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Factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian public high schools, estudio realizado en las siguientes instituciones educativas:  
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## CERTIFICACIÓN

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## DEDICATION

This thesis project is dedicated with all my love and affection to my parents Juan Alfonso Alvarado Diaz and Noelia Vera Silva, who being far away from me, have never failed to give me financial and moral support to finish my career. Likewise, this research is dedicated to my darling wife Katherine Gomez Proaño, who unconditionally supported me during all the period of my studies and especially in hard moments.

Javier

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## ABSTRACT

The topic of this research is “Factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian public high schools”, and its purpose was to analyze the factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process.

This study was developed in five public high schools in Puyo city, Pastaza province, Ecuador. The method used for this study was quantitative, through class observation sheets and questionnaires applied to teachers and students in fifteen observed English classes. The sample included two classes of 9th year, two classes of 10th year, five classes of first year of Bachillerato, four classes of second year of Bachillerato and two classes of third year of Bachillerato. The aspects considered in conducting the analysis come from the information obtained in the observed classes and teachers and students' questionnaire, being demonstrated in charts and graphics of the surveys previously applied.

The main conclusion from the analysis showed that the major factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process are the use of few methods and techniques applied by the teachers, and the limited use of English teaching resources in the classroom.

## INTRODUCTION

Nowadays the English language is one of the most spoken languages in the world and those who speak it have more opportunities in the commercial, professional and work environment. Without a doubt, it is necessary and essential that Ecuadorian students have an acceptable level of English to be able to opt for scholarship that will allow them to study internationally. Unfortunately, in our Ecuadorian reality there are many deficiencies in the English language learning in those students who finish high-school; because when they enter to the University they lack a sufficient knowledge of the English language. Studies carried out by the SENESCYT and the Ministry of Education's CRADLE Project concluded that Ecuadorian students in general, at a national level, do not have a deep understanding of the English language.

The present research tries to corroborate these previous findings in more depth and gives conclusions and recommendations, so that other researchers can base their future research on these findings.

The teaching-learning is a process which is made up by contents, objectives, knowledge, methods, resources and evaluation. Therefore, in order to carry out this process, it is necessary to use teaching-learning strategies that allow both teachers and students to fulfill their objectives.

Through this study, it is revealed that some important factors, such as students' needs and level of English, methods and techniques used by the teachers, English teaching resources, class size, and seating arrangement, can be considered as determining aspects inside an Educational environment.



The main goal of this research was to analyze the factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian public high schools. In relation to this purpose, the specific objectives for this research were firstly, to determine classroom conditions in which English lessons take place; secondly, to identify the characteristics of in-service English teachers, and finally, to determine the teachers' instructional competence. The first objective was completely achieved because in the description and analysis of results, according to teachers and students' opinion about the classroom conditions, they are good and the physical space is appropriate to organize the desks in different positions depending on the teacher's lesson plan and objectives. The second objective was also accomplished because, in relation to the results of the research, it could be determined that most of the teachers apply only some methods and techniques to carry out activities in the classroom, and the English teaching resources used by the teachers in the class are limited. The last objective was fully fulfilled since all the English teachers have university studies; nevertheless, the observed classes evidenced pronunciation problems and the need to be perfected through regular training.

Further to the above, in order to give a scientific foundation about classroom conditions, a study was carried out by Brown (2000) which showed one of the factors as class size, whose ideal number of students to work effectively in the classroom is twelve. In this way, the teacher can provide feedback easily to each one of the students and interaction among them is also very dynamic.

With regards to the physical space, Brown (2000) also studied some external factors such as noise and weather conditions, and concluded that they can

affect the students' learning process. And besides this, everything inside the classroom must be well organized, clean and tidy.

In relation to the teacher's performance, when managing the class, Gower (1995) carried out a research in which he points out several techniques used to organize and manage the class: firstly, the visual contact between teacher and students; secondly, the usage of mimics, gestures and facial expressions is crucial in order to have a clear understanding; thirdly, it is very important for teachers to remember their students' name in order to create a friendly and cooperative atmosphere.

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

Finally, to perform this study the researcher must mention that there were some limitations related to the sample size and the number of observed classes.

## METHOD

### *Setting and Participants*

The field research was carried out in five public high schools in Puyo city, Pastaza province, in a period of two weeks during September 2012. The participants of this study were fifteen English teachers, three teachers in each high school. The majority of the students who studied in the morning were selected at random for the research. The students were both male and female with a ratio of 3 to 1, there were more female students. They belong to a social and economic mixed background.

### *Procedures*

The general approach of this study was quantitative. First, the researcher searched and gathered information from basic resources like books, magazines, articles, previous studies and other sources which are available on the Internet. Information involved the importance of English as a foreign language in Ecuador, teaching methods and techniques, managing learning, lesson design, class size, classroom space, seating arrangement, classroom and teaching resources, classroom observation, student's motivation, learning styles and student's intelligence or aptitude to learn English.

Additional information was gathered. It was about research studies on the topic Factors that affect English language-learning process.

The technique applied was direct observation, where the researcher had to observe 15 classes; also, observation sheets were applied while teachers were performing their classes. There was a teachers' survey including 20 questions for each surveyed teacher. In addition, a survey was applied to 15 students from the researched high schools.

Information collected was tabulated and represented graphically using charts where it was possible to add percentages in order to identify how teachers and students answered according to suggested questions.

Once information was gathered and tabulated, it was possible to start an interpretation and analysis of what teachers and students' answered according to the items proposed in this research.

The aspects which were considered for the analysis of results were to set the questions, represented graphically, analysis of answers and interpretation on what we have found. It was possible to set the authors' point of view on what was observed and analyzed.

## DISCUSSION

In this section the Theoretical Background or Literature Review can be found that encloses the most important contents and definitions about students' needs, students' English level, teachers' level of education, their language proficiency, their teaching methods and techniques, their percentage of language use in the classroom, the lesson planning, seating arrangement, and other factors concerning classrooms, such as class size, classroom space, and resources. Furthermore, it is included in this segment Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results, Conclusions and Recommendations.

### Literature Review

Regarding the relevant background about this topic, the Sub-secretary of Educational Quality has carried out an open event in 2011 in order to evaluate the students of the scholarship program in Public Ecuadorian High Schools. The results of the test determined the level of knowledge and domain of the English language by which it was demonstrated that at least sixty percent attained a grade of beginner level (A1, A2). The results showed that the education in Ecuador with regards to the English language teaching, at a national level, needs to improve in a significant way.

The information above was also supported by a research conducted by the Ministry of Education in 2011, based on the CRADLE project, whose results of the learners' evaluation showed grades of 13.06 and 13.19 points respectively; of a general average of 13.13 over a total of twenty marks in the English language. Likewise, the CRADLE project tested students in November 2009, where it was

evidenced that most students were categorized in level A1 and A2 according to the European Common Reference. This tendency was confirmed in 2011.

In order to answer the question as to why the importance of teaching English as a Second Language, we must first look at reviewing the different teaching methods in use today. Below, we will see what they are.

### *Teaching Approaches and Methods*

Many tendencies in teaching English were developed in order to improve the teaching process. An example of this is the Grammar Translation Method, where a language can be studied by means of a full analysis of its grammatical structure focusing in the translation of texts and sentences into the second language. This method focuses on reading and writing. The vocabulary is acquired by means of reading books and new terms are taught through a word list in two languages. (Richard & Rodgers, 2001).

Another method is the Natural approach. This emphasizes the exposure or input rather than the practice; it focuses on written material for input and what the students are more prepared emotionally to learn. Besides, they pay attention for a period of time listening to the language before producing it. Therefore, written material is used as a source for understanding the learner's input.

In addition to this, the Whole Language Approach focuses on learning to read and write in a natural way; focusing on real communication. Consequently, the main principles of this method are reliable literature and are used instead of artificial approaches in order to focus events of daily life rather than stories without pupils experience content. (Richard & Rodgers, 2001).

