand and select only one kind of personality according to the surveys. On the other hand, the observations were restricted in its extent which did not permit to the investigator to draw reliable outcomes. It is good to recommend that future researchers can have more opportunities to observe the English classes in order to establish the real situation regarding oral communication.

Literature Review

This section presents a scientific overview of some of the most outstanding factors that influence high school students' disposition to orally communicate in English as a foreign language: Motivation, proficiency level, personality and teaching speaking. In addition, some previous studies related to the theme of this investigation have been analyzed. This data will be used as a support during the analysis of the results of the current research.

Motivation

Motivation is the “driving force behind all actions of an organism.” According to Pandey (2005) “motivation” is a strong desire and enthusiasm to participate during the learning process which make that learners develop class activities in the best way. Some studies have demonstrated that teachers who apply appropriate strategies within the lessons, influence positively on students' willingness and get more engaging time to carry out tasks into the class. Accordingly, it is one of the most important tools to succeed during the process of learning a second language.

Similarly, Harmer (2001) refers that motivation is determined by how strong is the desire that somebody has to obtain something. He also claims that motivation can be extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation refers to outside factors, for instance: to pass a test; to travel or to study abroad. Intrinsic motivation deals with an internal wish to do something that makes people feel better. This kind of individuals show enthusiasm for learning and most of the time have a positive attitude.

Additionally, Harmer (2001) points out that the teacher plays an important role on students' engagement when learning a second language. Even though extrinsic motivation deals with outside factors affecting students' attitude, learners' motivation depends on how strong is the level of confidence among teachers and students inside the classroom, the

methods teachers apply must be the adequate in order to make that students feel comfortable during the learning process.

Likewise, Dweck and Elliot (2005) refer that motivational atmosphere inside a class is constructed by a mutual and continuous communication among teachers-students and students-students as well. They suggest that even though students' interests differ from one to another and it is difficult for teachers to find material to please everyone, the only way to get students' motivation is by choosing interesting material according to learners' age. Additionally, the researchers imply that there are many interesting ideas to success in English classes but sometimes teachers are limited to use old fashion curriculums based most of the times on textbooks.

Proficiency level

The Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR) is a pattern which is utilized to refer to students' accomplishments when learning a second language in Europe and other countries all over the world. Its main purpose is to offer approaches of teaching, learning and testing, under six reference levels of proficiency. (Wikipedia)

The Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR) classifies learners in three groups (A-B-C). Each group is divided in two levels (A1, A2; B1, B2; C1, C2) which describe what a student is able to do according to the four skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing.

A1 (Basic user) Beginner: "Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce themselves to others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where they lives, what people people knows and things they have. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly is prepared to help".

A2 (Basic user) Way stage or elementary: “Can understand sentences and frequently use expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment), can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters, can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need”

B1 (Independent user) Threshold or intermediate: “Can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans”

B2 (Independent user) Vantage or upper intermediate: “Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party”

C1 (Proficient user) Effective operational proficiency or advanced “Can express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes”

C2 Mastery or Proficiency (Proficient user) “Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations”

Personality

For a long time psychologists and scientists have spent time to find out what personality is. According to Berens and Nardi (1999) “personality” is a series of features or individualities that establish the differences or similarities between one from another when people act, feel or think according to their own beliefs. They infer that there are 16 types of

personalities as follow:

Promoter Executor (ESTP)

This kind of personality (Extraverted Sensing Thinking Perceiving) deals with being very creative; love challenges; like doing something and perform tasks very often. It does not matter how difficult it is, this kind of people find the way to solve any problem. They are mentally busy all the time. Nevertheless they do everything through people, they also work effectively individually. They never stop and ask for help if they need it. They are good mediators; they try to make that all the people involved in any activity feel comfortable. They take high risks but if they realize they will not obtain good results they do not doubt in change their mind to do something different. They appreciate being rewarded; they are organized and like to create something that looks nice; they elude to work with people they do not admire. They usually choose people to work with and enjoy acting as advisors.

Analyzer Operator (ISTP)

People (Introverted Sensing Thinking Perceiving) are active to solve problems, observe how things work; have talent for using tools for the best approach; consider the different possibilities before making a decision and follow intuition and feelings; they usually do the work in advance. In difficult situations they are very logical and analytical. Since they are good observers, they find out opportunities and improve them. They like to be competitive and flexible to make things that will have impact. Order is not a big deal for this kind of people although they can do it well. Things can make sense if they have fun at doing it. They put passion and enthusiasm on the different things they do. Usually, they love doing things as a contribution. In other words the activities they develop have to be meaningful.

Motivator Presenter (ESFP)

This personality (Extroverted Sensing Feeling Perceiving) entails performance, action,

desire to help others, to make them act and get what they want but enjoying the process. This kind of people makes the difference in the world. Experts in entertaining; love freedom; learn about people; like taking risks and challenges. Experiencing and act but in order of importance according to their own beliefs and values. Organize systematically to obtain effective outcomes. Sometimes they go back on time to recycle past practices and look for details. Interpret and analyze situations to interconnect them to other frameworks or circumstances.

Composer Producer (ISFP)

People (Introverted Sensing Feeling Perceiving) take advantage of chances and situations, stay with what they consider important. Good at managing problems. Although they are reserved, they are easy to make good and loyal friends but only when they know people. Good listeners, enjoy giving and taking from relationships. Have personal style and construct their own self-esteem, peaceful to handle different situations in life; dislike tedium and disrespectful. Love competition and to be rewarded by something they do well but immediately. They are workaholics, perfectionists and appreciate people help; like impressing others with their projects.

