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Factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process in  
Ecuadorian public high schools

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## CERTIFICACIÓN

Doctor

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DIRECTOR DEL TRABAJO DE FIN DE TITULACIÓN

C E R T I F I C A:

Que el presente trabajo, denominado: “Factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian public high schools” realizado por la profesional en formación: Abad Calva Rosa Marlene; cumple con los requisitos establecidos en las normas generales para la Graduación en la Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja, tanto en el aspecto de forma como de contenido, por lo cual me permito autorizar su presentación para los fines pertinentes.

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Rosa Marlene Abad Calva

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to **God** for giving me the opportunity to live and to be with me every step I take to strengthen my heart and illuminate my mind and for having put in my way to those people who have been my support and company throughout this large period of study.

My **parents** who are the most important pillar and for always demonstrating me his love and affection.

My **husband** who has been by my side giving me love, confidence, and unconditional support in order to go ahead and complete another stage in my life.

And my **daughters** who are the reason to continue improving day by day to achieve my most valued ideals of overcoming.

Marlene Abad

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Finally, an extensive gratitude to the prestigious **University Técnica Particular de Loja** whose doors are open with the aim of preparing students so that they can deal with a competitive future and be useful in society.

Thanks to all of you!

Marlene Abad

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## ABSTRACT

This research was aimed at analyzing factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process. Its general approach is quantitative. The research was conducted in five Ecuadorian public high schools in Lago Agrio in 2012. The sample was drawn from fifteen teachers from 8<sup>th</sup> of basic education to 3<sup>rd</sup> year of senior high school. The data was collected through observation forms, surveys, and interviews.

During the process, fifteen classes in public high schools were observed; fifteen teachers were both interviewed and administered a questionnaire; and fifteen students were applied a survey. For the interpretation of results, the collected information was examined and analyzed quantitatively, considering what the teachers mentioned in the interview and questionnaire, the answers of the students to the applied survey, and what was observed.

The results of the study reveal that factors concerning teachers, students, classroom, and educational institutions affect directly the process of teaching and learning English in Ecuadorian public high schools.

## INTRODUCTION

English as a foreign language (EFL) in Ecuador has been incorporated in the curriculum of public high schools with the aim of helping students develop their language skills. However, it has been observed that the English level of students is poor when entering the university. It means that they are not able to get an international scholarship to study abroad since their academic performance is limited by their lack of English knowledge. For this reason, it was proposed to investigate factors that affect the process of teaching and learning English in Ecuadorian public high schools, so that, the best solution to this situation can be found.

To accomplish this, specific objectives were set in this study. They are as follows: determine the classroom conditions in which English lessons take place; identify the characteristics of in-service English teachers; and, determine teachers' instructional competence.

Moreover, it is necessary to mention the great importance of investigating factors affecting the English teaching-learning process because it allows us to identify and analyze possible causes and effects leading to a decrease in the study of the foreign language, and on account of this, actions can be taken in order to provide positive and effective EFL teaching and learning.

As a background, it is worth mentioning that previous studies on factors that affect the English teaching-learning process have been conducted. Riddling in 1994 conducted a study to find out whether seating arrangements have a significant effect upon the verbal interaction of teachers and upon students speak behavior. The researcher found that seating arrangement influences participation, thinking, and appropriate comments, which in turn might have positive effects on learning. In this study no limitations are reported by Riddling.



Another study was conducted by Lang (2002) to determine how teachers altered their physical environment and changed their work plans because of the classroom space. In this research it was found that teachers altered their classroom spaces and/or adjusted their routines to meet their pedagogical goals since there were many students learning in a small space and a few learners working in a large space. Regarding limitations, this study was limited to an exploratory case study.

Moreover, language researchers such as Blatchford, Russell, Bassett, Brown, and Martin (2006) conducted a study to determine whether teachers in large and small classes differ in time spent on teaching or instructional activities. Two important findings of this research are as follows: 1) class size affected the overall amount of teaching; and 2) in small classes it is likely to give more individual attention whereas in large classes students are more likely to be one of the crowds. No limitation is reported in the study.

Given the information above about past research, an important point to remark about investigating factors that affect the English teaching and learning process in Ecuadorian public high schools is that the findings will benefit the teachers, educational institutions, and authorities so that they can intervene in the problem by solving it in the most appropriate way. It involves considering students' needs, teacher instruction, institutional equipment purchases, and policies that will enable the learners to succeed in coping with the challenges of the modern world.

In the research study no limitation was found since the observed teachers, the high school authorities, and the students collaborated and provided useful help to create an environment conducive to investigating successfully about factors affecting the English teaching-learning process.

## METHOD

### *Setting and Participants*

This research was carried out in five high schools in Lago Agrio, Ecuador in 2012. The students attending these institutions were boys and girls. The sample was drawn from fifteen teachers from 8<sup>th</sup> basic education to 3<sup>rd</sup> years of senior high school. The sample was appropriate for the purpose of the study since the fifteen observed teachers have been teaching EFL for at least two years.

### *Procedures*

In this investigation, bibliographic and field research were conducted. The bibliographic investigation was carried out both to provide solid evidence from previous and current research and to use it for supporting the description, analysis, and interpretation of results. The theoretical content of the bibliographic research was carefully done by investigating different books and some databases available on the Internet.

As the field investigation is concerned, the general approach was quantitative. During the process, fifteen (15) classes were observed, three in each high school selected over a four-week period. At the end of each class, one student was surveyed randomly. The observed teachers were also surveyed and interviewed. The interview was done to identify their English language proficiency, for which The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) was used. It enabled the teachers to be placed on Basic and Independent Users. In relation to the surveys, they were done for knowing the point of view of the teachers and students about the EFL teaching-learning process. Moreover, instruments to collect data such as questionnaires and observation forms were used.

For the interpretation of results, a quantitative analysis was done to examine the collected data. In this analysis it was necessary to write twenty (20) questions and below each one a graph was displayed to indicate the percentages of what the teachers mentioned in the interview and questionnaire. Furthermore, what was observed during the lessons and the answers of the students to the applied survey were described and analyzed quantitatively in the corresponding question and graph.

## DISCUSSION

### Literature Review

The factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian public high schools are necessary to be considered and investigated. That is the reason to include in this literature review information about the importance of teaching and learning EFL in Ecuador. To start with, it is worth saying that in 2006 El Comercio (an Ecuadorian newspaper) published that more and more Ecuadorians want to study the most common language spoken in the world.

However, in relation to public education, the Secretaría Nacional de Educación Superior Ciencia y Tecnología (SENESCYT), based on a research conducted by The Ministry of Education of Ecuador (MEC), affirmed in 2012 that the English level of Ecuadorian students of public high schools is poor. The reasons reported are as follows: the lack of teachers with a high level of proficiency; insufficient number of professionals in the English language; a national curriculum not designed in accordance with international standards; and the lack of a policy to hire new teachers.

Therefore, the SENESCYT emphasizes that English teachers must be well-instructed and trained to teach through an adequate teaching and learning methodology. It suggests that teachers in Ecuador teach EFL in accordance with international standards technically established that allow students of public education to make their knowledge of English apparent. For this reason, the SENESCYT is at present offering scholarships to EFL teachers of public high schools to provide them with the opportunity to study abroad so that they can improve the teaching-learning process.

Moreover, to improve the student's level of English, the MEC in 2003 made the teaching of English be integrated in the Ecuadorian high school curriculum. The incorporation of English in the high school curriculum has a functional-communicative approach both to developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing language skills and helping the students' minds focuses on receiving and sharing information through their language skills and on communicating socially (MEC, 2003).

Given the above background, an important point to note about the factors affecting the quality of English teaching and learning is that in this literature review some relevant theoretical concepts and past research are described in the section below in order to provide a better overview on this issue.

#### *Teaching Methods and Approaches*

Davies and Pearse (2001) define method as a teaching-learning way which includes specific instructions of activities and techniques to be used. And these authors define approach as a way of teaching which focuses on ideas about language, learning, and teaching. There are several different methods and approaches applied to the teaching and learning of a foreign language. The methods this paper concentrates on are The Grammar Translation Method (GTM), Total physical Response (TPR), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), Content-Based Instruction (CBI), and Task- Based Language Teaching (TBLT). Some of the characteristics of such methods and approaches are briefly described below.

With regard to GTM, Larsen-Freeman (2000) says that the main aim of this method is to learn a foreign language by reading literature in the target language. To accomplish this aim, the learners are taught grammar deductively, i.e. analyzing rules and translating sentences (Brown, 2001; Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards and

Rodgers, 2001). The same authors point out that in GTM vocabulary is learned through a list of words and that reading and writing are the primary language skills taught.

Regarding TPR, Richards and Rodgers (2001) mention that in this method language is attempted to be learned through physical activity; aims are to teach oral proficiency at a beginning level; comprehension is a means to an end; and the fundamental aim is to teach basic speaking skills. A remarkable point to note about TPR is that the target language is used communicatively to make the learners listen to it from the beginning of instruction, and the teacher facilitates comprehension of the language being taught through the use of pictures and occasional words provided in the mother tongue of the learners (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). However, as TPR is targeted at developing listening and speaking skill, “In TPR reading and writing activities the students are limited to spinning off from the oral work in the classroom” (Brown, 2001, p. 30).

Concerning CLT, this method is a means of expressing meaning, and its main role is interpersonal communication (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). According to these authors, in CLT the objectives are set in accordance with the needs of students. Moreover, it is required for learners to know linguistic forms, meanings, and functions as the objective is to communicate in the language being taught (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). The same author points out that the teacher facilitates the classroom communication by making the learners develop communicative activities such as games, role-plays, and problem-solving tasks. In addition, Brown (2001) mentions that in CLT language techniques are applied to have students use the language in a pragmatic, authentic, functional, meaningful, productive, and receptive way.

As for CBI, Richards and Rodgers (2000) say that in this second language (SL) approach, teaching is based on content or information that learners study. In CBI the learning of language is usually integrated with the learning of some other content such as an academic subject matter since it has been observed that academic subjects offer natural content for teaching language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). In fact, Brown (2001) mentions that CBI might enhance intrinsic motivation and empowerment because the subject matter is focused on areas that are important to the student's lives.

As far as TBLT is concerned, it is an approach encouraging the use of tasks for teaching language and for providing a better context for the activation of the students' learning process (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Nunan (2004) affirms that in TBLT the intellectual growth of students is stimulated through the involvement in sequences of tasks. Therefore, as stated by Brown (2001), in TBLT teachers have a well-integrated approach to plan their classes through tasks that learners use out there in the real world. These tasks are focused on developing the students' four language skill according to Brown.

### *Teaching Techniques*

As defined by Brown (2000), technique is an exercise, activity, or task used in the language classroom for achieving the aims of a lesson. Some of the teaching techniques mentioned by Brown are choral repetition in which the students repeat a model given by the teacher or by a learner; student-initiated question used for reviewing material previously taught, diagnosing the skills of the students so that they can stimulate the student's critical thinking; and group and pair activities that help students to interact with all the members of a group.

Other teaching techniques that can be used in the language classrooms are mentioned by Harmer (2001). Demonstration, for instance, is a technique used for offering the students a situation which shows the language in action. Explanation is a technique in which the construction of the language is explained through the use of the board or overhead projector. Accurate reproduction is a technique used for engaging the students themselves with repeating sentences, phrases and new words. A technique called immediate creativity is used for making the learners create sentences of their own.

An Additional set of teaching techniques is mentioned by DeBord (1989). This set is as follows: simulation which reflects a situation found in the real world; role playing in which the learners have well-defined roles including specific times, places, equipment, and rules; and games which can be positive to motivate the students to discover, examine, and learn.

### *Managing Learning*

In this topic, the focus of the literature review is on the importance of instructions, timing, and the feedback. In relation to instructions, Watson (1999) says that instructions are a series of utterances that take part in an activity and are explained verbally. Effective instructions are crucial to develop tasks well; especially those which involve change of interaction such as individual to group work (Stronge, 2007). Moreover, Davis and Pearse (2000) say that instructions are given according to the level of students to make them receive the message clearly.

As for timing, Watson (1999) points out that balancing the time allotted for different activities might be for teachers a key role in achieving success in a lesson.



According to Underwood (1987), educators can consider how much time is necessary for each activity. Indeed, planning the time of a lesson enables the teacher to have good judgments in making choices that affect the timing (Wajnryb, 1992).

Regarding feedback, Stronge (2007) states that feedback is a technique which contributes powerfully to enhancing the pupils' learning outcomes. Through feedback, teachers can correct the student's utterances, acknowledge their response, ask for clarification of their response, and give backchannel cues (Watson, 1999). For Wajnryb (1992), feedback provides motivational and linguistic aspects and cognitive reasons for the response of the teacher because it is linked with the production of the learners.

### *Lesson Design*

An important point to note about lesson design is that Harmer (2001) suggests that before making the lesson plan, teachers consider level of the students, their educational and cultural background, their motivation, their different preferences for learning, the content and organization of the syllabus/curriculum, and the requirements of exams which the students are working towards. In relation to the content of the lesson plan, it should contain a topic, objectives, activities, timing, and materials to develop each activity (Clark Starr 1981; Harmer, 2001; Watson, 1999). Furthermore, Harmer (2001) recommends that class description and timetable fit should be included in the lesson plan since it provides information of who the students are and what can be expected of them. In addition, to encourage the students to meet their needs, the plan should add variety in the lesson, and it might contain teaching strategies, class organization, i.e., whole class, group work, assessment, and assignments (Watson, 1999).