On the other hand, the Total Physical Response method emerged as one where teaching is based on action and speaking. Therefore, actions are performed while students are speaking. In this way, Asher (1977, p.4) states that “most of the grammatical structure of the target language and hundreds of vocabulary items can be learned from the skillful use of the imperative by the instructor”.

As a response to this teaching methodology, the Task- Based Language (TBL) Teaching was presented. This is where a group of planned tasks and instructions to teach a language were set up. In this context one of the main points of the TBL teaching method is “focused on process rather than product”. The basic elements of this language method are “purposeful activities and tasks that emphasize communication and meaning”. A last point in this method is that learners learn the language by “interacting communicatively and purposefully while engaged in the activities and tasks.” (Feez 1998, p.17)

### *Teaching Techniques*

Engagingly, maintaining a teenager's motivation through a variety of techniques is a key element which guarantees students' performance inside the classroom. Consequently, dynamic classes through different techniques reduce the risk of bad discipline, concentration and boredom. Hence, in order to keep a good environment inside the class, it is advisable to use the techniques suggested by Caroselli (2006), which are quizzes, handouts, buzz groups, storyboards, scripts and assessments. These techniques are adapted to students' personalities and ages and provide significant experiences during the learning process.

In addition, Brown (2000) classifies the techniques for language teaching in three groups; controlled, semi controlled, and free techniques. In the first group,

warm up activities, such as mimes, dance, songs, jokes and games, they are considered as controlled techniques because the students feel stimulated, relaxed, motivated, attentive, engaged and ready for the lesson.

In the second group, one finds semi controlled activities such as brainstorming, storytelling and question-answer activities. Brainstorming involves free and undirected contribution of many ideas on behalf of the students about a certain topic by the teacher. Story telling may be used to maintain the students' attention, motivation and prolonged practice.

Finally, in the third group, there are free techniques such as role-play, game and report. Role-play is related to students' acting out of specialized roles and functions. Several kinds of language game can be applied in the classroom, for instance, board and dice games, and making words. Reports are expositions about experiences and project work carried out by the students. All the above techniques are useful and necessary in most or all of the classes.

### *Managing Learning*

Another factor concerning teachers can be described by Reynolds' opinion (2003, p.163), "the classroom management of effective teachers is so good that observers hardly notice it. There is a little misbehavior in the classroom and rarely a noticeable disciplinary event".

In brief, when there is a good classroom management, students are able to understand what they are allowed to do inside the classroom. As a result, they identify their roles, routines and responsibilities when they are learning. Classroom management is crucial when, as teachers, we want to continue working without interruptions.



Although there are different situations in different classrooms, what is important is to pay attention to some principles of effective classroom management. Hence, Reid (2007) points out five principles in order to have successful classroom management; firstly, take time in order to provide feedback to the students; secondly, planning lesson helps to prevent failure and anticipate certain problems that students can experience; thirdly, the teacher must know students very well in order to anticipate potential learning problems such as dyslexia and dyspraxia; fourth, the teacher must delegate responsibility to students and let them feel important; and finally, students must develop classroom habits.

In addition, Gower (1995) shares various techniques for organizing and managing the class. Firstly, it is vital to establish eye contact between teacher and students. Also, one must use mimics, facial expression and gestures in order to have a good classroom management and communication and finally, educators need to know students' names in order to create a friendly and cooperative environment.

### *Lesson Design*

In addition to the above, Woodward (2001) proposes some important aspects for lesson design. In this way, teachers have to think how long a lesson is; it has been recognized that this is in the students' interest and what one expects on how they will act in class. However, what is important in a lesson are the resources applied to reach our goals, the teachers' role is to support students before, during and after classes. However, planning a lesson requires a high level of resources and activities to boost the students' confidence, saving time in classes.

The teachers usually agree with some crucial elements for a lesson plan. Brown (2000) shows some basic elements to design a good lesson plan. In this way,

teachers have to set goals and objectives to accomplish at the end of the school year or semester. And, according to that, set material and equipment is the key to planning a lesson and obviously procedures which involve techniques, and activities done by students guarantee success inside the classroom. Consequently, if we plan something, we expect to have evidence of the knowledge acquired, which can be done by evaluating activities and giving extra classes to those who fail the evaluations.

Gower (1995), states that the lessons plan has several important roles, for example preparing planning with the purpose that the students can fulfill the objectives at the end of each lesson. Besides, the tutor must record the activities and tasks carried out by the students after every class, and this information will be helpful to create a future lesson plan.

### *Class Size*

With regards to classroom conditions, according to Brown (2000), an ideal number of students in classes is twelve, where teachers can work effectively catching their attention, which does not happen when there is a large number of students, which is usually higher than thirty students. In the same way, feedback is easily performed when teachers are good at managing large classes, they can interact as much as possible with students, letting them work by pairs and groups.

Also, Woodward, (2001) suggests planning as a strategy when working in large classes, encouraging them to work by groups, where instructions have to be adequately presented and performed inside the classroom. Planning is crucial when teachers want to encourage all students to work together. Activities should be

planned considering the different types of learners in classes and the way how they interact with new knowledge.

Many people considered large classes as a problem; however, this fact should not have a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning process. Another important aspect is related to the use of the teacher's methodology and how to organize interaction among the students, to give attention to learner needs personalizing the classes and evaluating properly their work. Byram, (2000).

### *Classroom Space*

The space in the classroom must attract and sustain the activities which are planned by the teacher. Horizontal rows are a useful way to work individually with the teacher, because it focuses on the broadcaster, furthermore, it allows pupils to work two by two in the classroom. For instance, Morrow & Weinstein, 1986 say that moving a library into a corner take the pupils to be involved in literature tasks during the class.

Concerning the physical environment in the classroom Brown (2000) explains that there are external factors which can affect students' learning, such as noise and weather conditions. Therefore, a good sized classroom must guarantee comfort to all students despite weather conditions and number of students inside a classroom. Besides, everything must be organized, clean and in order because if something is unsuitable, this can affect the students' learning and motivation.

### *Seating Arrangement*

In relation to seating arrangement, Gower (1995) says that "classroom furniture always affects the learning atmosphere to some extent but the choice will

almost certainly be outside your control. Inevitably, teachers can only have flexible seating arrangement within the constraint of the institution”.

The position of the chairs should be arranged according to the size of the class or group work and the type of activity. It is recommended that students sit round a table. In addition, when students are going to be evaluated in reading comprehension it is advisable to turn learners away from one another to provide them self-determination of concentration and at the same time to avoid cheating during a test. Gower, 1995.

Reinforcing what was expressed above, Harmer (1998) determines the arrangement of furniture in the classroom, for example, to keep desks ordered by rows in order to keep eye contact between teacher and students; circles and horse shoes to be used in smaller classes where learners have visual contact among them and sit students at individual desks because teachers can monitor and help them.

#### *Classroom and/or Teaching Resources*

Concerning classroom and teaching resources, Gower (1995) points out some tips at using some teaching resources. Firstly, the use of the board which has to be clean, written with legible handwriting and well organized. Secondly, the use of an overhead projector where transparencies have to be prepared in advance and presented systematically in the classroom. Thirdly, realia as a visual resource which lets students visualize what they are studying, and finally videos where students watch and hear what they are learning.

Additionally, Worth (1984) recognizes visual and illustration material to be applied inside the classroom. Both resources are material to carry out role plays, drama and controlled activities, but visual material lets students identify graphically

what they learn such as illustrated pictures, that is a presentation but both can capture a students' attention.

Furthermore, Hakem & Wright (1991) propose the correct use of the whiteboard where the right part can be the diverse parts of different things, the left hand, to write examples down and design diagrams; the overhead projector, to show written material or imagines; audio cassettes, tapes to bring real spoken language into the classroom; video where simultaneously students can listen and watch scenes of lively language.

### *Classroom Observation*

On the other hand, the monitoring process happens when teacher works with a whole group in pronunciation practice class. An observation class allows us to identify how fast or slow the lesson is, in order to make decisions concerning the teacher's performance in class. Regarding this, Gower, Phillips & Walters (1995, p.50) say that, “An aim of pair work and group work is often to encourage fluent, uninterrupted communication, even at times when the students’ aim is more product oriented to decide on the answers to a set of questions, to write a story.”