Implementor Supervisor (ESTJ)

This kind of character (Extroverted Sensing Thinking Judgment) involves a high sense of responsibility, ethic and organization, not only from themselves but from the others in the same way. They can manage several projects at the same time; love taking care of others; feel satisfaction when people appreciate their effort; things have to make sense and be rational, on the contrary it can be frustrating for them.

Planning is challenging and exciting as long as people get what they need. Dislike when people are late to do something; hate wasting money and time; feel impatient and disappointed when things do not go as expected because of the others. Dismiss people who do

not help to the purpose. This kind of people can generate leadership by giving to the others responsibility and recognizing awards when they see others' effort. They relax only when tasks are done.

Planner Inspector (ISTJ)

People who belong to this kind of personality (Introverted Sensing Thinking Judgment) take responsibility by planning, organizing and monitoring activities until getting the goals. They like helping others; working as volunteers in the community; experiencing and acting according to what they consider important, taking into account values and beliefs. They organize systematically everything in order to obtain effective results. They go back in time to review past situations that can help them in the present; interpret and analyze situations to interconnect things to future frameworks. Have intuition to anticipate possible implications and probable results. Join other people to the project but taking into account group opinions.

Facilitator Caretaker (ESFJ)

People in this group (Extroverted Sensing Feeling Judgment) have willingness to accept and help others to obtain what they need. Admire the others' success. Ensure that people feel comfortable and involved when doing something; love having good relationships and maintain people together. Sometimes they go back to the past to review details that can help to current projects; act according to their beliefs and values; analyze, categorize and evaluate taking into account principles; deduce results and connections to apply them in other circumstances. Utilize their intuition to anticipate positive or negative outcomes.

Protector Supporter (ISFJ)

This kind of people (Introverted Sensing Feeling Judgment) are trustable and conscious; have a high sense of responsibility; like helping others to solve their problems; feel

happy if their guidance really aids the other person; enjoy making some friends but like being alone as well. Family is very important for them. Avoid being notice by others because like coming and going at will. Do their best and can't stand people who do not. Being organized and structured are some of their strengths; prioritizing is important to leave things and pick them up the next day. Dislike compliments face to face. Have an uncommon sense of humor and love laughter.

Strategist Mobilizer (ENTJ)

Belonging to the group of Extroverted Intuitive Thinking Judgment, people of this category are leaders, very talented to direct and manage people to get the goals with a strong sense of organization. Enjoy building well-structured and proficient systems; establish rules; coordinate actions; and prioritize things in order to achieve objectives. Have talent to coordinate several projects at the same time. Anticipate and find out probable results and inferences; analyze and evaluate under principles. Revise past practices and search meticulously for some information which helping in current projects.

Conceptualizer Director (INTJ)

The conceptualizer director (Introverted Intuitive Thinking Judgment) maximizes achievements. Organizing, structuring and analyzing towards goals are strengths of this kind of personality. Love challenges not only to accomplish something but to experience solving problems. They try to solve things from different perspectives, integrates experience to never make the same mistakes again. They intend to be competent at any situation, program their mind to do it well. Autonomy and respect are big deals; ideas and creativity need to be awarded not only for their success but to the others'. Upset when people do not do things correctly. If their lives are not well emotionally, work could be very difficult to develop.

Explorer Inventor (ENTP)

People who belong to this group (Extraverted Intuitive Thinking Perceiving) are inventive, talented at constructing patterns; developing concepts into practical and original strategies. Enjoy the creative process; finding new ways to make that systems work effectively. Trust in their capacity and always look for new projects; take advantage of some situations and contacts to use them in other context; analyze, classify and evaluate according to beliefs. Use details of past practices; Predict situations and implications; organize things for effective results; and value importance according to what they consider worthy.

Designer Theorizer (INTP)

People in this group (Introverted Intuitive Thinking Perceiving) have talent for design and redesign something; imagine constantly how things function; go to the bottom of things; good at working in groups, do not show enthusiasm when doing something; sometimes they can be seen as defiant. Be honest and integral are some of their characteristics; have visual intelligence; they can be seen as heartless and unsociable; solve personal problems by themselves. Love learning all the time and enjoy working with people who think in the same way but express better.

Envisioner Mentor (ENFJ)

For envisioner mentors (Extroverted Intuitive Feeling Judgment) life deals with having good relationships and helping others to grow; feel empathy; seek opportunities to grow together; use the intuition to join the past and the future; have talent to see the potential in others influencing them to learn. Easygoing to connect with people but sometimes it becomes in a limitation to their own growth so they can get lost; it is important for them feeling understood, needed, reassured and recognized; usually act as advisors; they can get that others feel easy and open mind. They think that helping others is their life's mission. They can easily

feel affection for others. Learning from relationships is important for them but sometimes it can be hard.

Foreseer Developer (INFJ)

This kind of personality (Introverted Intuitive Feeling Judgment) inquire for more knowledge; have always something in mind; tend to find the purpose of life by helping others to grow; they really make the difference in the world; caring people is the best thing they can do; making good and deep relationships especially if people think like them. Act as guiders; organize things to accomplish goals; they are good observers and good listeners; they usually analyze people and make assumptions; watch how people act before doing an approach. Empathy and honesty are some of their strengths.

Discover advocate (ENFP)

According to the authors this type of personality (Extroverted Intuitive Feeling Judgment) deals with inspiration, looking for significance at motivating people. Perceptive and enthusiastic; interested in what people have to say, intuitive to discover deceitfulness in others and hidden thoughts. Organize ideas systematically toward getting the goals; value and give importance to something according to beliefs; make connections considering others to the group; review past situations to look for details; predictive about possible outcomes.