### *Class Size*

In the classrooms teachers might instruct large and small groups. Regarding to large groups, Davies and Pearse (2000) say that achieving good results is quite difficult when instructing large groups since the learners may not be capable of seeing or hearing the teacher well and vice versa; the students' individual practice is reduced; the teacher has to monitor many pairs or groups; and feedback cannot always be given individually on learners' written work. To facilitate the teaching-learning process when instructing large classes, Davies and Pearse suggest getting co-operation from almost every learner of the group, forming teams, with the stronger students functioning as monitors, and adjusting the course objectives to the real situation. Moreover, when instructing large groups, the teacher needs to consider carefully the best way of making the learners actively participate in the entire lesson (Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, and Pincas, 1980).

In relation to teaching small groups, Jeffries and Huggett (2010) mention that the smaller number of students provides an opportunity to know the student's names, their knowledge, learning styles, and previous learning experiences. The same authors say that with the progression of the course, the teacher is capable of assessing the students' comprehension and application of the content of the course. Jeffries and Huggett also says that when instructing small groups, the engagement between learners, the teacher, and the content is encouraged because activities requiring learners to move beyond the recall and recognition of concepts can be introduced.

### *Classroom Space*

McLeod, Fisher, and Hoover (2003) affirm that classroom space affects the instructional program directly since the learners misbehavior might result from the lack of pace in which they work. According to Watson (1999), the overall size of the

classroom, the number of students, and the nature and placement of the furniture and fixtures, i.e. the board, determines the teacher's influence on the classroom space. It means that in a small classroom with many students and fixed chair the teacher can rearrange a little the space in which to work while in a large classroom with few students and movable chairs, the teacher can rearrange much more the space available. Furthermore, Hadi-Tabassum (2006) points out that although classroom space may be symbolic and conceptual, the teacher has to observe how the space separate subjects and objects from one another, and how it may be rearrange differently.

#### *Seating Arrangement*

Clark and Starr (1981) suggest organizing the class according to the activities that students will focus on. For example, these authors say that small circles might be appropriate for committee work, and a circle or some segment of a circle may be useful for speaking practice. Another seating arrangement that teachers can used is a semi-circle of four leaners. Edge (1993) considers this seating arrangement to be helpful because the students can work individually, in pairs, and groups. On the other hand, if the classroom cannot be rearranged because the desks are too heavy, the teacher can do good work with all the students by getting them to look at one another while asking and answering questions (Byrne, 1987).

#### *Classroom and Teaching Resources*

There is a wide range of teaching materials such as teachers' books, realia, the overhead projector (OHP), audio, visual, etc. that can be used in the EFL classes to offer the learners a rich source of language input. For example, Underwood (1987) says that the OHP can be used for fulfilling the function of a board and much more.

The audio tape is another teaching material that Underwood suggests using extensively for making learners practice their English.

As said above, visual material is also used in EFL classes. Watson (1999) says that the board (chalkboard or whiteboard) is the most common visual aid used in the classroom. According to Watson, this teaching equipment can be used for writing practice in which the teacher can underline and circle words, write in capitals, use different colors, show connections, use ellipsis, draw pictures, symbols, diagrams, tables, maps, etc. Another type of visual material is video. As stated by Cunningsworth (1984), video material helps the teacher to make the learners practice English in a very well-contextualized manner since they can see and listen to the language in use. Apart from video, there are other teaching materials used for making the learners see the language in use. These materials include newspaper articles, brochures, tickets, letters, advertisements, and announcements (Cunningsworth, 1984).

#### *Classroom Observation*

Wragg (1999) points out that classroom observation might be a valuable tool for improving the quality of teaching and may benefit both the observer and the person being observed as long as it is done skillfully. Furthermore, classroom observation offers several experiences and processes that can help the teacher to grow professionally (Wajnryb, 1992). The observation of a class can be done by a teacher or a school “as part of a school-based aid program for teaching staff, or beginning teachers, or newly-employed teachers engaged in an induction period” (Wajnryb, 1992, p. 2). Classroom observation can also be handled or conducted by school supervisors with a specific objective. Bailey (2006) says that supervisors observe language classroom in order to see how well the curriculum is coordinated,

assess the performances of a teacher, collect information to encourage the development of the educators, etc.

### *Students' Motivation*

Harmer (2001) defines motivation as an internal drive pushing someone to do something that he or she wants to attain. The same author mentions two types of motivation, namely extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation is caused by several external factors such as needing to pass an exam, hoping to travel in the future, etc. whereas intrinsic motivation comes from within the individual. It means the enjoyment of the learning process itself or the desire to feel better may motivate a learner (Harmer, 2001). Within the same topic, Stronge (2007) states that good teachers are capable of supporting intrinsically motivated students and finding ways to promote extrinsic motivation to learners who need it.

Keeping on discussing about motivation, Rost (2006) emphasizes the importance of motivation in EFL environments. According to this author, all of the conditions which help to acquire SL successfully are lacking in most EFL settings since the learners are not quite enough exposed to English input; they are not likely to have enough opportunities to interact with English speakers; etc. Therefore, the pupils need an extraordinary motivation to learn successfully in EFL environments (Roust, 2006).

### *Learning Styles*

Learning styles are defined by Lefever (2004) as the way in which learners assimilate information to better processes and use it. Some types of learning styles mentioned by this author are imaginative, analytic, common sense, and dynamic learners. Regarding imaginative learners, they like to learn by getting involved with others through interpersonal relationships, by listening and sharing ideas, by seeing,

by sensing, by feeling, and by watching. Referring to analytic learners, they watch, listen, assess information, and plan strategically to learn. As for common sense learners, they put into practice what has been taught by testing the theory in the real world. As common sense learners are hands-on people, they use the ideas of their own to analyze, solve, and fix problems. In relation to dynamic learners, they learn by taking risks, by thriving on situations calling for flexibility and change, and by enjoying something new that was took up.

Other types of learning styles are the ones mentioned by Vermunt (1996), namely cognitive processing, regulation of learning, affective processes, and learning orientations. Learners with cognitive processing styles find reading and re-reading a lot instructional materials the most important processing activities. For students with regulation of learning style, monitoring processes are formed from the difficulties they experience when learning. Learners with affective processes style, in turn, are afraid of not being capable of coping with their studies, dealing with them well, and learning the instructional materials. On the other hand, students with learning orientations have doubts about their ability to achieve something successfully.

To complement the types of learning styles briefly described above, it is worth saying that Clark (1968) mentions learning styles such as visual, aural, and physical. As it is known, visual learners are those who like to learn by retaining information through visual material, i.e., pictures. Aural students learn with the help of listening input such as audio dialogues, songs, etc. Physical learners love to get involved in doing things in order to learn actively.

#### *Students' Intelligence and Aptitude to learn English*

Regarding intelligence, Edge (1983) says that language students' intelligence, knowledge, skills, and expectations are not the same. That is, some learners learn a

language more quickly than others because their attitude toward it is positive, their motivation to learn the language is strong, their practice of it is organized, etc. Also, it is necessary to consider that intelligence is complex because students have different abilities and strengths to learn (Lightbown, and Spada, 1999).

Referring to aptitude, Dunlap (2006) points out that some learners have an innate aptitude for language learning since they learn English more quickly than other pupils. An important point note about aptitude is that Lightbown, and Spada (1999) mention that tests such as The Modern Language Aptitude Test (MLAT) and the Pimsleur Language Aptitude Battery (PLAB) have been used by researcher to investigate whether students will learn a foreign language successfully in the classroom. These tests focus on the view that the components of aptitude are the ability to recognize and memorize new vocabulary, the ability to grasp the function of particular words in sentences, the ability to work out grammatical rules from language instances, and memory for new words (Lightbown et al, 1999). As all the components of aptitude might not be found in students learning a foreign language successfully, teachers need to provide a variety of activities to “accommodate learners with different aptitude profiles” (Lightbown et al, 1999, p. 32).

At this point, it is important to support the fundamental theoretical concepts discussed above with previous research which has revealed several factors affecting the teaching-learning process. Some of the studies conducted by linguistics, researchers, teachers, etc. are briefly described below.

Ridling in 1994 conducted a research in a public school in a Midwestern city in Kansas, Missouri. The purpose of this study was to find out whether seating arrangement have a significant effect upon the verbal interaction of teachers and upon students talk behaviors. Ninety teachers with more than five years of teaching

experience participated in the study. The method was Quasi-experimental. Data were collected through observation. In the research process each teacher was assigned a different seating configuration such as traditional row seating, u-shaped, and split-half seating arrangements. In the study Ridling found that seating arrangement influences participation, thinking, and appropriate comments, which in turn might have positive effects on learning. Ridling recommends that teachers in their own classrooms should investigate ecological variables such as student's density, classrooms of various sizes, etc. to enhance the understanding of classroom ecology.

Lang, another researcher, in 2002 carried out an exploratory case study in an interim school in Washington D.C. The purpose was to determine how teachers mediate their physical environment and change their work plans due to their classroom space. The research involved thirty one high school teachers. In this exploratory case study data were gathered through questionnaires, observations, and interviews. During the process, the amount of teacher personalization to their classrooms was recorded in notes and photographs. One conclusion of this research is that teachers altered their classroom spaces and/or adjusted their routines to meet their pedagogical goals. To lead to the allocation of adequate space for arrangements furnishings and equipment, Lang suggests that a deeper collaboration between teachers and administrators should be necessary.

Moreover, in 2006, Nakabugo, Opolot, Masembe, Samson, and Byamugisha conducted a research to explore issues emerging in the teaching of large classes. This study took place in twenty schools in Kampala and Wakiso Districts in Uganda. The sample consisted of 31 female and 4 male teachers. The method was constant comparative. Interviews and observations were the instruments to collect data. In the research process, thirty five teachers and twenty school administrators were



interviewed and one hundred lessons with classes ranging between 70-80 learners were observed. Nakabugo et al conclude that although teachers might do what is in their means to facilitate teaching and learning in large classes, they would still need institutional and policy support which includes bigger classroom space, sufficient furniture, and instructional materials. The researchers' suggestion is that alternative strategies for increasing learning in large classes should be explored.

Furthermore, Aduwa and Iyamu in 2006 carried out a research to determine the factors responsible for the poor quality of the teaching of English as a second language in public secondary schools. This study was conducted in Nigeria. The sample consisted of three thousand senior secondary school students. The method was quantitative. Data was gathered through questionnaires and observations. During the process, all of the participants were given a questionnaire to examine their experience with the teaching and learning of English language as well as the conduciveness of their school environment to effective learning. Observation, in turn, was done to authenticate the veracity of the given answers. Aduwa and Iyamu found that secondary school students in Nigeria do not learn English language in an environment conducive to effective learning because the learners agreed that the schools are overcrowded, the furniture is not comfortable for proper sitting, and classrooms are without proper lighting and ventilation. The researchers recommend that the learning environment in public schools in Nigeria should be given priority attention by state and federal governments to make the students learn English effectively.

In addition, Blatchford, Russell, Bassett, Brown, and Martin in 2006 conducted a study to determine whether teachers in large and small classes differ in time spent on teaching or instructional activities. This research was carried out in a school in

London. A subsample of children in small (25 or under) and large (31 and over) Year-6 classes and a sample of nine pupils participated in the investigation. The method integrated case studies with qualitative and quantitative approaches. Data collection was based on systematic observations, questionnaires, and case studies. The research process involved observing 257 students and conducting observations in blocks of 10-s time intervals. Two important Blatchford et al' conclusions are as follows: 1) class size affected the overall amount of teaching; and 2) in small classes it is likely to enable more individual attention whereas in large classes students are more likely to be one of the crowds. The researchers recommend that teachers in large and small classes should both develop strategies for more individual attention and recognize the benefits of other forms of learning such as group work.

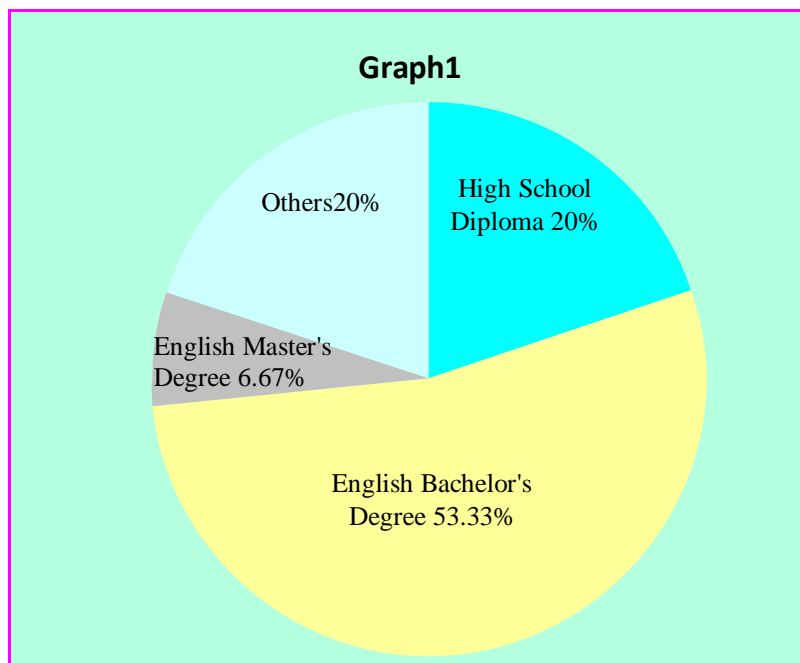
## Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

This section analyzes data gathered through observations, interviews, and surveys applied to EFL students and teachers of the high schools selected. The collected data will be analyzed quantitatively by taking into account four variables which include factors concerning teachers, students, classroom, and educational institutions.