Moreover, when activities have been started by students, teachers can stand back to see what groups are satisfactorily working and what groups are facing problems. Teachers always have to be aware in giving clear instructions and support students in order for the students to work during the whole period. (Gower R., et al, 1995).

Furthermore, Clem & Walker (2005) confirm that class observation will vary depending on students. They say “observational role is not simply a temporary role

that he or she internalizes and carries on into their teaching. The visual contact is very important in class because it communicates action”.

On the contrary, Reid (2007) thinks that monitoring is a bridge between teacher and students. Preferably, the target is that learners can take control and direct their own monitoring of activities; this fact can become a learning experience.

### *Students' Motivation*

Similarly, all teaching process is related to students' attitude and the way how they face their education. In this case, everything is related to factors that affect students motivation, the type of motivation they have and how teachers deal with it through approaches or methodology in order to be effective on what students are learning. But firstly, it is necessary to understand what motivation means.

In this regard, Salkind (2008, p.687) defines this in the following way: “Motivation as the energy and direction of behavior. Motivation is important in educational psychology because it explains and predicts the behavior of students, teachers, and administrators in school settings”. Therefore, the teaching process responds to what students want to get in the future.

Consequently, there are two factors which it will affect students' performance. Internal factors could be the dispositions that students have, which can be biological, affective and cognitive. In other words, the internal factors constitute the energy which will guide students' aspirations and goals. While external factors are aspects related to culture, socialization with adult people and environment context which will determine students' adaptation in the educational system.

Another aspect is the students' type of motivation, which is intrinsic and extrinsic. The first one is related to self-motivation where people want to get a

desired goal and determination in order to be succeeded on what they are planning. This is shown by Woolfolk (2007, p.373) who states that “When we are intrinsically motivated, we do not need incentives or punishments, because the activity itself is a reward”. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation depends on an environmental influence and the students will react according to the type of influence they have. However, it is necessary to point out that motivation can vary depending on the situation and where it is promoted.

Referring to approaches to generate students’ motivation, Lumsden (1994) states that the teachers have to consider that if there is a rich range of environmental stimulus then the students will be encouraged to reach their goals, in this way their studies will be effective. On the other hand, establishing punishments must be avoided at school, and supporting children is a key element in the learning process. Therefore, there is a real need to combine approaches and methodology in order for students and teachers to reach their objectives and to obtain effectiveness in the pedagogical practice. Teachers have to think that students are human beings who need mutual support and interaction.

Motivation is the internal and external energy. Teachers have to consider that they have an opportunity to help students in their learning process, promoting an adequate environment, by which they allow the students to progress in their studies. Therefore, classes have to be full of stimulus where students can interact positively. (Lumsden, L., 1994)

### *Learning Styles*

Teaching students implies to have some considerations in order to succeed at learning another language. Teachers have to be aware and recognize factors that

affect students learning, their preferences and how to teach students in order to have the best result inside learning process.

Evidently, according to Salking, N. (2008) the importance of learning styles is identifying how students learn. In this case, the factors related to the learning styles are: Modality preferences where people preference is evident for visual, auditory, tactile and kinesthetic learning; and personality type where students engage emotionally at doing and learning tasks and social factors, where learners can learn or work in a collaborative way with other students. Identifying these factors is the key at the moment to teach students in classes, because the learning process can be planned and adapted to all students in the class.

If teachers recognize factors that affect students' learning, teachers will be able to identify students' preferences, according to each learning style. In this case some students prefer to study visually, others through the auditory channel. Besides, students can be independent or not at doing their learning process, which implies preferences that are totally related to learning styles, where teachers have to work at providing necessary stimulus to reach success in the teaching process.

Finally, teachers have to know how to teach students. Diagnosing, encouraging and reflecting on students' needs is the key in the learning process, where teachers identify everything that is to be done as a planned process inside classes. Therefore, if teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses, it is possible to be effective and successful in the learning process. (Riener, C. & Willingham, D., 2010).

Another important aspect to be considered in the topic learning styles, is the one analyzed by Coffield, Ecclestone, Hall & Moseley (2004, p.598) who explain it



as follows: “Learning style is divided into five major strands called stimuli. The stimulus strands are: environmental, emotional, sociological, psychological and physiological. These elements significantly influence the individuals learning”. For this reason, stimuli is a fundamental part in teaching students, but this depends on other factors like the environment, students’ emotional maturity and sociological stimuli, which will determine the students’ success in the learning process.

Likewise, if teachers recognize what the students’ needs and factors are, this will determine success at everything that is done as part of the teaching process. Conscious teachers are best prepared to obtain the best results from students, because if there is enough motivation and stimulus, students will have a reason to learn something relevant for their future.

#### *Students’ Intelligence or Aptitude to Learn English*

Students’ intelligence has been related to certain types of tests and routines. In this regard Lightbown & Spada (2006, p.57) state that “over the years, some researchers have shown that IQ scores were a good means of predicting success in second language learning. However, as suggested above, IQ tests may be more strongly related to metalinguistic knowledge than communicative ability.” About the aptitude to learn English, this term has been associated to the ability to learn fast by John Carroll in 1991. Consequently, it can be theorized that some learners learn easily and quickly but others make an effort to reach what they expect to obtain.

Moreover, Cook (2008) states that there are some students who are gifted and can learn a second language, others are unfortunate, and likewise some immigrants living abroad for many years have acquired the domain of the language while other immigrants in the same conditions as the rest, could not speak English. In other

countries such as Pakistan and the African continent people speak two or three languages in their daily living due to multilingual existence, and there is almost no individual who cannot accomplish the demands of a multilingual reality.

Additionally, Harmer (1991, p.41) says in his text *The Practice of English Language Teaching* “those with a more general view of things – whose analytical abilities are not so highly developed and who received and use language in a more message-oriented way appear to be at a disadvantage”.

Below, the theoretical support on five previous studies about the researched topic will be developed and expanded.

Sakizli & Saricoban (2006) studied about factors influencing how teachers manage their classroom. The purpose of this research was to determine the factors that influence successful classroom management.

However, Sakizli & Saricoban conclude that successful classes can be affected by factors concerning students and teachers and school environment factors. The first refers to the characteristics and need of the learners as methods which are used into management skills. School environment comprises physical factors in which we can mention sights, sound and feelings, how chairs are arranged, and the use of the board. Also, social factors, for example, a successful class may be affected by a large number of students, educational aspects as the presentation of subject matter, and how teacher gives instructions.

Finally, regarding teachers, Sakizli & Saricoban state that it is required that teachers develop an effective lesson design. Furthermore, the methods and approaches used by a teacher should motivate students. Other important aspects,

used by the teacher, such as roles and styles, voice and body language, play a crucial role in classes.

Khamkhien (2010) carried out a research in which he explains factors that affect language learning strategy. The goal of this study is to define how motivation, experience and gender affect the language learning strategy when learners study English and compare these factors with the strategy used by Vietnamese students.

The process of the research was developed with one hundred thirty-six undergraduate Vietnamese participants; twenty four males and twenty eight females. The instruments used in this study were 80-item Strategy Inventory for Language Learning and a background questionnaire. In order to obtain information concerning how factors affect the selection of strategies in language learning the questionnaire was modified. This research focuses on exploring the function of gender, motivation and experience when students study English. However, two sub questions were included concentrating on variables, motivation and experience.

Finally, the author concluded that differences in gender do not depend on the selection of what language strategies they could learn, in fact, there are no differences between Vietnamese male students and female students. Concerning motivation, the results determined an important effect on the usage of strategies in language learning because of motivation between the two groups of students, motivation had a significant impact on language learning strategies.

Aduwa & Iyamu (2001) carried out an investigation about factors that affect the quality of English language teaching and learning in secondary schools in Nigeria.