Harmonizer Clarifier (INFP)

The harmonizer clarifier belongs to the group of (Introverted Intuitive Feeling Perceiving) which deals with having talent for listening; relating stories and metaphors. Intuition to discover what is trustable. Organizing and structuring to maintain their lives in order. Look for agreement and do the things well; like learning in an interactive way; need to have some connection with somebody or something that make worth; brainstorming is one of the characteristics of this kind of personality and discuss about them. Dislike joking; invest

their time in solving problems. Feel motivated when something has importance and value.

Teaching speaking

Teaching speaking refers to get that learners can be able to communicate efficiently through the target language and interact to express their beliefs; emotions, needs and so on. Unlikely, academic speaking activities are absent in many classrooms since most of the times speech is controlled by the teacher and learners with high level of competency. In addition, some curriculum programs do not include speaking activities that help the students to practice conversational skills.

To this concern, Crawford and Zwiers (2011) imply that there are five essential communication abilities that help the learners in the classroom to produce academic language through contents: elaborating and clarifying; supporting thoughts; building challenging ideas; paraphrasing; and, synthesizing. Besides, the author mentions that through conversational activities students can learn from one another, connect with their own and others' ideas; change their minds; construct and apply these ideas to their daily lives. These kind of activities motivates students to learn; techniques such pair group or small groups improve speeches into the classroom. Another activity to be practiced in pairs is "unpredictability" which make conversational tasks more interesting due to the partner does not know what to expect from the counterpart.

Similarly, Burns and Goh (2012) imply that gaps activities are frequent strategies to practice real-life communication. To develop information gaps tasks students are provided with some material as: printing handouts, video text; pictures; flashcards, etc. Then students must follow some directions: a) understand the information they are given; b) explain to one another what information they require; c) communicate orally with their classmates about the information they have; d) ask to the other students if something is not clear; e) ask for

repetition as many times as necessary; f) complete the gap task with the required information. During the speaking task, learners are able to practice some activities such as describing, comparing, listing, summarizing, and explaining, using their own resources or preparation to achieve this kind of tasks.

Some studies related to how motivation, proficiency level, and personality influence on the use of English language in speaking activities have been researched in order to clarify concepts and give support to this project.

One of them was conducted by Yashima and Shimizu (2004) which main objective explored communicative behavior in intercultural contact situations inside and outside the classroom. Examine the factors that affect learners' communicative behavior and the relationship among confidence in communicative tasks as well as learners' motivation.

The study was carried out in Kyoto. The sample was taken by choosing 82 high school pupils matriculated in 1999, and 84 students who were enrolled in 2000. All of them studied at a high school in Kyoto and their teachers were native speakers of the English language. The second sample involved 57 high schools learners who participated in a year-long study abroad program in the United States. Students' age ranged between 15-16 years old. Some questionnaires were applied to both groups during one year period.

The results of the research show that there is a positive connection among international position and international willingness to communicate in the second language. They also evidenced that motivational and affective variables regarding to the willingness to communicate in the target language and communication behavior are closed related.

The second study was directed by Dörnyei and Kormos (2000) which principal aim was to assess how motivational aspects influence the quality and quantity of learners' performance in a second language classroom during communicative activities

developed in pair groups.

The methods used to carry out this study was a spoken questionnaire which was done by means of an interactive problem-solving task which was developed in pairs in order to stimulate oral opinions related to daily school subjects. All of the gather information was obtained through students' English classes. All of the activities were recorded and transcribed.

The outcomes conclude that the quantity of speech was widely influence by motivational factors but did not exert the same power in quality. Also, it was evidenced that if low task-motivated learners had high task-motivated partners, they could do their best according to the number of arguments they had to perform.

The third study that was considered was conducted by Juhana (2012) which main purposes were: to discover the psychological factors that inhibit students from speaking abilities; to find out the possible reasons to this weakness; and to find out solutions to surpass the problems.

This project was accomplished in a senior high school in Indonesia. The sample was taken from 62 second grade learners who were surveyed to get information about the psychological factors that affect their speaking abilities inside the classroom. The study applied three methods or techniques to collect data through instruments like: observations, questionnaires and interviews.

The observations were applied to obtain clear evidence of students' participation regarding speaking activities; the questionnaires contain inquiries related to psychological aspects; and the interviews were carried out to collect interesting information about psychological issues that impede that learners develop speaking competency inside the English class.

The study draw some conclusions as follow: there are psychological factors that influence the normal development of speaking activities like: fear of making mistakes, shyness and anxiety. The first one is caused by the fear of being ridiculed by their classmates; the second factor was produced by their kind of personality.

The fourth journal taken into account was the one performed by Kurihara (2006). There are three questions or hypothesis that gave rise to this study: How did student attitudes change in a high school English oral communication class where students were restrained to participate in speaking activities? What inhibit students speaking performance? How could be eliminated the hindering factors to improve speaking competencies?

To facilitate the process of investigation, questionnaires were applied in order to get ideas about students' expectations; two activities that students never have performed before were developed in groups; both in the mother tongue and in the target language. When finishing the tasks, a new set of questionnaires were applied focused on the changes students experienced during the activities. In addition some observations were done.

To conclude, it is to say that students learning attitude was improved by choosing their peers and tools. To take their own decisions make that students become more interactive during speaking activities into the classroom. Autonomy is a form of learning, students attitude changes to the extent they can make their choices.