### *Quantitative analysis*

#### *Factors Concerning Teachers*

*Which level of education do you have?*



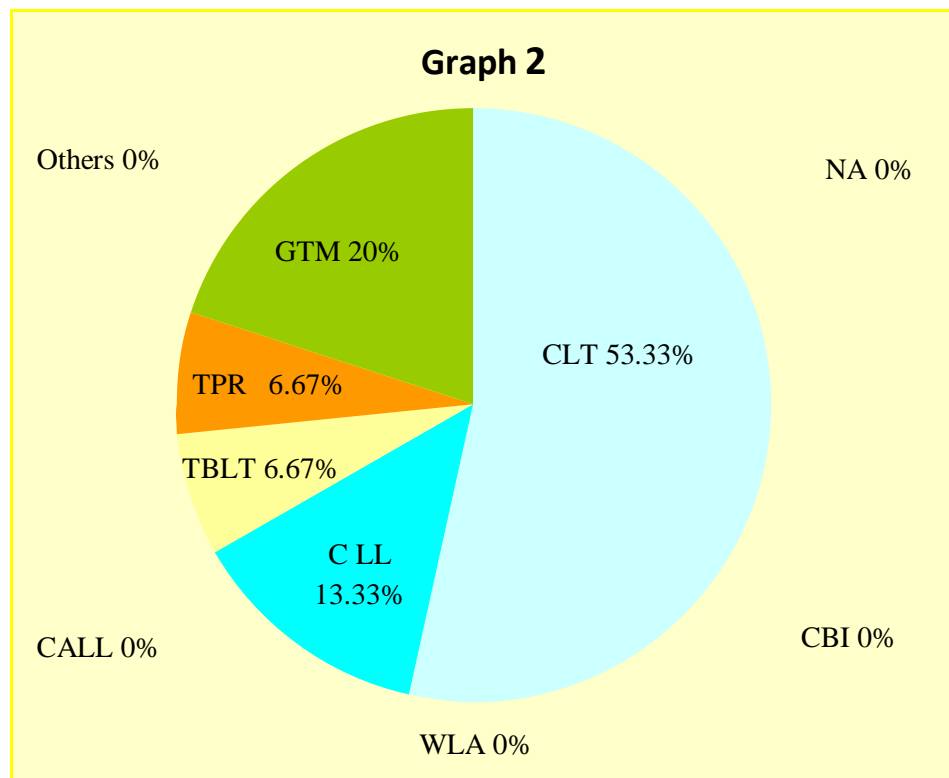
Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Graph 1 indicates that 20% of the observed teachers have a High School Diploma, 53.33% have an English Bachelor's Degree, 6.67% have a Master's Degree, and 20% have others kind of degree such as Executive Management, Enterprises Administration, and Tourism Bachelor's degree.

The results displayed on graph 1 were obtained through interviews applied to the teachers to know both their level of education and English. Based on the interview, the language proficiency of the teachers was compared and analyzed in accordance with CEFR which was used as a means of placing 3 teachers on B1 and 3 on B2. It means that their language proficiency in English is intermediate 1 and 2 respectively although some of the six teachers have an English Bachelor's Degree and even, one has an English Master's Degree. Furthermore, the collected data from the interviews was analyzed to place 8 teachers, who have a High School Diploma, in C1 and one, who has an English Bachelor's Degree, in C2. It indicates that the English level of the teachers is Advanced 1 and 2 accordingly.

The results above reveal that most of the observed teachers of public high school need to be trained in accordance with the CEFR to teach English effectively. That is why, it is worth considering here that the SENESCYT (2012) emphasizes that English teachers must be well-instructed and trained to teach the students of public high schools by using a teaching and learning methodology based on international standards such as The CEFR technically established. That is, EFL teachers have to know the language well, have a high proficiency level, and use the best strategies and ways of making Ecuadorian students learn the foreign language successfully and effectively.

Which one of the following methods was used in the observed classes?



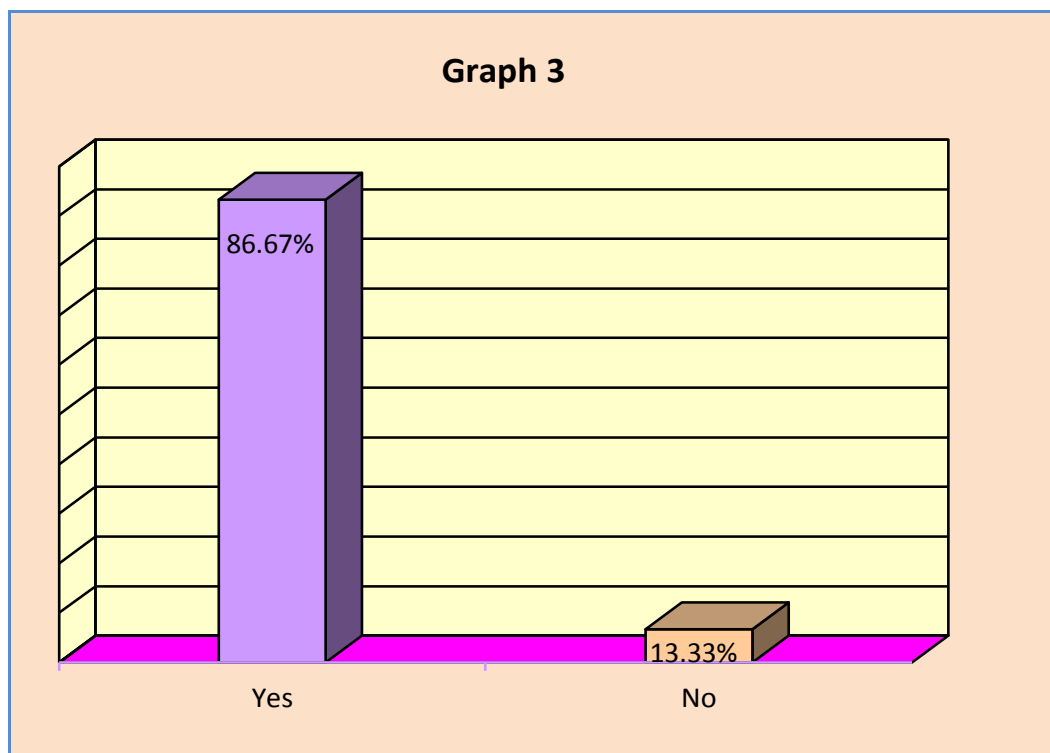
Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

From graph 2, it can be said that the teachers mentioned in the interview who use five of the above ten methods in the percentages as follows: Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) 53.33%; Grammar Translation Method (GTM) 20%; Cooperative Language Learning (CLL) 13.33%; and Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) as well as Total Physical Response (TPR) 6.67% each one. According to the classroom observations, CLT and GTM were each used 46.66% and TBLT was used 6.68%. It means that seven teachers used GTM, seven CLT, and one TBLT.

Comparing the results of the observed classes with those mentioned by the teachers in the interview, it can be seen that there is some difference of the methods used, especially with GTM, used in the English lessons. Besides, TPR and CLL were not used although it was said that these methods are used for teaching English.

Based on the survey applied to the students, 100 percent of them mentioned that they like the way the teachers teach English because the classes are dynamic, entertained, and motivating. Nevertheless, it was observed that in four classes a few students got bored since some teachers did not use GTM, CLT, and TBLT dynamically and encouragingly when teaching English. Besides, in these four classes it was observed that the teachers use GTM, CLT, and CLL methods without taking into account the students' needs. In contrast, in the others eleven classes the teachers used GTM, TPR, and CLL considering the needs of the students to make them interested in the EFL lesson.

*Do you use whole-group activities to teach your lessons?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

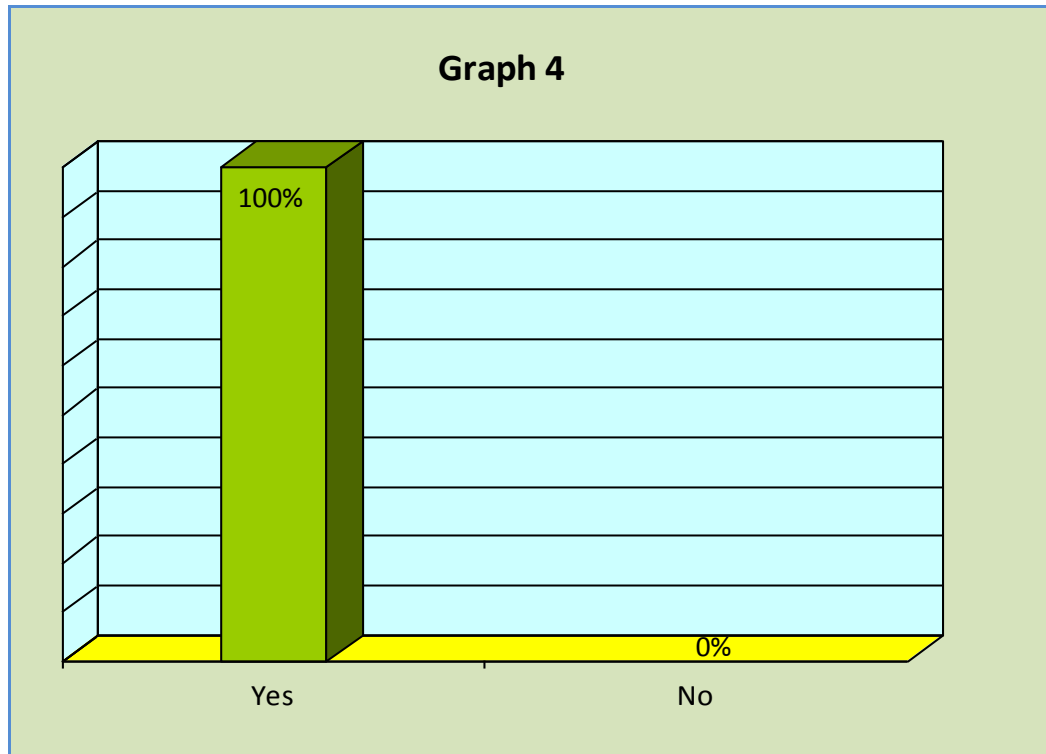
Graph 3 shows that in the teacher's survey it was outlined that 86.67% use whole-group activities to help the students improve their English and enable them to interact with each other. Graph 3 also reveals that 13.33% of the interviewed teachers

do not use whole-group activities since they argued that these types of tasks do not help the students participate in the EFL class. What these teachers mention is contrary to what Harmer (2001) says about whole group activities since this author affirms that these tasks allow the students to share an emotion of happiness or amusement. It means that the students participate in EFL lessons while working in the same activity all them together.

In relation to the survey applied to the students, it was mentioned that they like to work in whole-group because in this manner they are encouraged to learn English. As this statement was supported by 93.33% of the students, it is understood that their teachers usually make them learn English by doing group work activities. During the observations, in two lessons where the teachers used whole-group activities, most of the students participated actively. It was also observed that very few students did not participate in whole-group activities since they considered the tasks were not interesting for them.

To sum up, although graph 3 shows that 86.67% of the teachers (13 of 15) consider whole-group activities to be useful to teach English, it was observed that only 13.33% of the students worked in these activities.

*Do you use individual activities to teach your lessons?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

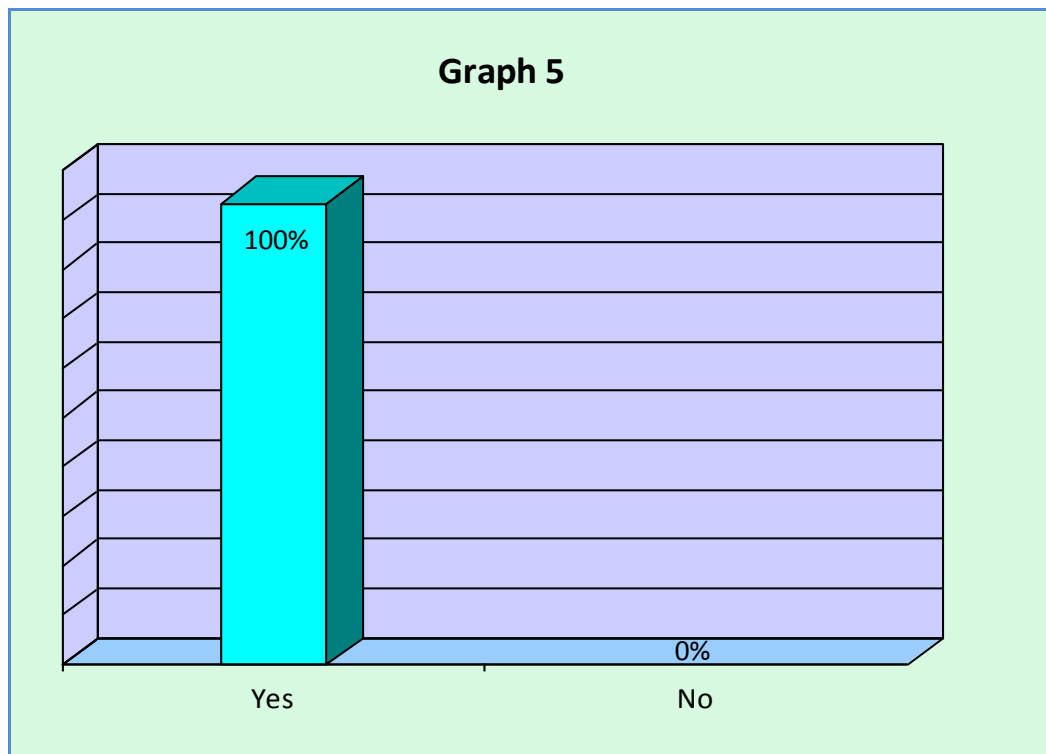
Graph 4 indicates that 100 percent of the interviewed teachers say that they use individual activities. They affirm that when the students work individually, they make their own effort to develop their language skills. Moreover, the teachers mention that through individual work, the English knowledge of the students can be evaluated.