The objective of this research was to know how often the teachers in High Schools use instructional resources and appropriate methods when they teach English, and identify if Nigerian High School students learn English in a favorable environment.

With regards to the techniques applied to their analysis by the above mentioned authors, questionnaire and observation were included. The content of the questionnaire, which was about demographic aspects, was written in four parts. For example, the location and kind of school, the frequency of teaching resources used by teachers, and the atmosphere of the institution. The research was completed when they observed certain classroom actions at specific moments, in order to answer questions as to perceive the features of the learning atmosphere.

As a final point, the authors concluded that the percentage of students who failed in language tests vary between fifty- five and seventy-five percent, in the last decade. Learners who manage to go into university in Nigeria still lack a proper command of the English language, due to a lack of preparation and the low level of education in English in Nigerian Public High School.

Also, Chang (2010) researched about factors which affect implementation of communicative language teaching in Taiwanese college English classes. The aim of this inquiry project was to reveal what factors stimulate and impede the implementation of CLT by English teachers in Taiwanese college.

Methodology applied to this study focused on personalized interviews in order to know the participants' perceptions and experience about research questions. Interviews were carried out in Mandarin. Open-ended questions, predetermined interviews were done by the researcher, allowing more flexibility. In addition, two

open-ended questions were asked for the data collection in order to search what functions can encourage or can be a stumbling block for the application of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) by teachers. Furthermore, interviews were tape recorded and time spent in each one was about forty-five to sixty minutes. As interviews were conducted in Mandarin language, researcher 1 translated and transcribed from Mandarin into English. After manuscripts were approved by participants and translation was checked by two professional reviewers, investigation was approved by Institutional Review Board. Data was analyzed thematically, divided and categorized into small units.

Lastly, the author's conclusion was that teacher plays a very important role in the practice of CLT. The practice of CLT does not depend on the teacher but also on the student's motivation and disposition in the use of English in the classroom. The school maintenance inspires teachers to implement CLT.

On the other hand, two researchers conducted an investigation relating to factors that affect students' classroom participation in second language acquisition (Choo & Mohamad 2010). The goal of this investigation work was to detect students' perception and participation in second language class, research the factors that affect learners' classroom participation and examine orators' perceptions in the schoolroom.

The research process was performed through four instruments: observations, pilot study, questionnaire and interviews. Pilot study was executed in English by five students who had to determine the problems that they experimented when the questions were answered. In relation to observations: in two classes three observations were carried out, the result was that four active and four passive

students were recognized as respondents for interviews. A total of thirty-five questionnaires were delivered to thirty-five pupils who were observed in each class. Concerning speakers of Teaching English as a Secondary Language (TESL), two of them were approached for controlled interviews during a period of twenty-five minutes.

Finally, researchers concluded that students' participation in class is not active; in addition, factors which affected participation of students in classroom were fear of speaking, anxiety while they answered the questionnaire, and deficiency in comprehension of the teaching contents.

## Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

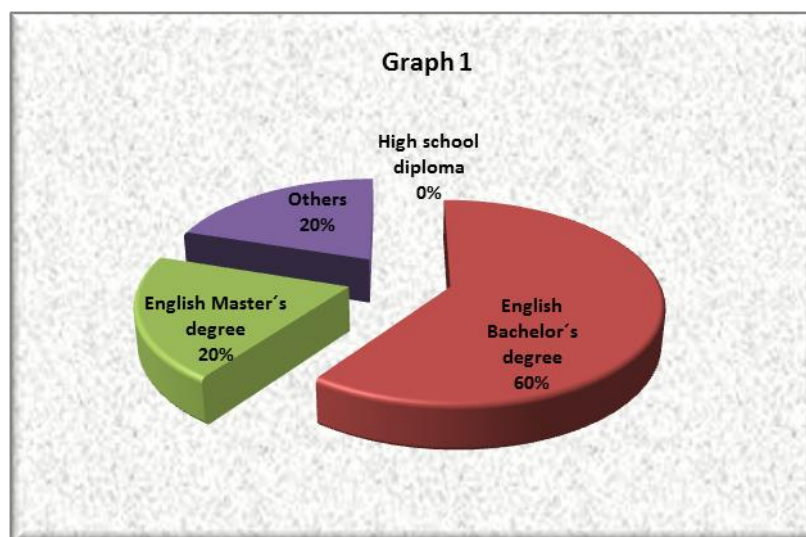
The following section of the research is very relevant to the whole document as it shows how some factors affect the English language teaching-learning process in the fifteen classes which were observed during the research process. In this case, the analysis is quantitative and below it will be explained how each variable in each class was analyzed.

Therefore, the factors considered to carry out the present research were concerning teachers, students, classroom and educational institutions. Each factor included some questions which were selected from teacher's questionnaire. The teachers' answers were analyzed and supported by means of information collected by observation sheets and the students' questionnaires which were applied in the observed classes. Also, the pie charts were based on the data obtained from the teachers' questionnaires to show the quantitative results of the research.

## Quantitative Analysis

### *Factors Concerning Teachers*

*Which level of education do teachers have?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

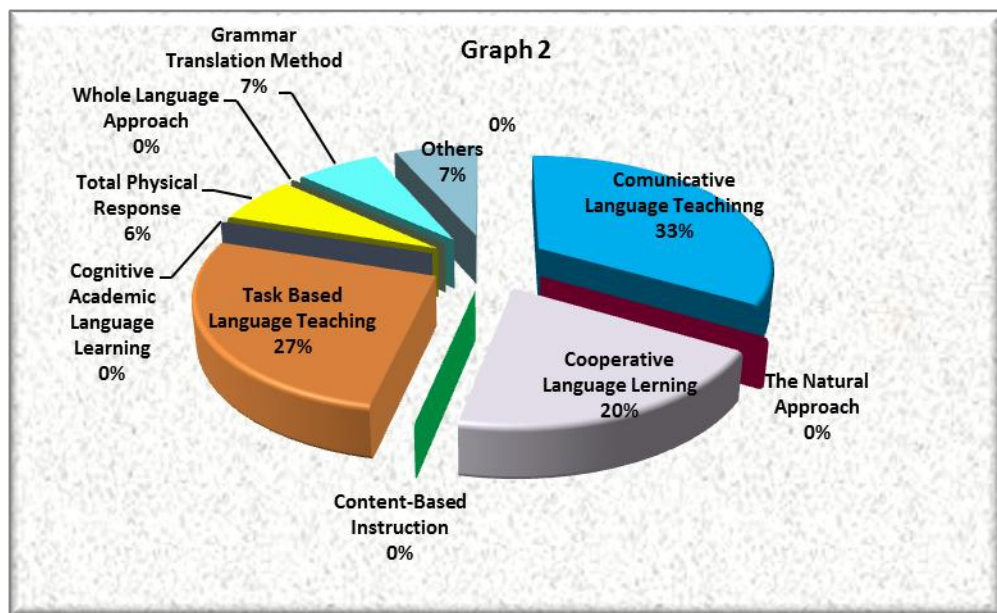
According to the obtained results, graph 1 reveals that most of the teachers have an English Bachelor's degree; 20% of them have an English master's degree and 60% have Bachelor's degree, and 20% have degrees in other areas. These results corroborate SENESCYT and the CRADLE'S project findings, where they conclude that about 70% of teachers who work in public high schools have beginner level.

In the teachers' interview, they mentioned that they would like to continue studying in order to get a master's degree, but unfortunately they do not have financial support. The answers and observed classes did not really coincide with the results because, although they all had a type of degree, most could not pronounce in English properly. This is because they learned English in a non- English speaking



country. And, this was evident in the observed classes. Furthermore, the teachers said that the main problem when they taught English in Ecuador is that most students lack a basic foundation in the English language.

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



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

Interpreting the results from this question, as the graph 2 shows, 33% of the teachers used the Communicative Language Teaching method, 27% used the Task Based Language Teaching method, 20% applied the Cooperative Language Learning method, 7% applied the Grammar Translation Method, 6% practiced the Total Physical Response method, and 7% used other methods, such as one teacher who used a mix of methods.