Finally, the last study presented in this section was leading by Woodrow (2006) who focused the research on the answers to the following research inquiries: "Is a dual conceptualization of second language anxiety according to in-class and out-of-class communication supported? Is the instrumentation measure second language anxiety reliable and valid? Is there a relationship between speaking performance and second language speaking anxiety? What are the major stressors reported by students learning English in

Australia?”

To carry out the study, it was necessary to consider three kinds of resources: quantitative data, taken from the second language anxiety speaking scale; IELTS type oral test; and, qualitative information from the interview report. The surveys contain 12 statements to establish students' real communicative conditions. In addition, 47 learners were interviewed; they were chosen according to year of study, ethnicity, gender, and perception of anxiety. The selected sample participated in a semi-structured interview regarding the level of stress they have experienced during second language speaking.

The research shows that a dual conceptualization of second language speaking anxiety was significant. Besides, the study demonstrated that the instrument used to measure second language speaking anxiety is trustable and valid. It will serve for future investigations especially if applying with learners with low level of proficiency and also with university students at the beginning of their careers in order to establish contextual impacts on second language speaking apprehension.

On the other hand, it was found out that there are an important negative relation among speaking anxiety and oral performance inside and outside the class. Finally, students experienced the major level of stress when interacting with native speakers, and also when they act in front of the class.

Method

Setting and Participants

The present study was carried in the city of Quito. The sample was chosen randomly. One hundred students were selected from a secondary public night school where five English classes with different level of proficiency and 20 attendants per class were selected. The students belonged to first, second and third year of high school and their age ranged between 17 and 36 years old.

Procedures:

To collect the scientific data of the different themes proposed to the elaboration of this thesis project, some books, web sites, journals and others were used to fulfill the required information. Besides, five previous studies related to the theme were researched. The collected material was selected, paraphrased and placed in the Literature Review section in order to give support to the analysis of the results.

A quantitative research design and a qualitative method were used to develop the present study. The qualitative method was used for gathering the information in all of the process, and the quantitative method was used for numerical data. Some surveys were applied to the selected students into the classrooms in order to gather information. In addition, note taking technique and class observation sheets were utilized during the development of the investigation.

The questionnaires consisted of seven short answers and open ended questions that evidenced the students' perceptions on the aspects that affect their oral communication during the English teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools. This information was classified, tabulated and presented in graphs to facilitate the process of analyzing and interpreting the outcomes to finally draw some conclusions and recommendations.

Discussion

Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of the Results

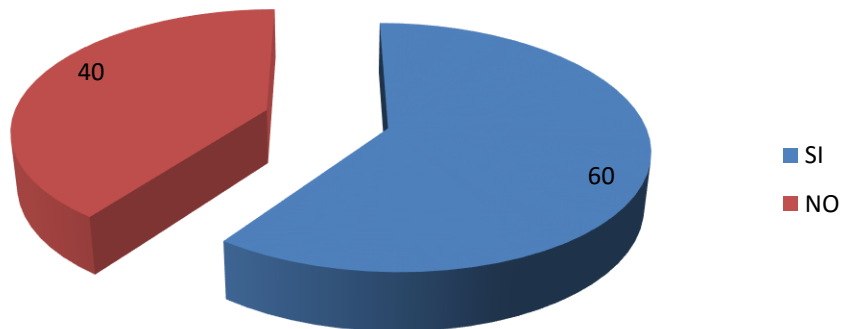
This section intends to analyze, interpret and describe the results obtained through the questionnaires applied to one hundred students in a public high school in Quito. The information is analyzed according to what students answered on the surveys applied and also, taking into account the direct class observations. The surveys contained seven questions that were fulfilled by the students. The results were tabulated and presented in graphs. The analysis respond at the three main questions set as a researching purpose.

Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

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

Do you feel motivated to speak English in the classroom?

Graph 1



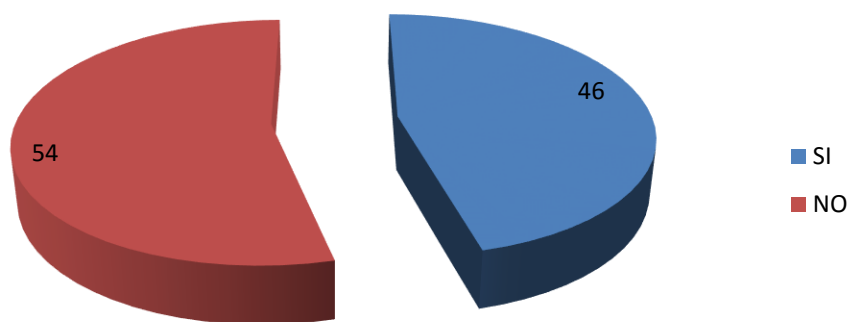
Author: Guarnizo Rosillo, Angel Esmeli

Source: Students 'surveys

The results stated in graph 1 show that 60% of the students answered positively and 40% of the responses were negative, which means that most of the students were engaged in speaking activities during the English lessons. The other 40% do not feel enthusiasm to interact during the class time. Another important fact to be mentioned is that when students were observed, the willingness to participate increased since they like contending with their classmates, they also like showing what they knew and tried to interact the whole time. Even students' mistakes were ignored by their peers. Regarding students' motivation, Pandey (2005) infers that it deals with the wish, enthusiasm, and willingness to participate during the learning process. Besides, the researcher implies that when students are motivated they have a strong desire of being successful. The scientist also mentions: teachers who apply appropriate strategies within the lessons, influence positively on students' willingness to carry out speaking tasks into the class.