To complement what the teachers said about individual activities, in the survey the students answered that these kinds of tasks are used by their educators in the foreign language classroom. Moreover, 93.33% of the students mentioned that they like working individually to be motivated to learn English. What the students mentioned was observed in five classes where individual activities were used because they were willing to work in this way.



In short, it was observed that individual activities were used only 33.33% although the fifteen interviewed teachers outlined in the survey that all of them make the students learn English individually.

*Do you use group work activities to teach your lessons?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

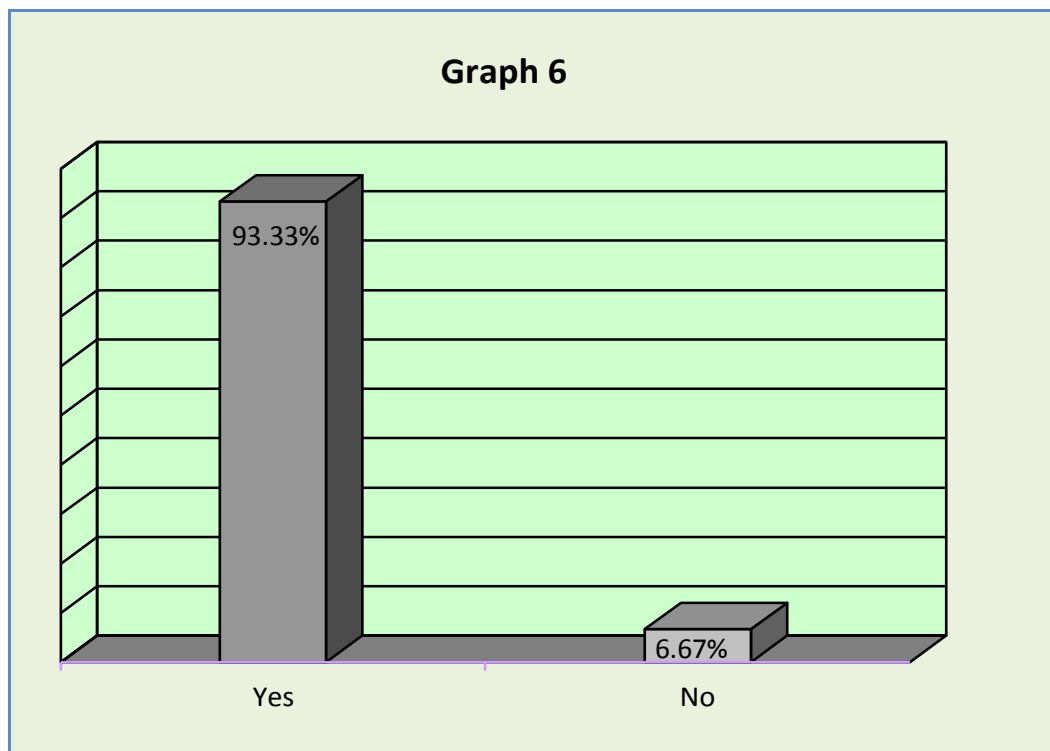
Graph 5 reveals that 100% of teachers agreed with the use of group work activities since according to them, the students share their own knowledge; they practice and improve their speaking skills by helping each other; and they create collaborative and integrated attitudes towards the English lesson.

Based on the survey applied to the students, they mention that group work activities are used by the teachers in the EFL classes. They also mention that working in group motivates them to learn English. The motivation of the students to learn English by grouping with their classmates was observed in eight classes in which

they worked in groups of two, four, five, and seven to role play dialogues, work with picture sets, solve puzzles, and order scrambled sentences.

Taking the above information as a point of reference, it can be said that group work activities were carried out in 53.33% of the observed classes. It means that 8 of the 15 observed teachers made the students learn English by grouping them.

*Do you use English most of the time in your lessons?*



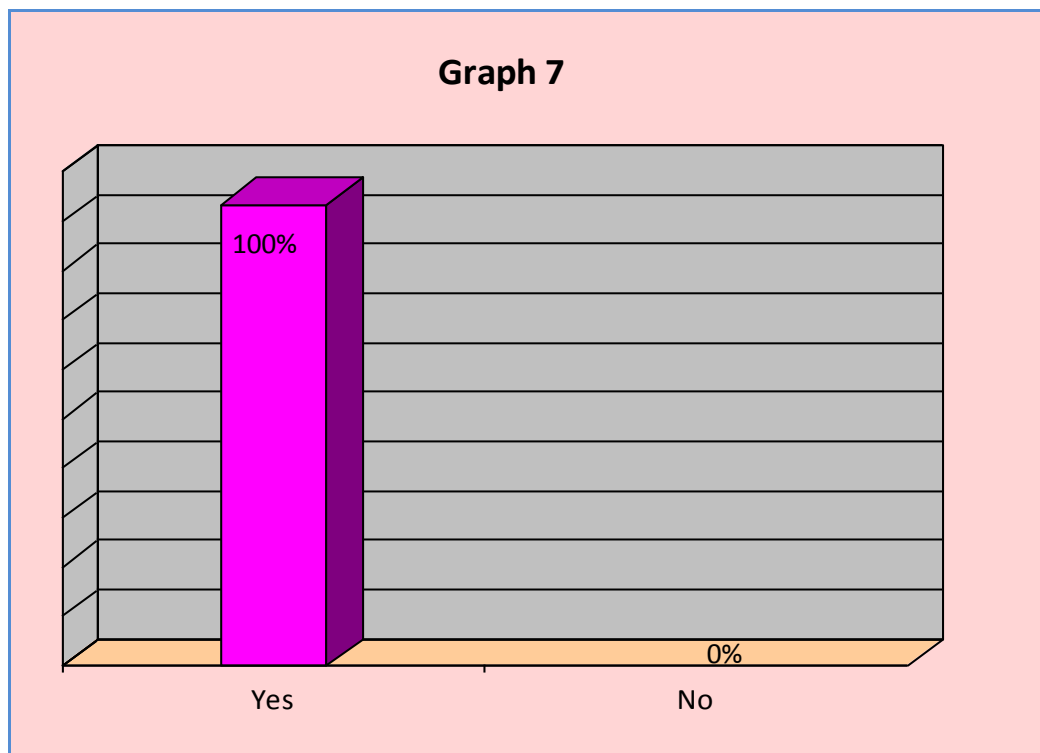
Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Graph 6 shows that 93.33% of the teachers say in the interview that they use English most of the time in their lesson whereas 6.67% of them do not use so much the target language. During the observed classes, one teacher used English 100%; seven 75%; four 50%; and three 25%. The teacher, who spoke 100% of English during the whole class, motivated the students to learn the foreign language. It means that she was totally able to attract the student's attention to the lesson and to make them willing and enthusiastic to learn English. In the classes where the teachers used

50 to 75% of English, it was observed that the students highly expected the lesson to be translated into Spanish since they actively participated in the EFL classes when explanation or instruction was given in their native language. In the classes where English was used 25%, there was a teacher who motivated the students to learn in Spanish most of the foreign language. That is, the teacher only spoke English to explain something she considered necessary. In this case, the students' reaction toward the lesson was positive; they even mentioned that English is understood and learn in the way (using Spanish) the teacher teaches, and that they have difficulty assimilating information when other teachers use English most of the time in their classes.

Moreover, according to the students' survey, eighty percent of them say that the teachers use English most of the time while the rest mentions that the target language is used occasionally in the EFL classes. Comparing these results and those mentioned by the teachers in the survey and which are displayed on graph 6, it can be seen that there is a difference of English used in the observed classes. In fact, the percentages claimed by the students and teachers are different from those obtained during the observed classes.

*Do you plan your lessons?*



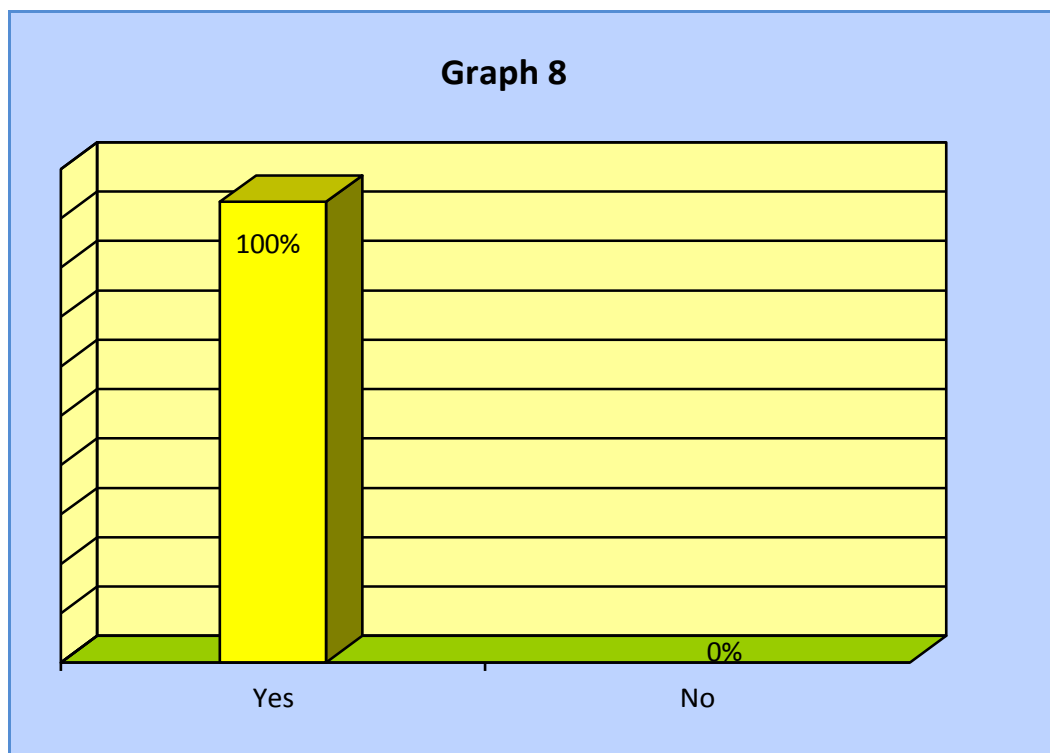
Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

From graph7, it can be seen that 100% of the interviewed teachers say that they plan their lessons. Although 100% of the teachers pointed out that their lesson plans are designed, it is considered and thought that they only do such thing because it is required by the authorities in charge of the English area. Therefore, as described below, only some teachers applied the whole aspects of a lesson plan. Clark and Starr (1981); Harmer (2001); and Watson (1999) suggest that the content of the lesson plan contains a topic, objectives, warm-up activities, timing, guided or individual practice, review, assessment, feedback, and materials to develop each of the planned activity. Moreover, it is important to design a lesson plan with all these aspects to succeed in establishing and achieving the objective of a lesson.

In the observed classes it was confirmed that all the teachers had an organized and well-designed lesson plan to teach their respective classes. But only 53.33 % of

the teachers could apply all the aspects (mentioned above) of the lesson plan to teach their lesson successfully while 46.67% of them developed the lesson topic, introduction of the new topic, guided or individual practice, review, assessment, and, feedback. That is, there was a lack of time to complete all the activities designed to teach their classes and to apply all the parts of their lesson plans.

*Do you consider aspects such as discipline, timing, feedback, and instruction to teach your lessons?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Graph 8 shows that 100% of the teachers in the interview mention to take into consideration discipline, timing, feedback, and instruction. However, only 66.67% of the students in the survey say that the teachers consider these four aspects. It means that 33.33% of the students say that discipline, timing, feedback, and instruction are not taken into account by the educators to teach English.