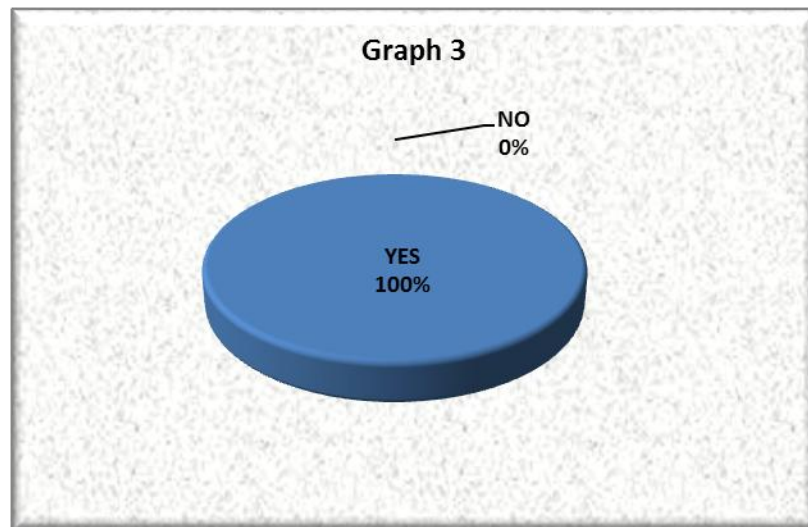
From the observed classes, most teachers only used three methods at the most. As the above graph shows, the most popular methods used were the Communicative Language Teaching method, the Task Based Language Teaching

and the Cooperative Language Learning method. As stated by Harmer, J. (1998) the Communicative Language Teaching has two main strands: the one which was mostly used is when the language is not just bits of grammar, it also involves language functions such as inviting, agreeing and disagreeing, suggesting which students should learn how to use. They also need to be aware of the need for appropriateness when talking and writing to people in terms of the kind of language they use

The least used method was the Grammar Translation Method, which was used by one teacher. According to Harmer, J. (1998) the danger with grammar-translation is that it teaches people about the language and does not really help them to learn the language itself. This confirms the suspicions that the observed teachers may need updated training in methods.

According to the students' opinion, the methods applied by the teachers are appropriate because they feel motivated to learn the English language. Furthermore, most of the students considered that their activities performed in the classroom are easy. The results show a varied use of methods and techniques and the students seem to be content with their use. Jones and Jones (2001:29) state that high expectations, active engagement of students, cooperative learning and the incorporation of various aspects of students' cultures are important figures in effective teaching. In the observed classes, the students had the opportunity to develop speaking and listening skills.

*Do teachers use whole group activities to teach their lessons?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

In this graph, 100% of the teachers answered this question positively, stating that they use whole group activities to teach their lessons, because the students can relate to each other more easily, interacting and learning from each other, interchanging ideas, and improving their language learning. However, from the student interviews, one student did not consider that his teacher used whole group activities. Also, from the observed class I was able to corroborate the student's opinion that the teachers sometimes do not use whole group activities, because while the observed classes took place, it was observed that in some cases the students worked individually while other students worked in groups.

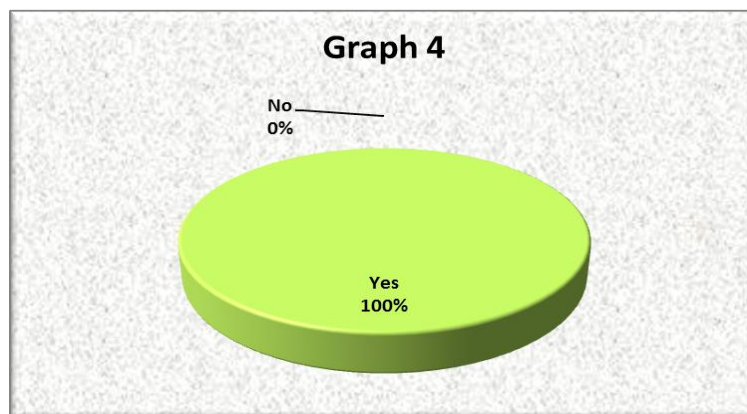
It was observed that nearly all of the observed classes' seating arrangements were in a row, and this relates directly to the use of techniques for teaching students in whole groups. In this regard, Harmer, J. (1998), states that when the students sit in rows in classrooms, there are obvious advantages. It means that the

teacher has a clear view of all the students and the students can all see the teacher. And, it makes lecturing easy; enabling the teacher to maintain eye contact with the people he or she is talking to. Also, the teacher can easily walk up and down making more personal contact with individual students and watching what they are doing. Orderly rows imply teachers working with the whole class.

Furthermore, with regards to the students' characteristics and needs, Jones and Jones (2001:29) state that high expectations, active engagement of students, cooperative learning and the incorporation of various aspects of students' cultures are important figures in effective teaching. They also say that learners may have differences in their characteristics such as: age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation, learning styles and strategies, multiple intelligences, personal needs, developmental needs and cultural needs.

Consequently, it is probable that a few students who did not participate in the whole class activity had other needs or expectations.

*Do teachers use individual activities to teach their lessons?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

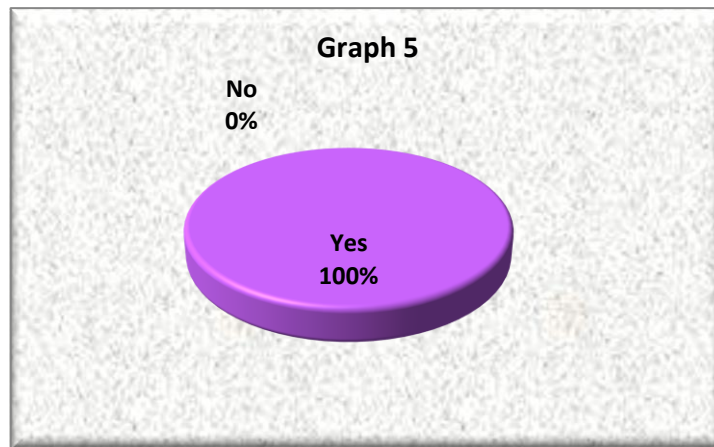
From the above graph one can observe that all the teachers answered positively; nevertheless, 93% of the students responded favorably and 7% of the students replied negatively, and this corresponded to two learners.

However, according to the observed classes, only 33% of the teachers (about 5 teachers) practiced individual activities to teach their lessons. Some educators argued that individual activities are used to provide feedback to the students. Other teachers stated that some tasks required individual work, for example, writing activities. Another reason given by the teachers regarding individual work was that it depended on the teaching activity and they explained that individual work was used to evaluate students.

Not all the observed teachers carried out individual activities. In this regard, Reid, G. (2007) states that the time taken to provide individual feedback is important to personalize the learning process. Also, Feedback needs to be provided on an individual basis with opportunities for students to discuss this. Moreover, Reid, G. (2007) states that feedback is an integral part of learning and should be seen not as the final stage in learning but as a source of support, a guide for monitoring and a bridge for achieving the desired learning outcome.

Likewise, Brown D. (2000), states that ideally, language classes should have no more than a dozen students. They should be large enough to provide diversity and student interaction and small enough to give students plenty of opportunity to participate and to get individual attention. On the other hand, he also states that large classes present some problems where individual teacher-student attention is minimized.

*Do teachers use group work activities to teach their lessons?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

According to the results obtained through the teachers' questionnaire, 100% of the teachers answered affirmatively to this question, emphasizing that they used group work activities to teach their lessons, as it is shown in the graph five.