Do you feel motivated to speak English with your classmates?

Graph 2



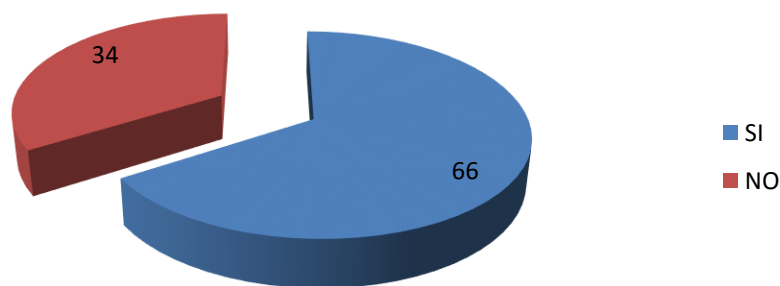
Author: Guarnizo Rosillo, Angel Esmeli

Source: Students 'surveys

When students were asked if they feel motivated to speak English with their partners, most of them (54%) answered negatively. In contrast, 46% of the surveyed learners affirmed they do feel motivated to develop interactive tasks into the class. The observation showed that teachers prefer to make groups by considering students` own preferences which do not help so much to get that all the class interacts efficiently. It was realized that only strong learners participate actively during speaking tasks. To this concern, Dweck and Elliot (2005) states that motivational climate in the classroom is created by a reciprocal exchange of communication that flows constantly between students and teachers and among peers themselves. Additionally, Harmer (2001) points out teachers play an important role on students` engagement when learning a second language. Even though extrinsic motivation deals with outside factors affecting students` attitude, learners` motivation depends on how strong is the level of confidence among teachers and students inside the classroom, the methods teachers apply must be the adequate in order to make that students feel comfortable during the learning process.

Is your participation in speaking class activities voluntary?

Graph 3



Author: Guarnizo Rosillo, Angel Esmeli

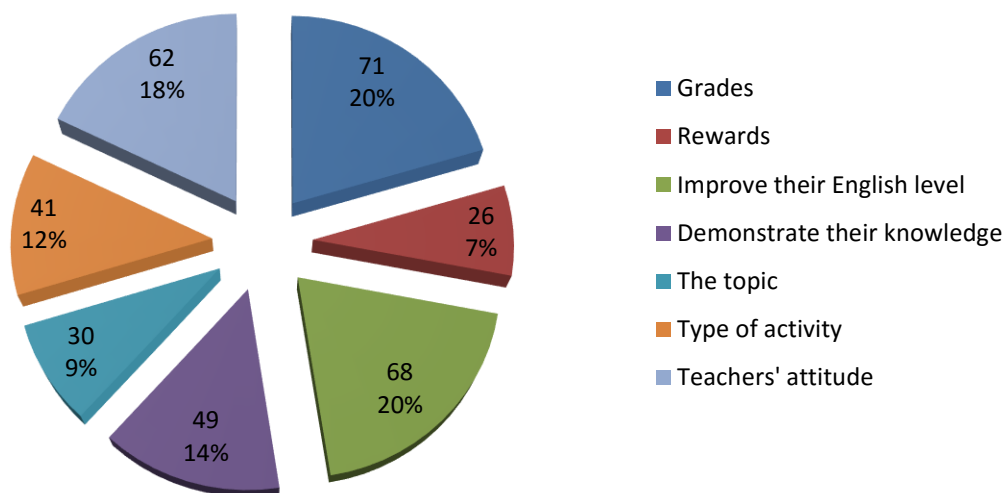
Source: Students` surveys

In graph 3 it can be seen that students' participation in speaking activities is voluntary, since most of the surveyed learners (66%) answered positively, and only 34% of the responses were negative. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that during the class observations most of the students were actively involved in speaking activities. It was also observed that there was a high level of competency inside the classrooms since pupils tried to impress each other.

To this concern, Brown (2001) stated that although spoken language is simple to execute, in some cases it becomes hard due to the lack of students' confidence. Consequently, the level of difficulty that students face during the teaching-learning process could be related according to teachers' methods and techniques used inside the classroom. Therefore if teachers dose the level of difficulty of task activities students may increase their self-esteem which let them to participate more often in oral assignments.

What motivates you to participate into "speaking" activities in class?

Graph 4



Author: Guarnizo Rosillo, Angel Esmeli

Source: Students' surveys

In graph 4, it can be seen the responses and percentages obtained through the surveys. It belongs to seven variables that are taken into account by the learners at the moment of participating in speaking activities inside the classroom. From a total of 347 responses, 71 students (20% of the responses) agree that *grades* motivate them to participate in oral assignments during the class time. The second variable that students considered important was *improve their English level* with a total of 68 scores (20% of the total responses) which evidences that to be highly scored and to make progress at speaking abilities are the major concern for high school students in educational institutions in Quito.

To continue with the analysis of the results it is to say that 62 (18% of the total answers) of the surveyed students asseverate that *teachers' attitude* plays an important role at the moment of practicing speaking activities within the lesson time, since teachers' good mood can influence positively during learning process but on the opposite any hint of disdain can affect students' willingness to practice this skill in front of the class.

The fourth aspect that encourages the learners to participate in oral tasks is *to demonstrate their knowledge* to the others, since 49 pupils (14% of the total responses) favor this tendency. This may be due to some of the observed classes were multilevel where some students were better prepared than others. Another possible reason is that pupils like competitions. The fifth factor that can influence speaking development is *type of activity* with a total of 41 votes (12% of the total answers), which means that less than half of the surveyed students consider important to practice this skill through the application of different methods and techniques that makes the class interesting.