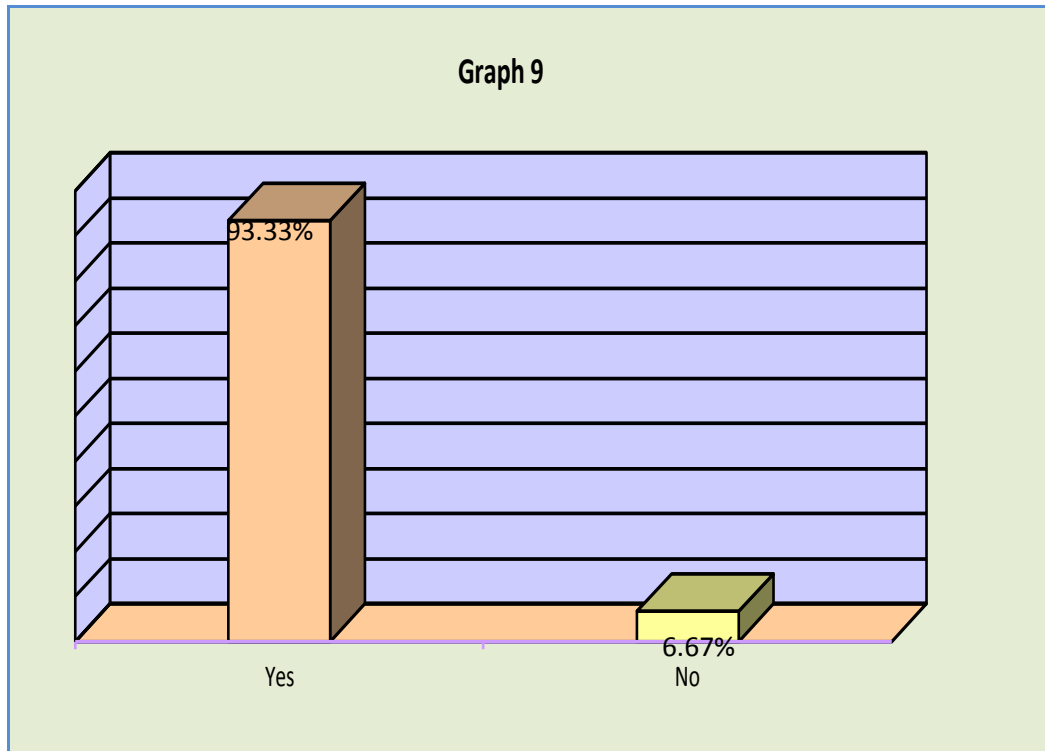
Furthermore, in the observed classrooms eight teachers considered discipline, timing, feedback, and instruction successfully. Five teachers, on the other hand, did not take into account timing because they were not able to complete the activities designed for a particular class. Besides, two teachers did not consider feedback and instructions because they preferred to quickly make the students work on their tasks and end the lesson as soon as possible.

At this point, it is important to mention that Watson (1999) says that instructions are crucial to make the students develop their tasks effectively. The same author points out that balancing the time allotted for different activities might be for teachers a key role in achieving success in a lesson. Furthermore, Watson states that through feedback, teachers can correct the students' utterances, acknowledge their response, ask for clarification of their response, and give backchannel cues. What Watson says about instructions, timing, and feedback was not put into practice by some of the observed teachers as it is indicated in the previous.

### *Factors Concerning Students*

This section presents students' factors that teachers must consider to teach English in a productive and efficient way. The following are the factors that concern students in EFL classes.

*Do you consider student's needs to teach English successfully?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

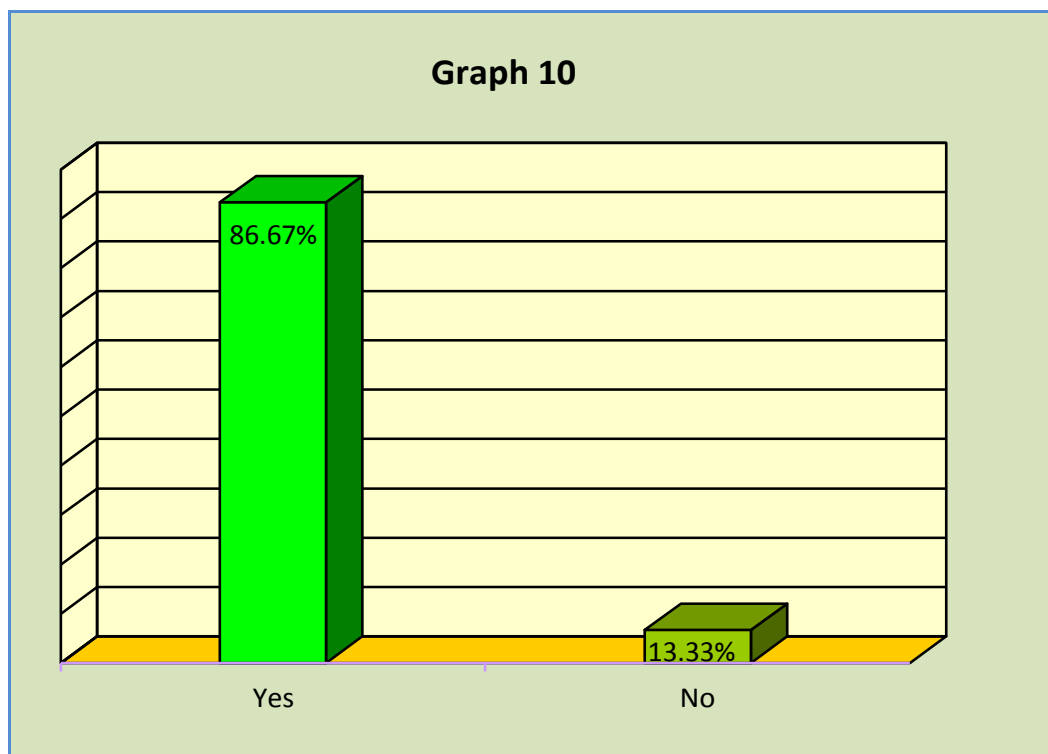
Graph 9 reveals that 93.33% of the teachers mentioned in the survey that they consider the students' needs whereas 6.67% of them mention that they do not take into consideration the needs of their students. During the observed classes, 73.33% of the teachers considered the student's needs. That is, they provided a variety of activities suited for the age of the students in order to create a positive attitude of them towards the lesson and increase their motivation to the English class. Moreover, the teachers considered some learning styles such as visual, auditory, and

kinaesthetic since some activities and teaching materials (visual, audio, etc.) were targeted at these types of students.

On the other hand, it is necessary to mention that 26.67% of teachers did not take into account the students' needs because they did not provide a variety of activities and did not use enough instructional materials to keep the students' interest and attention to the lesson.

In short, the students were interested in the lesson and focused their attention on learning English as much as they could in the classes where their needs were considered. However, some students got bored and lost their interest and motivation to learn the foreign language in those classes where their needs were not considered.

*Do you consider Students' level to teach English successfully?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Graph 10 indicates that 86.67 percent of teachers affirm that they consider the students' level whereas 13.33 % do not consider it. According to students' survey,

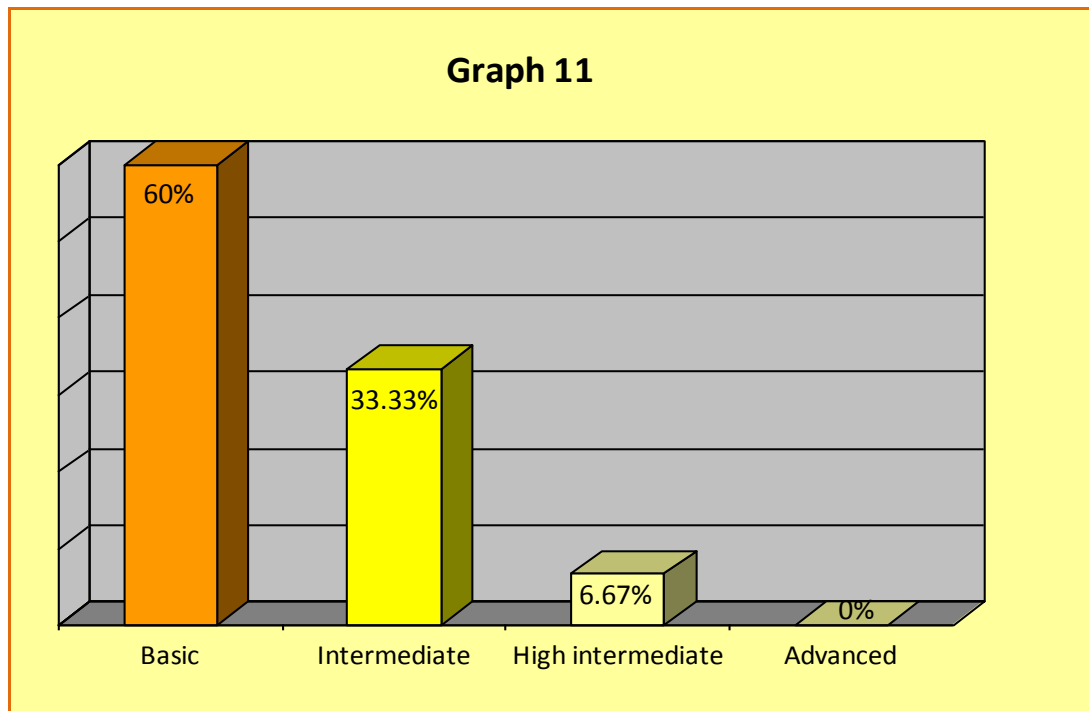


73.33% of them say that their level of English is considered when the activities developed in class are easy for them. On the other hand, 13.33% of the students say that their English level is not considered since the activities of the classes are difficult for them to develop.

During the observed classes, thirteen of the fifteen observed teachers considered the students' level because the activities and tasks were easy and challenging enough to be done in class. In contrast, it was observed that two teachers did not take into consideration the level of the students because the activities developed during the lessons were too difficult and did not match the knowledge of almost the whole class.

It is important to mention that the students' reaction toward the lesson was seen in their motivation and enthusiasm to learn English and participate in those classes where their language level was taken into consideration. Nevertheless, there were some students who did not want to participate in the classes where their language level was not considered. It means that they were afraid to make mistakes in order to say what they think or volunteer to do a particular task.

*Which is the level of your students?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

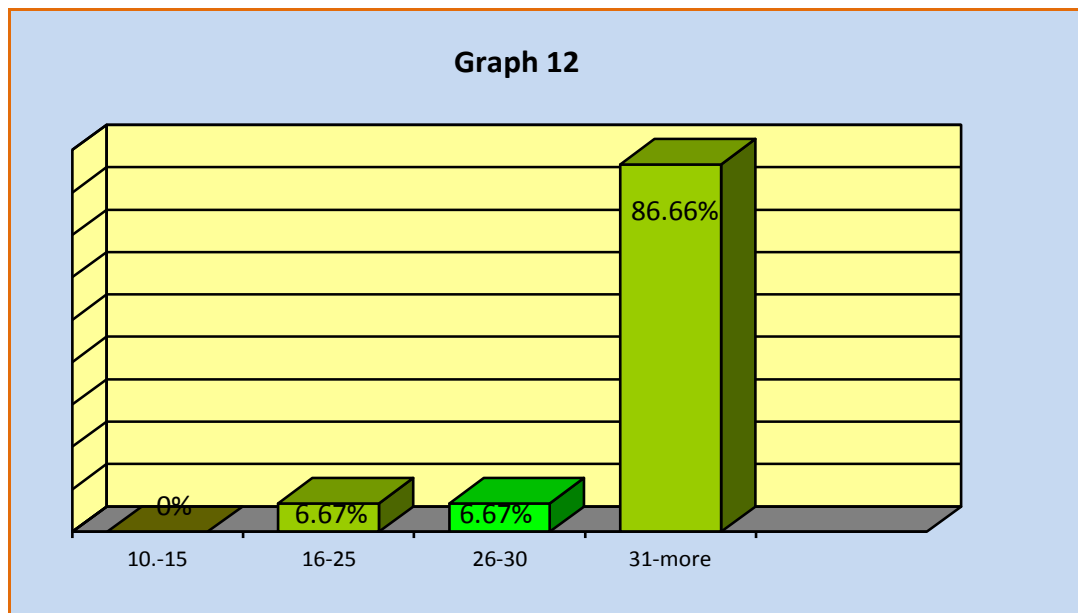
Graph 11 reveals that the teachers in the interview stated that 60% of the students' level is basic; 33.33% is intermediate; and 6.67% is high-intermediate. However, 80% percent of the students' level was basic. This statement is done because the content of the observed lessons was tailored to basic classes. It was also observed that 20% of the students' level is high-intermediate. This claim is based on the content of the lessons and students' understanding of the class. Moreover, based on the survey applied to the students, 86.67% of them considered the activities developed in the observed classes were easy; while 13.33% mentioned that the tasks were difficult for their English level.

On the other hand, it is necessary to mention that the results displayed on graph 11 which were obtained through the teachers' interview contrast with those

gathered through the observations because the level of the students is not the one mentioned by the educators.