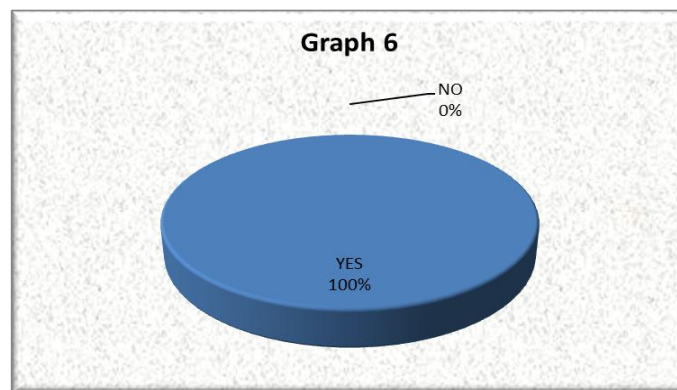
Nonetheless, 7% of the surveyed students answered negatively to this same question. The rest of the students, that is 93%, answered affirmatively. It was directly noted by the researcher from the observed classes, that only 33% of the teachers applied group work activities, equivalent to five teachers.

There is a very significant difference from what is noted on the teacher's answers and the observed classes; nearly 1 in 3 of the teachers did not actually use group work activities in the observed classes. This is also corroborated by some students' answers, as discussed above.

Concerning the importance of group work activities, Woodward, T. (2001) says that " Contrary to what teachers of smaller groups sometimes think, teachers

of large classes need to use pair and group work a lot in order to give students natural oral/aural target language practice and use. When doing group work with large classes, you need to plan it well otherwise there will be chaos”.

*Do teachers use English most of the time in their classes?*



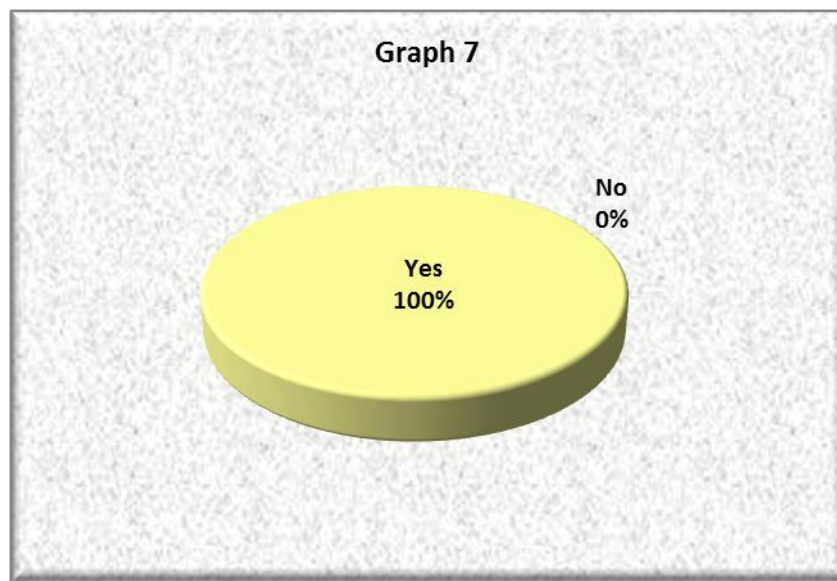
Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

Interpreting results from this question, the above graph shows that 100% of the teachers state that they use English most of the time in their classes. However, two students affirmed that their teachers did not use spoken English in their classes, corresponding to 13%. Most of the teachers, that is, 87% do carry out their classes in English, according to the students' questionnaire.

Also, by means of the observed classes it could be determined that 53 % of the teachers (eight use English language in their classes all of the time. Likewise, 33% of educators (five) use spoken English language in the class 75% of the time and Spanish 25% of the time, in the class. And, 7% of teachers (equivalent to 1 teacher) used the English language 50% of the time. Finally, the last 7% corresponding to one teacher who used English language in a 25%.

The class observation coincides perfectly with the student's opinion. Consequently, sometimes the student's and teacher's perception about the use of English in their classes seem to differ.

*Do teachers plan their lessons?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

According to the teachers' answers to this question, 100% of the answers were affirmative, as it is shown in graph seven. However, 7% of the students, equivalent to two learners, said that the teacher performed other kinds of activities in the classroom and no time was given to the students when a task was assigned by the teachers.

In contrast, through the observed classes, it was evidenced that 33% of the surveyed students (matching to five students) worked on lesson topic and review. Another 20% (equivalent to three students) worked on assessment feedback. Two



students or 13% worked on material resources. And finally, one student (or 7%) worked on warm up activities.

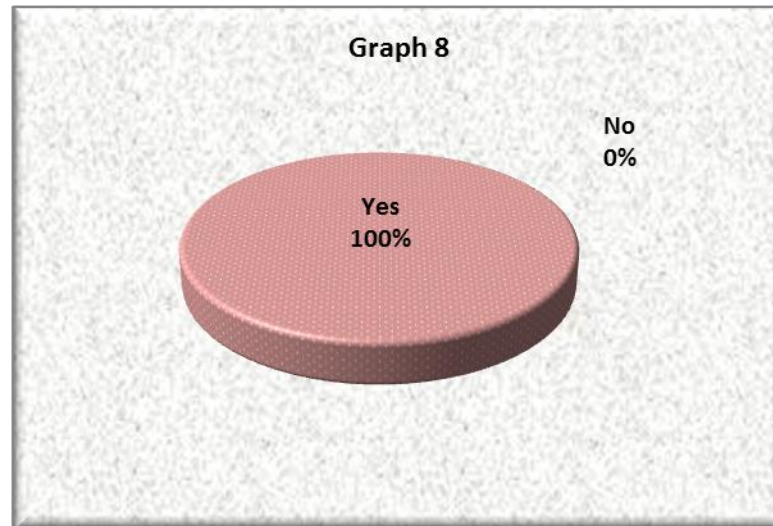
This question was not directly applied to the students but an outcome can be inferred from the question “Does your teacher carry out different activities that allow you to interact with your peers?” To this question, only one student (or 13%) said no. We can infer from this that the majority of students were content with the activities or lesson plan. This in itself means that only one student (13%) perceived the lesson plan to be either absent or very limited.

From the literature review we see that, for example, Woodward T. (2001) states that lesson planning is a legitimate subject matter for a lesson or part of one. These might include planning for time, conduct, resources, and much more, for example, on resources these can be word processors, newspapers, digital dictionaries, puppets, masks, mobile phones, internet access. It could be that the above student who perceived a limited lesson plan came to this conclusion due to the absence of the resources mentioned above.

Moreover, Woodward, T. (2001) mentions there are a number of reasons why we would want to plan our courses and lessons, and these may include the following: thinking things through before you teach helps to reduce feelings of uncertainty or panic and inspires you instead with a sense of confidence and clarity, or it can inspire confidence in students who pick up a feeling of purpose, progression and coherence.

Brown, D. (2000) also mentions that the writing of lesson plans has a number of important functions, such as an aid to planning, to be a working document, and to have a record suitably amended after the lesson.

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



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

Concerning this question, 100% of the teachers stated that when teaching their lessons they considered aspects such as discipline, timing, feedback and instructions, as it is displayed in graph eight.

Also, according to learners' viewpoint, fifteen students (which was equivalent to 100%) responded positively that teachers control discipline. However, regarding timing, 7% of the class (two learners) answered negatively, and 93% of the students said that a time was assigned by the teacher to perform the tasks. With respect to the instructions given by the teachers, 100% of the class replied positively, stating that the instructions given by the educator were clear.

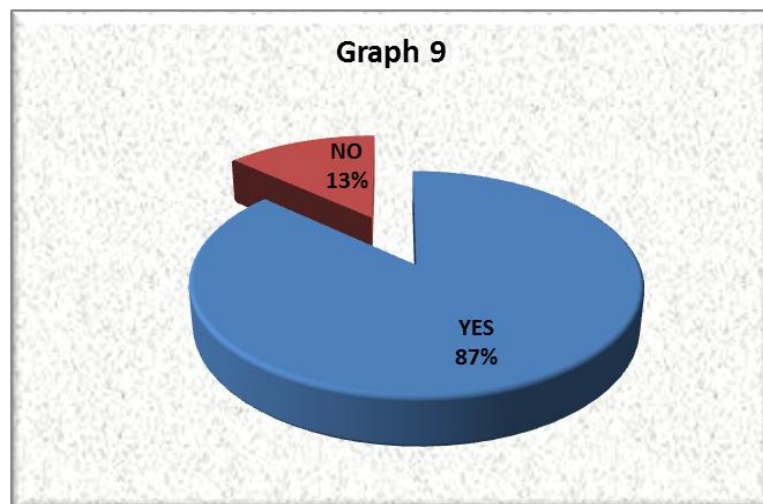
The students and teachers coincided in answering this question positively. And, from the observed classes the discipline was very good, the timing was within the time schedule, but feedback was very difficult to achieve because of the high

number of students in each class. There was about 60% of feedback in general but this feedback was not personalized.