On the other hand, there were 30 marks (9% of the total answers) that clearly demonstrate that *the topic* of the English class is not so important to motivate the surveyed learners to get involved in speaking activities into the classroom. Finally, according to the

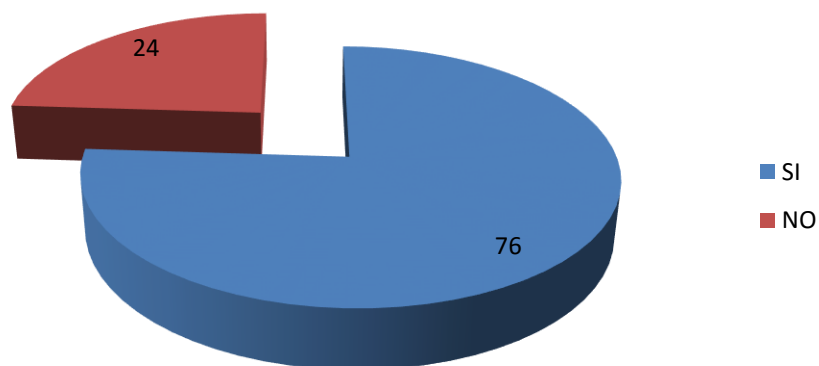
results, only 26 students of a total of 100 students (26% of the responses) imply that recognition or rewards influence learners' attitude to practice speaking skills into the class.

To this concern, Pandey (2005) stated that teachers have little control over students' motivational matters. Nevertheless, researches have shown that teachers may influence student's motivation widely. The survey presents *teacher's attitude* as the third one in order of importance to motivate students. On the same line, Dweck and Elliot (2005) states, motivational factors depend on a reciprocal exchange of messages between students and teachers; and, among students as well.

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

Do you think your English level influence your participation into the speaking activities in class?

Graph 5



Author: Guarnizo Rosillo, Angel Esmeli

Source: Students' surveys

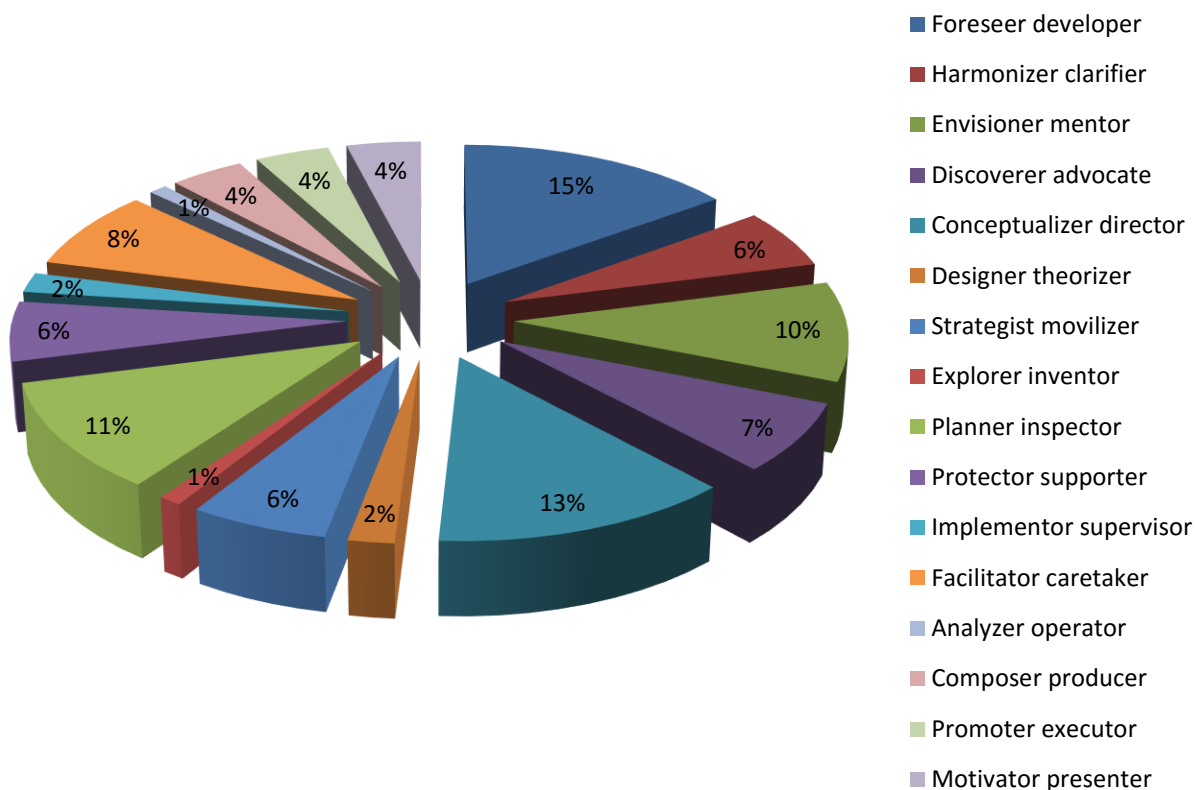
The results stated in graph 5 show that a vast majority of the surveyed learners (76%) think their English level influences their participation into the speaking activities in class.

Most of the students agree their low level of competency in the target language is a barrier that constrains their willingness to speak English in class. During the observations it could be seen that some learners tease each other when making mistakes which inhibit students' participation. This situation occurs due to their low self-esteem which is caused by their low level of English. The other 24% of the students' responses belong to students with a high level of language competency and students who do not believe that their English level affect their participation in oral assignments.