### *Factors Concerning Classrooms*

*How many students are there in the observed classes?*

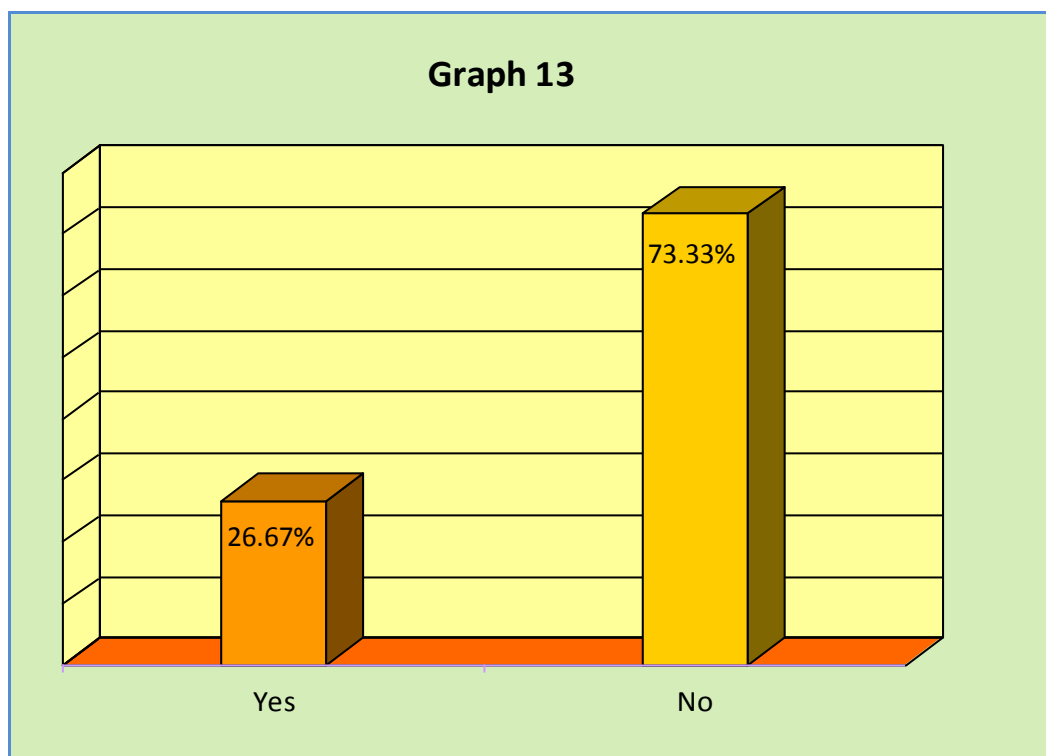


Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Graph 12 shows that in the observed classes there were 31 to more students which represent 86.66%, followed by 16 to 25 and 26 to 30 students representing each one 6.67% respectively. According to students' point of view, seventy percent of them said that the number of classmates in their classrooms help them to learn English better. What this group of students mentioned was confirmed because during the observed classes, where there were 35 to 40 students, they cooperated and interacted with almost any difficulty. On the other hand, there were classes with 44 students where 33.33% of them said that they cannot be favored learning the target language. This became apparent during the observed classes attending 44 students because not all of them could take part in the entire lesson, especially on individual work.

An important point to note about the number of students in the classroom is that Jeffries and Huggett (2010) states that when instructing small groups, the engagement between learners, the teacher, and the content is encouraged. What Jeffries and Huggett point out was observed in the classes where there were 35 to 40 students because almost the whole class was involved in working on the content of the lesson and interacting with the teacher. On the other hand, Davies and Pearse (2000) say that achieving good results with large groups is quite difficult since the learners may not be capable of seeing or hearing the teacher and their individual practice is reduced. What is mentioned by Davies and Pearse was observed in the classes where there were 45 students since not all of them could hear the teacher well and practice individually.

*Do teachers feel comfortable with the number of students they are working with?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

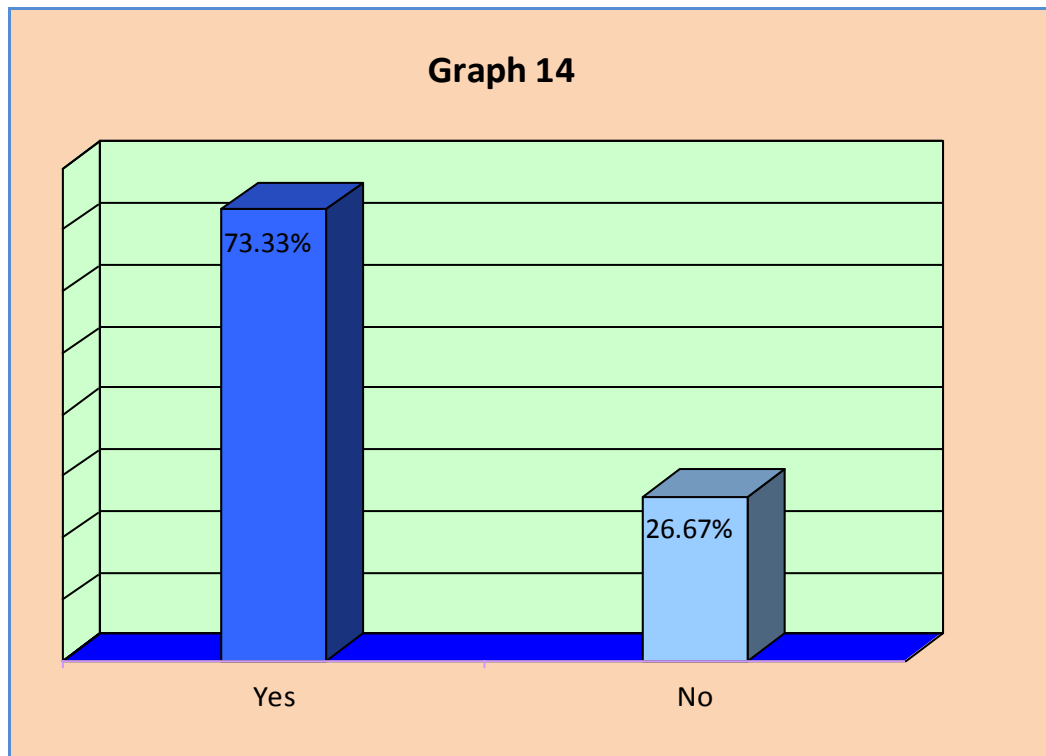
Graph 13 reveals that 26.67% of the interviewed teachers are comfortable with number of students they have in their classes. In contrast, 73.33% of the teachers do not feel comfortable with the number of the students attending their lessons. The teachers who consider not having problems with the number of students they work with are those teaching English to 25 to 35 students. In turn, those working with 36 to 44 students are the ones who do not feel comfortable with such a number.

According to students' opinion, 66.67% of them agreed with the number of classmates in the EFL classes. It means that the small number (16-25) of the students in the classroom allow them to learn English effectively. In contrast, 33.33% of the students said that the large number (31 to more) of classmates does not help them to learn English in a better way.

Based on the observations, it can be said that in the classes where the students attended in a number of 36 to 44, the teachers had difficulty providing the students with individual practice. On the other hand, those teachers working with 25 to 35 students could engage almost the whole class with individual work.

Regarding the number of the students the teacher work with, Broughton et al (1980) say that when instructing large groups, the teacher needs to consider carefully the best way of making the learners actively participate in the entire lesson. What said by Broughton et al was observed in eight classes where the teachers could sustain the students' attention to the lesson and their active participation during the class in spite of the fact that they do not agree with number of students (36 to 44) they work with and that they had difficulty providing individual practice.

*Do teachers have enough space to work with the group of students they have been assigned?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

From graph 14, it can be seen that 73.33% of the teachers said that they have enough space to teach English in accordance with the number of students assigned in their classroom. Contrary to this point of view, 26.67 percent of the interviewed teachers mention that more space is needed to work with the group of the students they have assigned.

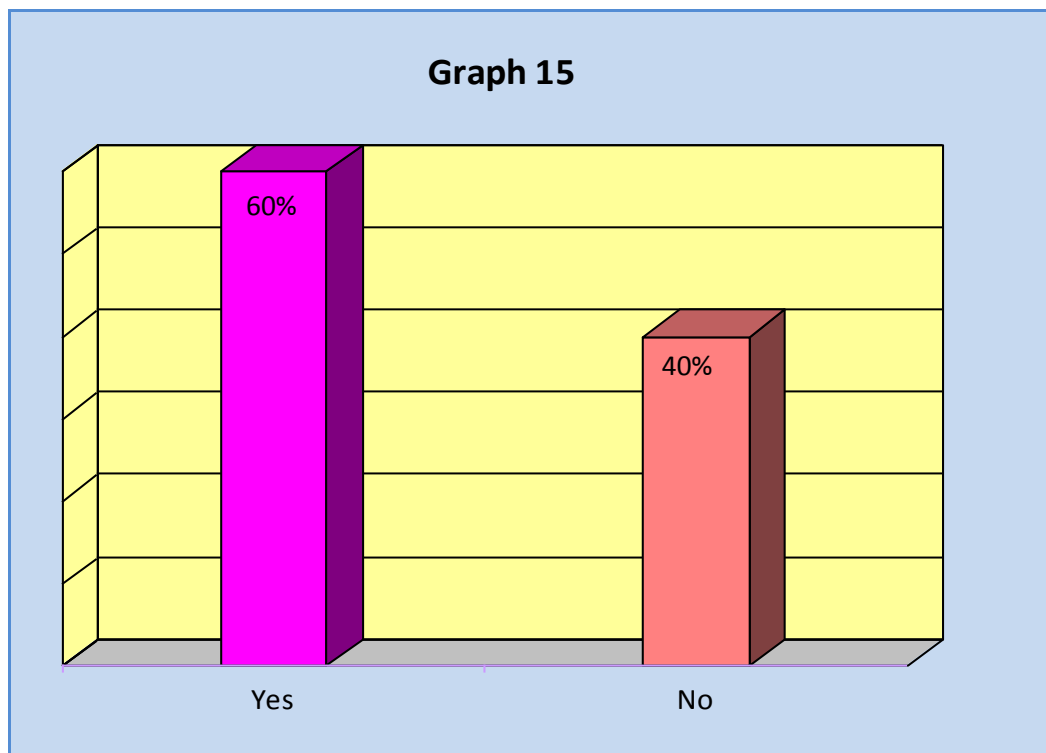
As outlined by the students in the survey, 73.33% of them say that they are in concordance with the size of classroom to learn English whereas 26.67% mention that the classroom space does not enable them to work in a comfortable way.

The results shown in graph 14 are in complete agreement with the point of view of the teachers and students, as well as with the observed classes. That is to say, the classroom space was small for large groups because it did not allow them to

move easily during some activities while for small groups it enabled them, when necessary, to work by moving from one place to another without any difficulty.

An important consideration is that Watson (1999) states that the overall size of the classroom and the number of students determines the teacher's influence on the classroom space. What this author says was observed in seven classes where the space was influenced by the teachers because of the amount of the students and the size of the classroom; that is, to be able to work on their tasks, the students were asked to move their seats.

*Do you arrange students' seats in relation to the activities planned for your classes?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Graph 15 shows that 60% of the teachers point out that the seats are arranged in accordance with the activities planned for their classes, but 40% of them said that the seats are kept in a traditional layout arrangement which is in rows. From the students' surveys, 73.33% of them said that they like the way seats are arranged

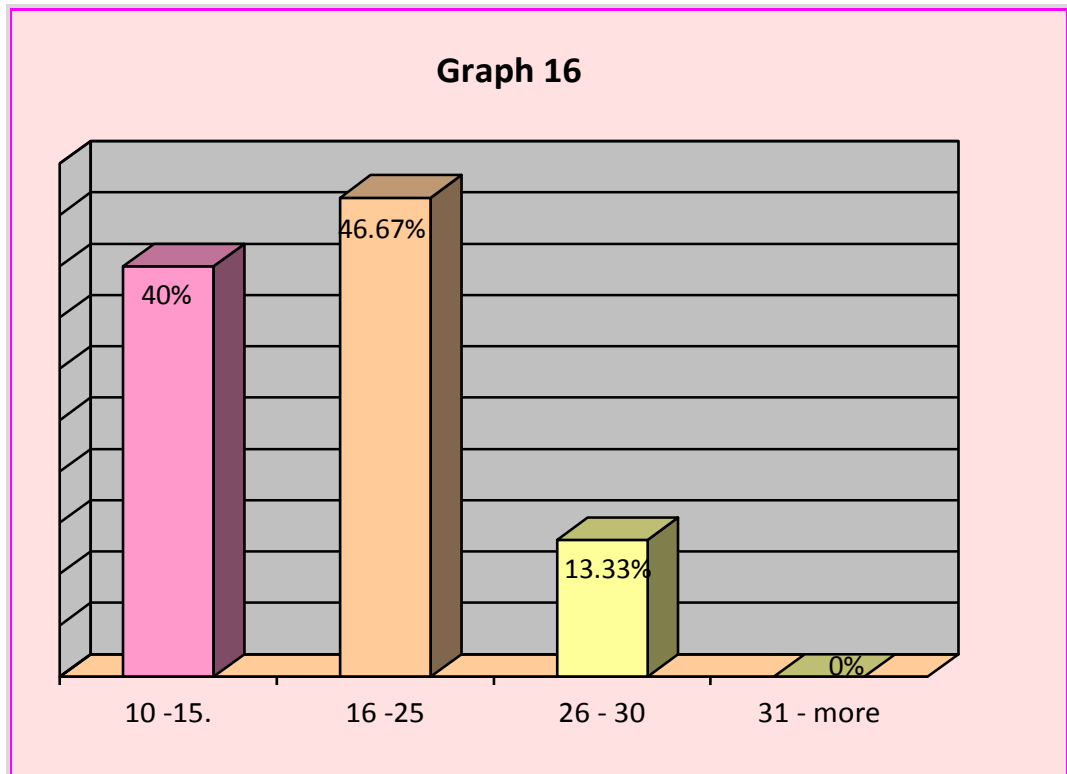
during the tasks they do in the classes. On the other hand, 26.67% of the students answered that they do not like how the seats are arranged when working on different activities.