The instructions were carried out very clearly and the majority of teachers repeated the instructions. The class observations differ slightly from the student's and teacher's perception of the feedback given, because feedback for me should be more personalized. Khamkhien, A. (2010) states that feedback also fosters motivation because it gives valuable information to the students on their progress. It also provides teachers with the areas that need revising and improvement. The aspects such as timing, feedback and instruction cannot be given to the students in a general way because they do not necessarily feel identified in the process.

#### *Factors Concerning Students*

*Do teachers consider students' needs to teach English successfully?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

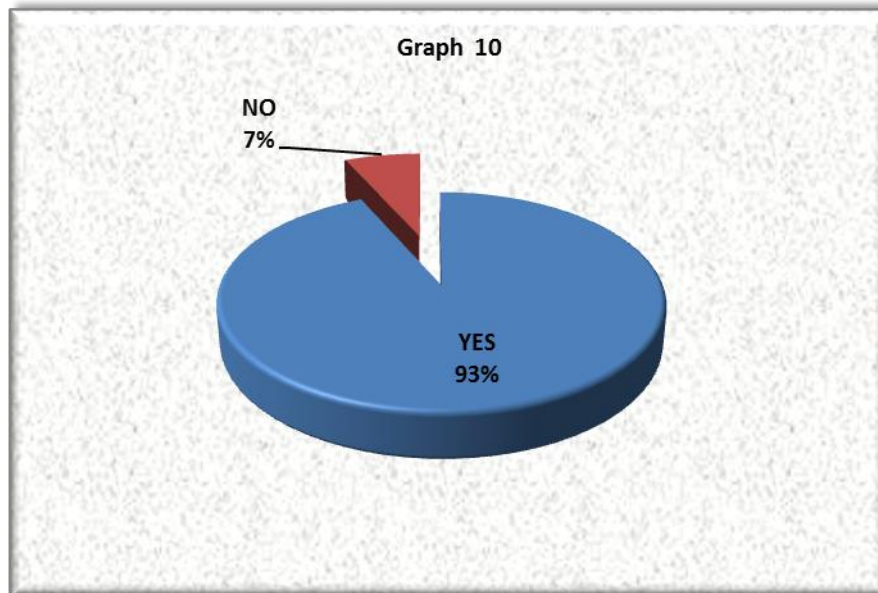
When asking this question to the teachers, most of the teachers, 87% of them (or thirteen teachers) considered the students' needs to teach English successfully, and two teachers said that they did not consider students' needs. These corresponded to 13% of a total of 15.

In the same way, according to the obtained results through the observation sheets, 60% and equivalent to nine teachers, considered students' needs, and six teachers which is equals to 40%, did not consider students' needs.

On the other hand, the observed classes evidenced that 40% of the tutors did not carry out dynamic activities or a variety of tasks. These results did not assist in the students' motivation and attitude.

Further studies by Riener and Willingham (2010) highlighted that teachers have to know how to teach students and must make a diagnosis of students' needs. If teachers firstly identify students' strengths and weaknesses, it will be possible to have an effective and successful class. Recognizing the needs of each student is a key to the progress of the student's learning. Students' needs are varied and include internal and external factors, which may be social, family, medical, financial, psychological, and many others.

*Do teachers consider students' level to teach English successfully?*



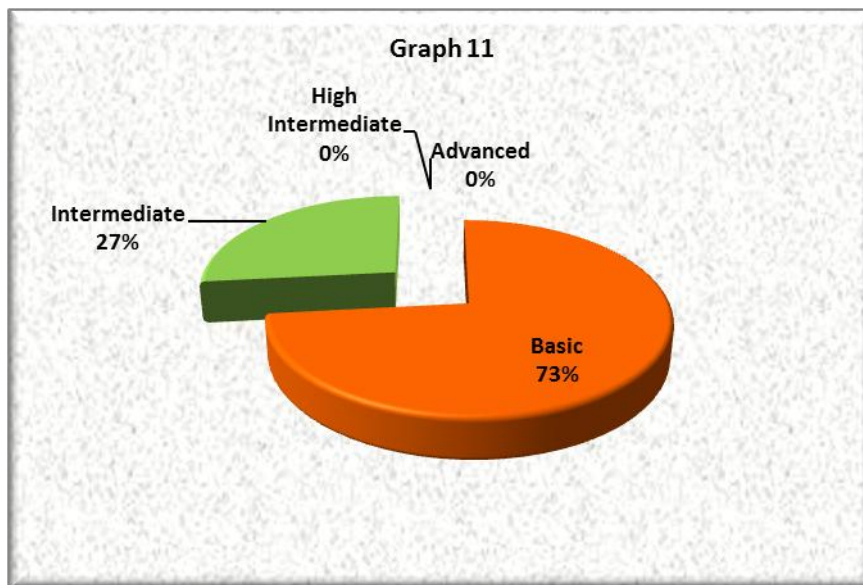
Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

As it is shown in graph ten, 93%, of teachers consider students' level to teach successfully inside the classroom. On the contrary, 7% of teachers do not consider students' level when they teach.

Besides, the obtained results in the observation sheets proved that ten students (67%) had a basic level of English language knowledge, and five learners (33%) had an intermediate level of English language.

These results can vary depending on the type of Educational Institutions because some of these high schools have audiovisual rooms and teaching resources which encourage the students to participate dynamically in classes, and unfortunately, other institutions do not have them.

*Which is the level of the students?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Student's Questionnaire

In this question, eleven students equivalent to 73% said that they have a basic level of English language and only 27% (equivalent to 4 students) have an intermediate level of English language knowledge, as it is shown in graph eleven.

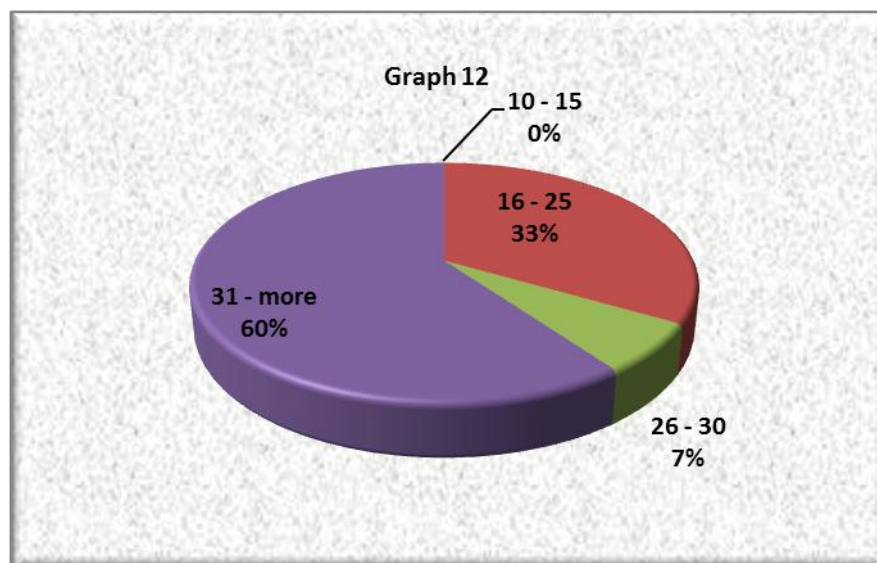
Furthermore, the above information provided is confirmed by the obtained results in the observation sheets, evidencing that most of the students, that is, 67% had a basic English level, corresponding to ten students. Also 33% of students had an intermediate English level.