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

What kind of personality do you think you have?

Graph 6



Author: Guarnizo Rosillo, Angel Esmeli

Source: Students' surveys

To analyze the responses in graph 6, it is important to mention that there are 16 types of personalities proposed by Berens & Nardi (1999). Each personality has its own characteristics as well as its strengths and weaknesses. The results obtained through the surveys show that there are a clear tendency toward being a *Foreseer Developer* since 15% of the inquired students affirm they are classified in this group. This kind of personality (Introverted Intuitive Feeling Judgment) finds their purpose of life by helping others to grow. They really make the difference in the world, since caring people is the best thing they can do. They make good and deep relationships. They act as guiders which benefit broadly their own and others' learning.

The following percentage (13% of the responses) belongs to the group of *Conceptualizer Directors* (Introverted Intuitive Thinking Judgment), who maximize achievements, organize, structure and analyze towards goals. They love challenges, try to solve things from different perspectives. They program their mind to do it well; autonomy and respect are essential for them; rewards are also important for this group, but if they are not well emotionally, they cannot work in a proper way.

Then, 11% of the total responses belong to the *Planner Inspectors*. This kind of personality (Introverted Sensing Thinking Judgment) takes responsibility by planning, organizing and monitoring activities until getting the goals. They usually like helping others; working as volunteers in the community; experiencing and acting according to what they consider important but taking into account values and beliefs. Have intuition to anticipate possible implications and probable results.

To continue with the analysis, it was encountered that 10% of the total answers correspond to *Envisioner Mentors* (Extroverted Intuitive Feeling Judgment). Similar to the *Foreseer Developers*, they like helping people to grow. Besides, the *Envisioner Mentors* have

talent to see the potential in others influencing them to learn. They think that helping others is their life's mission. This kind of personality is good at participating in group work.

The following percentage (8%) belongs to the group of *Facilitators Caretakers* (Extroverted Sensing Feeling Judgment) who have disposition to accept and help others to obtain what they need; admire others' success; love having good relationships and maintain people together; analyze, categorize and evaluate taking into account principles; deduce results and connections to apply them in other circumstances. All of these characteristics favor the interaction between all the participants in a classroom.

Then, it was found that 7% of the surveyed students belong to the group of *Discoverers Advocates* who are perceptive, creative, intuitive, and usually find out hidden people thoughts. Similarly to this kind of personality is the *Harmonizer clarifier* (6% of the respondent students), who are also intuitive to discover what is trustable and what not; good listeners, and like learning in interactive ways which promote speaking abilities during the teaching-learning process.

According to the results stated in graph 6, six percent of the surveyed learners are *Protectors supporters*, who similarly to *Harmonizer clarifiers* are also good listeners; responsible; and love solving problems. On the other hand, 6% of the responses belong to the group of *Strategist Mobilizers*. In this group, it can be found leaders who are good at managing people with a high sense of organization in order to improve resources and get the goals.

Following with the analysis of the results it is to say that 4% of the total responses belong to the *Composer Producers*. They take advantage of opportunities, creative at solving problems, have their personal style and create their own self-esteem. Another 4% correspond to the *Promoter Executors*, whose main features are talent to negotiate; good advisors; and

like to be in charge of family and friends. Another group with the same percentage (4%) is *Motivator Presenters*, who like taking risks, have talent to show things in a helpful manner, but sometimes misunderstand what other people say.

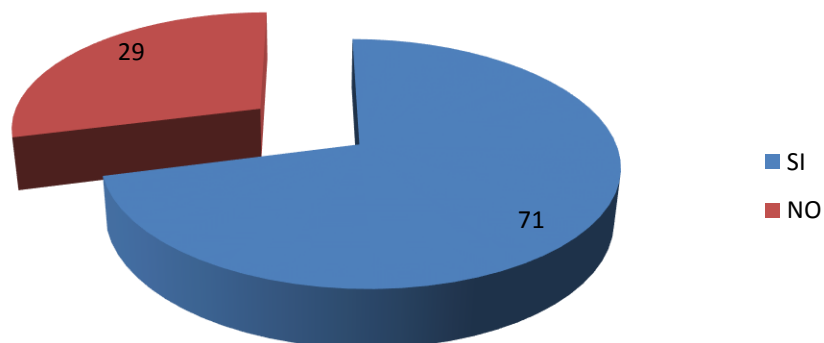
To continue with the analysis, it was found that 2% of the students mention they have characteristics to belong to the group of *Designer Theorizers*. This kind of personality deals with having talent for design and redesign something; good at working in groups, love learning all the time and enjoy working with people who think in the same way. The results also show that 2% of the learners think they belong to the group of *Implementor Supervisors*. People in this group are hard-working, organize things to get the goals, love helping people; have a high sense of responsibility, ethic and organization; avoid wasting time and money when develop a project.

The results stated in graph 6 also show that 1% of the surveyed learners belong to the group of *Explorers Inventors*. They tend to be creative and resourceful; finding new ways to make that systems work effectively; very organized with resources they have in order to find the ways for effective results.

Finally, the outcomes show that 1% of the respondent learners affirm they are in the group of *Analyzers Operators*. The characteristics for this group are: active to solve problems; good observers; talent for using resources for the best approach; intuitive; analytical; order is not one of their strengths, but things they do need to make sense in order to be performed.

Do you think your type of personality influence your speaking class activities?

Graph 7



Author: Guarnizo Rosillo, Angel Esmeli

Source: Students' surveys.