During the observations, 66.67% of teachers asked the students to change the layout of their seats to work on a specific activity of lesson plan, which in turn affected positively their attitude towards the class. The rest of the teachers, 33.33%, preferred to make the students work in traditional seating arrangement which is in rows.

At this point, it is worth saying that Clark and Starr (1981) suggest organizing the class according to the activities that students will focus on. They, for example, say that small circles might be appropriate for committee work, and a circle or some segment of it may be useful for speaking practice. It is worth saying that what these authors recommends was taken into consideration by some teachers because they asked the students to join the desks and to seat face to face in group of four where they practiced greetings; the students also arranged the seats in semi-circles where they role played short dialogues.



*How many students do you think is the appropriate number to teach English?*



Author: Abad Marlene

Source: Teacher's questionnaire

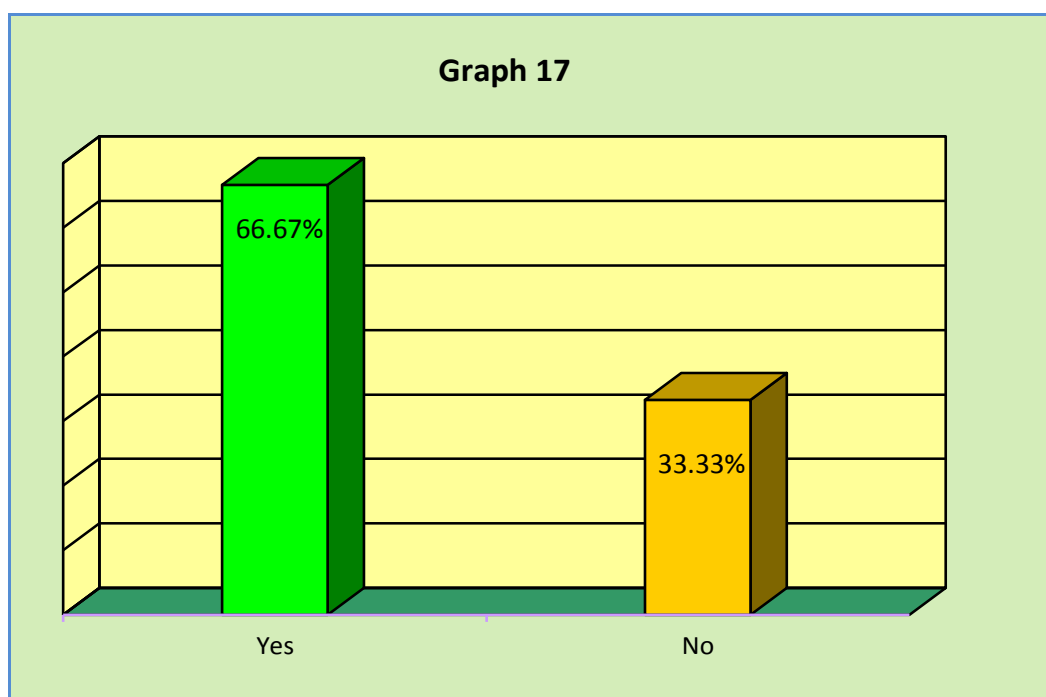
Graph 16 reveals that teachers consider the appropriate number of students to teach English in the percentages as follows: ten to fifteen 40%; sixteen to twenty five 46.67%; and twenty six to thirty 13.33%. It is worth commenting that the teachers out of the interview and survey mentioned that English classes are better taught to 10-15 students since they can be given short and effective instructions as well as individual, positive feedback. In fact, it was commented by the teachers that in a class with 10-15 students the teachers are able to control discipline when necessary and assess the knowledge of the whole class, and that the students have the opportunity to practice individually what is being taught.

During two classes where a small number of students attended, it was observed that they participated actively and dynamically to learn English. That is, the students

did activities by moving their bodies, hands, head, and feet in accordance with what was being learned.

In addition, it is good to remark that Jeffries and Huggett (2000) say that teaching to a small number of the students enables the teachers to evaluate the students' comprehension and application of the content of the course through the progression of it. What these authors mention can be taken into consideration for those involved in teaching English, especially when deciding the number of the students they are going to work with. Of course, it is difficult to determine the number of the students attending an English class in public education because it is most of the time laid down by the institution regulation.

*Do you use teaching resources (TV, tape/cd recorder, computer(s), projector(s), smart-boards, and supplementary materials)?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

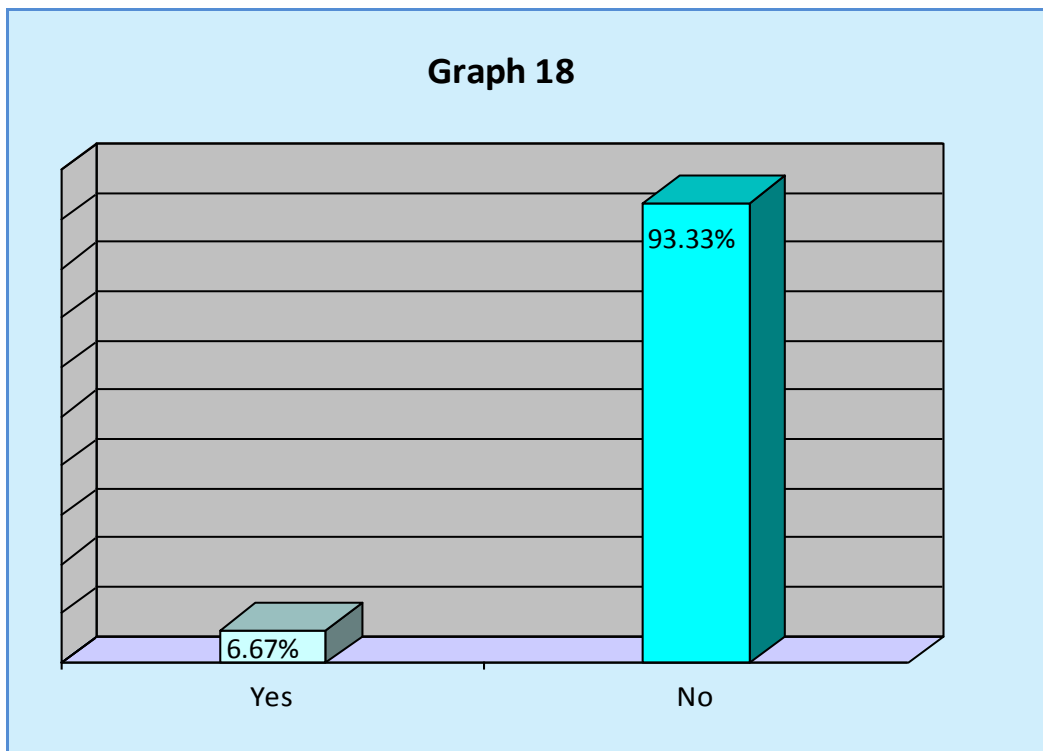
Graph 17 indicates that 66.67% of the interviewed teachers say that they use teaching resources such as CD/tape recorder, TV, the overhead projector, and

supplementary material. On the other hand, it was mentioned by the teachers that 33.33% of them do not use teaching resources because they argue that these materials are not available in their institution. Contrary to the point of view of the teachers, 33.33 percent of students in the survey said that teaching resources and supporting materials such as the type recorder, smart boards, etc. are used in the classes whereas the rest 66.67% said that teachers do not use any extra resource for teaching English.

In the observed classes the students' answers were confirmed because only the 33.33% of teachers used supplementary material such as pictures, cards, work sheets, and a square with added words whereas 66.67 % of educators focused on using only the whiteboard. Regarding this teaching material, Watson (1999) says that the board (chalkboard or whiteboard) is the most common visual aid used in the classroom. Considering Watson' statement and based on the observed classes, it can be said that most of the teachers preferred to use the whiteboard in their EFL classes because they claimed that teaching aids such as CD/tape recorder, TV, the overhead projector, and supplementary material are not at their disposal in the institution they work for.

At this point, it is necessary to say that language teachers use a wide range of teaching resources in order to teach the meaning and construction of a language, to make students involved in a lesson's theme, and to provide the core of a whole activity (Harmer, 2009). Moreover, the use of teaching resources and supporting materials helps teachers to create a motivating environment which facilitates the teaching-learning process just as it was observed in the classes where the teachers (33.33%) used different teaching aids.

*Do you consider appropriate the resources you have in class?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Graph 18 shows that 6.67% of the teachers considered to be appropriated the teaching resources they have in their classes, but most of them, 93.33%, believe the opposite. The latter teachers said that the high schools, where the research was conducted, have only one audiovisual room, and that it is used by everyone. For this reason it thought by these teachers that they do not have appropriate teaching materials to be used in the language classroom. Therefore, they state that the English area need its own laboratory equipped with technological and didactical resources to teach the foreign language.

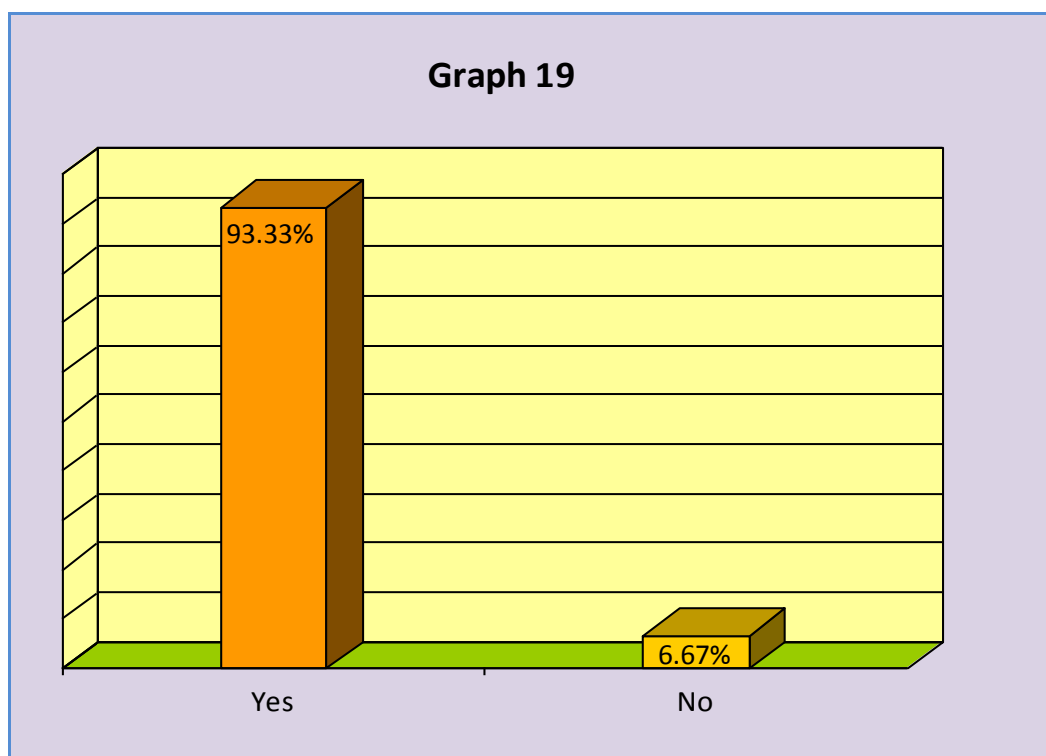
An important point to note about the use of appropriate teaching resources in class is that the materials should be adequate for the objectives of a lesson and for a specific group of students and must be selected considering the age, interest, and skills of the students (Davies and Pearse, 2000). The use of appropriate teaching

resources also enables teachers to make easier for students to understand English language input so that they can fix their knowledge successfully.

In addition, although the students in the survey did not say whether the teaching resources used in the lesson are appropriate or not, it was already mentioned that 33.33% of them affirmed that teaching resources and supporting materials such as the type recorder, smart boards, etc. are used in the classes whereas 66.67% of the students said that teachers do not use extra teaching aids in the English teaching-learning process.

### *Factors Concerning Educational Institutions*

*Does the institution review your lesson plans?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire.

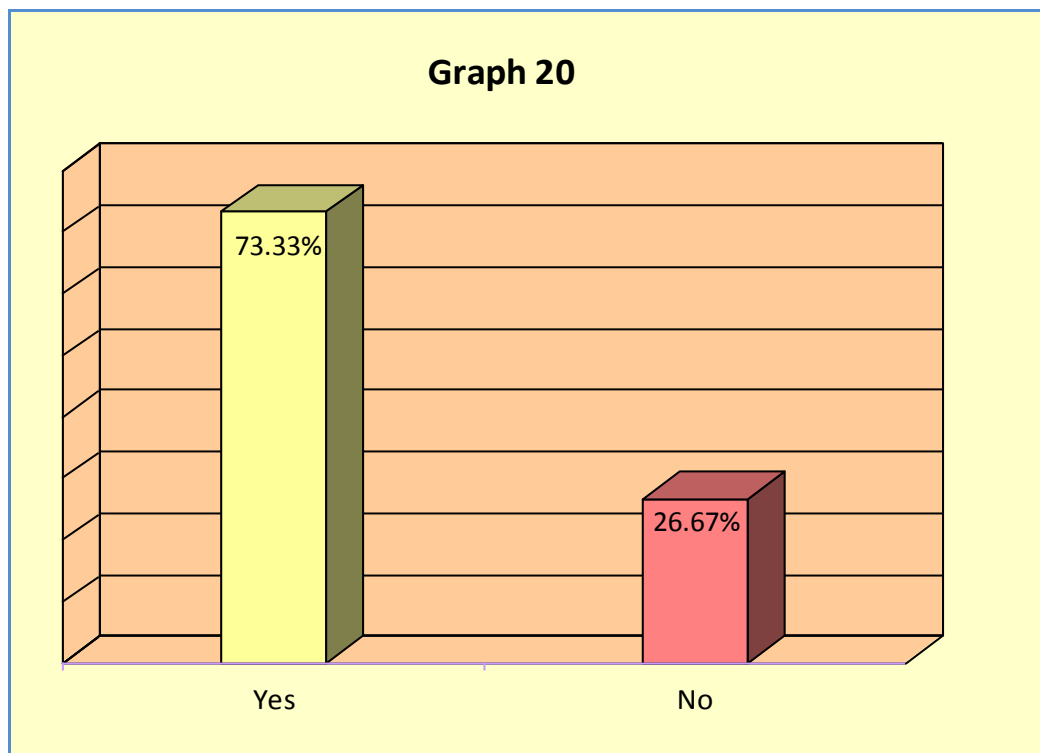
Graph 19 reveals that 93.33% of teachers said that the institution where they work review their lesson plans. Some of these teachers mentioned that their lesson plans are reviewed once a week or a month and others said once a year. Graph 19, on

the other hand, indicates that 6.67% of the teachers commented in the interview that the institution does not review their lesson plans.

Furthermore, to know the point of view of the high school authorities, where the research was conducted, in relation to reviewing the lesson plan, the supervisors of the English area were asked to remark about this issue; they mentioned that the lesson plans are designed according to the school year and are reviewed by the principal weekly, monthly, or annually. The supervisors also commented that the principal makes sure that the lesson plans contain all the elements and steps of teaching-learning process. According to the supervisors, if any lesson plan is incomplete, it must be corrected and design again if necessary. Moreover, both the teachers and supervisors said that the lesson plans are reviewed, but during the observations, it could not be seen whether the institution review such lesson plans.

Something important to comment is that lesson planning is crucial for professional teachers because they can decide exactly what they will teach and how (Davies and Pearse, 2000). Designing a well-structured lesson plan enables teachers to teach EFL effectively. Therefore, it is important for the institution to review a lesson plan to make sure that educators are planning their lesson carefully and to demand from them the appropriate application of the whole content of their lesson plans. Moreover, reviewing lesson plans is necessary for the institution in order to contribute to the improvement of the planning of teachers. It means that educators are given the opportunity to strengthen their knowledge and to change or adjust anything necessary to master their lesson design and improve the quality of their teaching.

*Does the institution monitor your teaching?*



Author: Abad Marlene  
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

From graph 20, it can be seen that 73.33% of the teachers mentioned in the interview that the institution monitors their teaching. According to them, their teaching is monitored in the frequency as follows: every day 40%; once a week 6.67%; once a month 13.33%; and once a year 13.33%. Moreover, the teachers said that the language supervisors are the ones who observe the way English is taught. From the graph above, it, on the other hand, can be seen that 26.67% of the interviewed teachers said that their teaching is not monitored. This statement became apparent because during the observed classes, any authority or supervisor checked the way English is taught.

Something worth remarking is that monitoring the English teaching process is of crucial importance because it helps to know whether teachers are working effectively and to find out if classes are being taught according to the institution

planning. Monitoring the EFL teaching process also enables authorities to analyze the performance of teachers in a critic and conscious way in order to help them growth professionally. Hence, it is necessary for institutions to monitor the teaching process.



## Conclusions

The conclusions about factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process are the following:

- The space of the classroom affected the teaching-learning process positively and negatively since in small classrooms many students had difficulty performing activities which involved moving from one place to another, whereas in classrooms with enough space the learners moved without any difficulty to perform tasks involving any kind of movement.
- In small classes the students assimilated information in an equitable way because they totally focused their attention on the lesson and had the opportunity to increase their individual participation.
- In large classes some students had difficulty listening or seeing the teacher well and vice versa, since there were learners who interrupted their classmates and the teacher in order to attract the whole class' attention, by doing questions because they could not hear what teacher said, because of the quantity of learners in the class. Therefore, what was being learned or explained had to be repeated twice or more times.
- The arrangement of the seats done in ten classrooms increased the students' participation, enthusiasm, and interest in the EFL classes because they were motivated to work in the way their seats were arranged and were delighted to interact with each other and the teacher as well.
- The instructional competence of some teachers is not good enough to teach English because their language proficiency level is poor. That is to say, the English level of these teachers is basic and their pronunciation is not adequate.

- The students' level is basic in spite of the fact that they are in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> year of senior High School. This conclusion is based on the way the students used English during the observed classes, it might be because of the lack of a good level instructional competence of some teachers.

## Recommendations

- ❖ It is recommended that teachers of public high school should be trained in accordance with the CEFR; it is to say, teachers should be qualified according to a teaching methodology based on international standards, so that they can teach English effectively and improve the academic performance of the students.
- ❖ It is highly recommended that public educational institutions demand that language supervisors monitor the English teaching process and review the lesson plans in order to evaluate the performance of teachers, stimulate their development, and help them improve their quality of instruction and professional growth.
- ❖ It is suggested that teachers in large classes rearrange the classroom space in the most convenient and appropriate way so that they can make the students learn in a comfortable way and interact with the whole class and their educator as well.
- ❖ It is suggested that teachers should take into account the students' needs in order to offer them a motivating learning process.
- ❖ It is recommended that teachers use a variety of teaching resources and supporting materials such as audio, audio visual, realia, etc. to provide students with a rewarding learning experience.

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Annex A

OBSERVATION SHEET

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
YEAR(desde 8vo básica a 3ro bachillerato):	

1. Does the teacher consider Students' needs to teach English?

\*Students' Needs (*age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation, and learning styles*)

YES ( )      NO ( )

\* It can be recognized based on the variety of activities (visual, audio, audiovisual, realia, and on-line) applied, and students' reaction to them.

2. Which is the level of the students? (*Check 1*)

*Students' Level			
Basic ( )	Intermediate ( )	High-Intermediate ( )	Advanced ( )

\* It can be recognized based on the material they are using or placement done by the institution.

3. Which of the following methods are used?

Communicative Language Teaching	( )
The Natural Approach	( )
Cooperative Language Learning	( )
Content-Based Instruction	( )
Task-Based Language Teaching	( )
Cognitive Academic Language Learning	( )
Total Physical Response	( )



Whole Language Approach	( )
Grammar Translation Method	( )
Others _____	( )

**4.** Which of the following activities are used?

Whole-group activities	( )
Individual activities	( )
Group work activities	( )

**5.** Which of the following aspects of the lesson plan were applied in the class?

Time	( )
Lesson topic	( )
Objectives	( )
Warm-up activities	( )
Introduction of the new topic	( )
Guided or individual practice	( )
Review/Assessment/Feedback	( )
Materials and resources	( )

**6.** Which of the following aspects have been considered by the teacher?

Discipline	( )
Feedback	( )
Activities management	( )
Time management	( )

**7.** How many students are there in the classroom?

10 - 15	( )	16 - 25	( )	26 - 30	( )	31 - more	( )
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**8.** Do students have enough space to move and participate in dynamic activities?

YES ( )	NO ( )
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**9.** Is the seating arrangement appropriate for the teaching-learning process?

YES ( )	NO ( )
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NOTES:

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**10.** Which of the following resources are there in the classroom to facilitate teaching?

TV	( )
Tape/Cd recorder	( )
Computer(s)	( )
Projector(s)	( )
Smartboard	( )
Supplementary materials	( )
Others	( )

**11.** In which percentage does the teacher use English in class?

25% ( )	50% ( )	75 % ( )	100 % ( )
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Annex B

STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
YEAR:	

1. ¿Te gusta aprender Inglés?

YES ( )	NO ( )
---------	--------

2. ¿Las actividades (juegos, trabajos en grupo y trabajos individuales) que se realizan en clase te motivan a aprender Inglés?

YES ( )	NO ( )
---------	--------

3. Consideras que las actividades realizadas en clase son:

Muy fáciles ( )	Fáciles ( )	Difíciles ( )	Muy difíciles ( )
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4. ¿Te gusta la forma de enseñanza del idioma Inglés que usa tu profesor?

YES ( )	NO ( )
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¿Porqué?

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5. ¿Tu profesor realiza actividades variadas que te permiten interactuar con tus compañeros de clase?

YES ( )	NO ( )
---------	--------

6. ¿Tu profesor utiliza Inglés la mayor parte del tiempo en la clase?

YES ( )	NO ( )
---------	--------

7. ¿Tu profesor controla la disciplina en la clase?

YES ( )	NO ( )
---------	--------

8. ¿Tu profesor les asigna un tiempo determinado para el desarrollo de cada actividad?

YES ( )	NO ( )
---------	--------

9. ¿Luego de cada actividad realizada, tu profesor te explica en qué fallaste y en qué debes mejorar?

YES ( )	NO ( )
---------	--------

10. ¿Las instrucciones que da el profesor para realizar las actividades en clase y extra clase son claras?

YES ( )	NO ( )
---------	--------

11. ¿Consideras que el tamaño del salón de clase te permite trabajar de una manera cómoda?

YES ( )	NO ( )
---------	--------

12. ¿Consideras que el número de estudiantes te favorece para aprender de mejor manera el Inglés?

YES ( )	NO ( )
---------	--------

13. ¿Te gusta la forma en la que el profesor adecúa los pupitres para trabajar en los diferentes tipos de actividades?

YES ( )	NO ( )
---------	--------

14. ¿Se utilizan en clase recursos tales como televisión, grabadora, computadora, pizarras inteligentes, etc.?

YES ( )	NO ( )
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GRACIAS!!!!

Annex C

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:

DATE:

YEAR:

1. Which level of education do you have?

High school diploma ( ) English Bachelor's Degree ( ) English Master's degree ( )

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you consider Students' needs to teach English successfully?

Students' Needs (age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation, and learning styles)

YES ( ) NO ( )

3. Do you consider Students' level to teach English successfully?

Students' Level (Basic, Intermediate, High Intermediate, and Advanced)

YES ( ) NO ( )

4. Which is the level of your students?

\*Students' Level

Basic ( ) Intermediate ( ) High Intermediate ( ) Advanced ( )

5. Which of the following methods was used in this class? (check only 1)

Communicative Language Teaching ( )

The Natural Approach ( )

Cooperative Language Learning ( )

Content-Based Instruction ( )

Task-Based Language Teaching ( )

Cognitive Academic Language Learning ( )

Total Physical Response ( )

Whole Language Approach ( )

Grammar Translation Method ( )

Others \_\_\_\_\_ ( )

6. Do you use whole- group activities to teach your lessons?

YES ( ) NO ( )

Why?

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7. Do you use individual activities to teach your lessons?

YES ( ) NO ( )

Why?

---

8. Do you use group work activities to teach your lessons?

YES ( ) NO ( )

Why?

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9. Do you use English most of the time in your classes?

YES ( ) NO ( )

10. Do you plan your lessons?

YES ( ) NO ( )

11. Do you consider aspects such as discipline, timing, feedback, and instruction to teach your lessons?

YES ( ) NO ( )

12. How many students do you have in this class?

10 - 15 ( ) 16 - 25 ( ) 26 - 30 ( ) 31- more ( )

13. Do you feel comfortable working with this number of students?

YES ( ) NO ( )

14. Do you have enough space to work with this group of students?

YES ( ) NO ( )

15. Do you arrange students' seats in relation to the activities planned for your classes?

YES ( ) NO ( )

16. How many students do you think is the appropriate number to teach English? (check only 1)

10 - 15 ( ) 16 - 25 ( ) 26 - 30 ( ) 31 - more ( )

17. Do you use teaching resources (TV, Tape/Cd recorder, Computer(s), Projector(s), Smartboard, and supplementary materials)?

YES ( ) NO ( )

Which ones?

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18. Do you consider appropriate the resources you have in class?

YES ( ) NO ( )

Why?

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19. Does the institution review your lesson plans?

YES ( ) NO ( )

If yes, how frequently?

Once a week. Once a month. Other \_\_\_\_\_

20. Does the institution monitor your teaching?

YES ( ) NO ( )

If yes, how frequently?

Once a week. Once a month Other \_\_\_\_\_

Thanks for your cooperation!!!!!!

Annex D

TEACHER'S INTERVIEW

A1	Where are you from? Where do you live?
A2	Where did you learn English? How long have you studied English? Which subject was the most difficult during your major?
B1	How long have you been teaching English? Which skill is easier for you to teach? Would you like to continue studying? Why?
B2	What are the advantages or disadvantages of teaching English in a “non-English speaking country”? What are the main problems a teacher faces when teaching English in Ecuador?
C1	What social benefits are derived from learning English? What is the most important reward of teaching English as a profession?
C2	What are the benefits that come from teachers staying more time in the educational institutions? What is the difference between teaching English as foreign language (EFL) and teaching English as a second language (ESL)?

TEACHER'S LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY:

C2	( )	C1	( )	B2	( )	B1	( )	A2	( )	A1	( )
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