According to the results, most of the surveyed students (71%) think the characteristics of their personalities influence directly on their participation in speaking class activities. They believe the different aspects of students' personality help or inhibit their willingness to participate actively in oral tasks using the target language. Only 29% consider their temper is not an obstacle to develop oral assignments during the learning process.

The direct observations made in the classrooms show that in fact, learners act according to their character. Most of the students felt confident to speak in the target language during the oral lessons even though they made some mistakes at their participation. Some others do not interact although they have the proficiency to answer correctly.

Conclusions

The results of the present investigation evidence that there are many factors that inhibit or help the students to participate actively during speaking activities, but motivational aspects play an important role into the class.

The outcomes demonstrated that the majority of students felt self-motivated to speak English in class. They like competition and being noticed inside the class. It is important to mention that according to the observations, motivation depends basically on the methods and techniques teachers apply to increase the learners' interest to participate actively.

The analysis of the results also showed that speaking English among peers is not a priority for students during the class time. Some reasons were that students felt ashamed of making mistakes and being teased by their peers, so they avoid practicing this skill.

The research evidenced that *grades, improve their level, and teachers' attitude* have a great importance for learners to get involved in speaking activities inside the class since most of the surveyed learners coincide in these points.

Nevertheless, the results of the present investigation showed that the level of competency of the target language affects students' willingness to speak English in class, during the observations it was noticed that most of the learners interact even if their English knowledge is poor.

Finally, the results highlighted the importance of taking into account students' personalities into the teaching-learning process since most of the students agree their personality help or inhibit their participation into speaking activities inside the class.

Recommendations

High school English teachers should encourage students-students interaction by applying some methods and techniques that foster speaking abilities into the class. For instance, activities like pair group; role plays, discussion groups among others are meaningful activities that make that all the students, especially shy learners get involved and acquire confidence when practicing oral skills inside the class.

To overcome that low level of competency in the second language affect students' participation into the class, teachers should apply some strategies to make that high level learners help low level ones during speaking tasks, especially in group works.

Being that students consider their personality influence their speaking abilities and participation in class, teachers must pay more attention on learners' individualities to design and apply interesting speaking activities that involve the whole class.

Finally, in order to teach a second language it must be mandatory that English teachers as well in public as in private educational institutions where English language is taught in Quito have B2 level of proficiency according to the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFR).

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Annexes



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 on how motivation, proficiency level, and personality influence on the use of the English language in speaking activities.*

The following information will only be used for academic/research purposes. Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible based on the following criteria.

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 feel motivated to speak English in class?

YES
NO Why?

2. Do you feel motivated to speak English with your classmates?

YES
NO Why?

3. Do you voluntarily participate in speaking activities during the English class?

YES
NO Why?

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

Type of activity	()
Rewards	()
Improving your English level	()
Demonstrating your knowledge	()
The topic of the lesson	()
Grades	()
Your teachers' attitude	()

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

YES
Why? NO

6. What type of personality do you have? Mark just one option.

1	Foreseer developer: they overcome their differences and get along with others. They are also practical when solving problems.	()
2	Harmonizer clarifier: They discover mysteries and have ways to know what is plausible.	()
3	Envisioner mentor: they are communicative people and share values. They are also intuitive and enjoy creative processes.	()
4	Discoverer advocate: they explore perceptions and respond to them through a creative process.	()
5	Conceptualizer director: they imagine reasons behind things that happen. They are also independent and it is difficult for them to interact with others.	()
6	Designer theorizer: they are talented at designing and redesigning. They activate their imagination, discover, and reflect on the thought process.	()
7	Strategist mobilizer: they are leaders and organize resources to achieve progress. They properly manage time and resources.	()

8	Explorer inventor: they are creative and clever. They try to be diplomatic.	()
9	Planner inspector: they make plans and take the responsibility. They cultivate good qualities and do the right things.	()
10	Protector supporter: they realize what is necessary and valuable. They are very good at listening to people and remembering things. They feel anxious when people ignore the rules or do not have good relationships with others.	()
11	Implementor supervisor: they are talented at bringing in chaotic situations. They self-educate and have a working attitude.	()
12	Facilitator caretaker: they accept and help others, recognize the success of others and remember what is important.	()
13	Analyzer operator: they actively solve problems and need to be independent. They act intuitively	()
14	Composer producer: they take advantage of opportunities. They are creative problem solvers and have their own personal style.	()
15	Promoter executor: they are talented at negotiating they like to act as counselors and take care of their family and friends. They feel disappointed in disrespectful people.	()
16	Motivator presenter: they are talented at presenting things in a useful way. They Respect freedom and take risks. Sometimes, they misinterpret the intentions of others.	()

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

YES
Why?

NO



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja
MODALIDAD ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA
TITULACIÓN DE INGLES

Observation sheet

INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
GRADE:	

1. The students actively participate in speaking activities in the English classroom.

YES
Why? NO

2. The students like to talk in English with their classmates.

YES
Why? NO

3. The students are self-motivated to participate in speaking activities.

YES
Why? NO

4. ¿Which of the following aspects motivate the students to participate in speaking activities?

Grades	()
Rewards	()
Improve their English	()
To impress the class with their knowledge	()
The topic	()
Type of activity	()
Teacher's attitude	()

¿Why?

5. Which types of speaking activities do teachers use in the classroom?

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

6. The students' knowledge of the language influences on their participation in speaking activities.

YES
Why?

NO

7. The students' type of personality influences their participation in the speaking activities.

YES
Why?

NO