Likewise, low level of English knowledge by students was evidenced through a test applied by the Ecuadorian-British CRADLE Project, in November of 2009. The results of this study showed that most students were in a level A1 and A2 (which are beginner levels) according to the Common European Reference for the English language (an international standard).

Now, when interpreting the results, it can be established that students English language level is low; 73% of the students have basic English knowledge; meanwhile, 27% of the students have an intermediate level of English. This situation is due to the fact that Ecuadorian children start learning English as a foreign language when they start 8<sup>th</sup> year of basic education. In this case, Piaget concluded that the best age to learn other languages is from the ages of two and seven years of age. Consequently, students are not learning English language at early ages where it is demonstrated that people can learn a language easily.

#### *Factors concerning Classrooms*

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



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

According to the teachers' opinion, as graph twelve shows, the teachers answered that they worked with more than thirty-one students in their classes. Also,

five teachers (33%) worked with sixteen to twenty-five learners. Lastly, one teacher (7%) worked with twenty-six to thirty students.

In addition, from the students' questionnaires, one can see that 73% of the students (corresponding to 11 students) said that the number of students in the class favored their learning of the language, while 27% of the students (equivalent to 4 students) replied that this was not conducive to their learning.

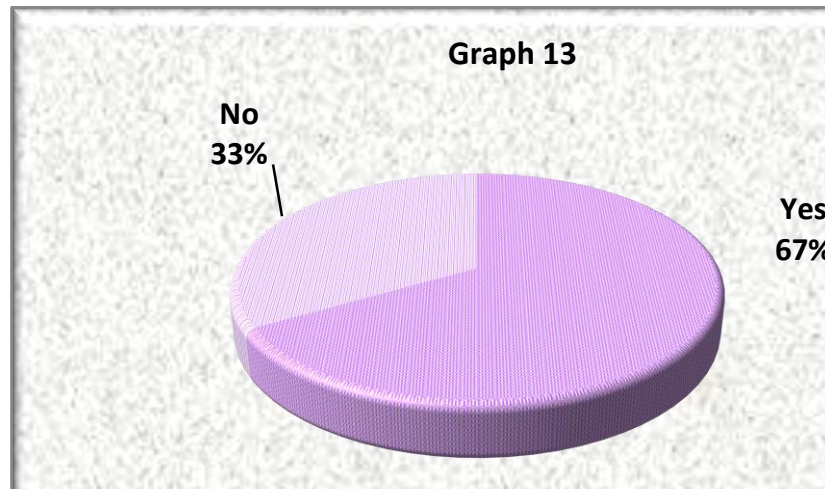
On the other hand, the results registered in the observation sheet showed that in seven classrooms there were more than thirty-one students (matching 46%). Also, in four classrooms the number of students was between sixteen to twenty-five (equivalent to 27%). Additionally, in three classrooms there were from twenty-six to thirty learners (corresponding to 20%). And, as a final point, in one classroom there were up to fifteen students, which was equal to 7%.

From the results one can see that many students perceived that this number of students (on average 30) did not stop them from learning English. In fact, Byram, M. (2000) corroborates this by stating that large classes are widely considered to be problematic for language learning and yet some teachers effectively manage large classes in which students learn successfully.

The above author also concludes that class size in itself does not necessarily have a negative impact on the quality of teaching and learning. What matters is teachers' and students' perceptions and assumptions about large classes, the teacher methods and the ways of organizing interaction, and giving attention to individual learners and adequately assessing students' work.



*Do teachers feel comfortable working with this number of students?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

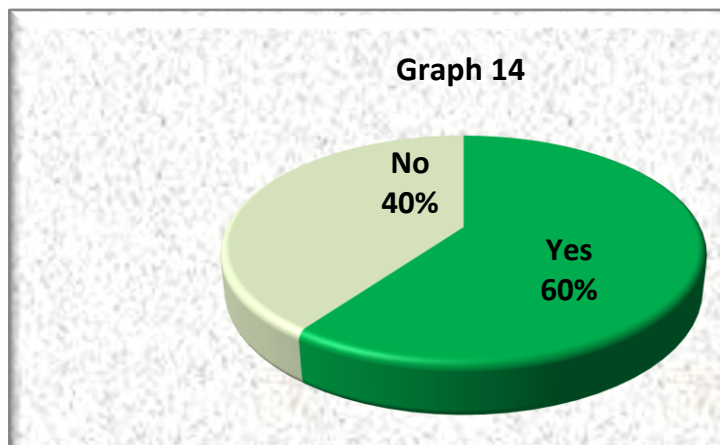
In relation to this question, ten teachers (67%) considered working with great number of students comfortable. And, five teachers (33%) did not feel comfortable working with this number of students.

Similarly, eleven of the surveyed students (73%) favored the English teaching-learning process with this number of students in a class, and four students (27%) disagreed.

On the other hand, the observed classes revealed that it is not good to work with a great number of students because classes cannot be personalized and the teachers cannot help each one of the students with their needs.

In contrast to the above, Brown (2002) states that ideally, language classes should have no more than twelve students. The reasons that the author provides is that with this number of students, it is easier to captivate the student's attention, feedback is readily and quickly given, and the students can interact with each other in a variety of activities, such as work in pairs and groups of three.

*Do teachers have enough space to work with this group of students?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso

Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

The graph number fourteen shows that nine teachers (60%) stated that they had enough space to work with the group of students, and six (40%) of them stated that they did not have enough space to work with.

Concerning the students' opinion, fourteen of them, (93%), considered that the classroom size was appropriate to work in a comfortable way, and only one student (7%) did not consider it appropriate.

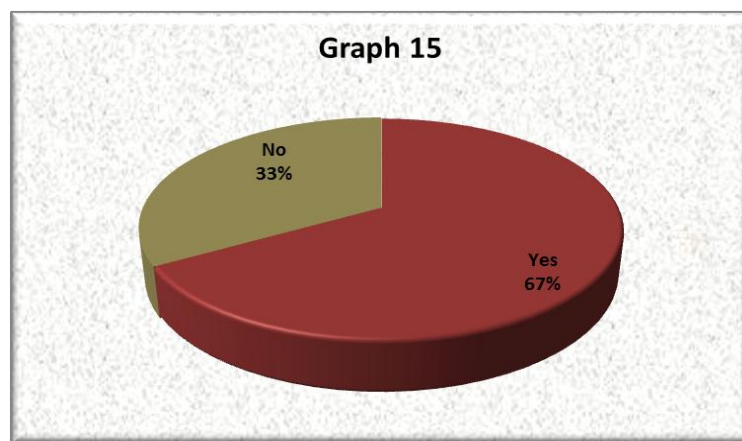
From the observed classes, it was evidenced that, in nine classrooms (60%), the students did not have enough space to move and participate in dynamic activities. On the contrary, the students had adequate space to perform the tasks in six classrooms (40%).

With regards to the space of the classrooms, the teachers' perception and the results of the observed classes corroborated each other. In contrast, the answer of the students show a marked difference, where they perceive that, for most of them, the space was sufficient.

Although the students' perception is limited to what they have experienced, Woolfolk, A. (1980) states that spaces for learning should invite and support the activities that teachers plan in their classroom, and they should respect the inhabitants of the space. This respect helps students identify themselves with their class.

Also, Manitoba Education (2011) agrees with the above, by stating that the physical arrangement of the furniture, supplies, and resources in a classroom is a critical factor in promoting positive behavior. In a well-designed classroom, the teacher can see all the students and they can all see the teacher. The students can also see presentations and displays such as agendas, behavioral expectations, strategy posters, and information on the board. Everyone can move about freely.

*Do teachers arrange students' seats in relation to the activities planned for their classes?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

Regarding student s' seating arrangement, it can be concluded that ten of the teachers (67%) planned activities in relation to the furniture. In contrast, five teachers (33%) said that they did not move the furniture around.

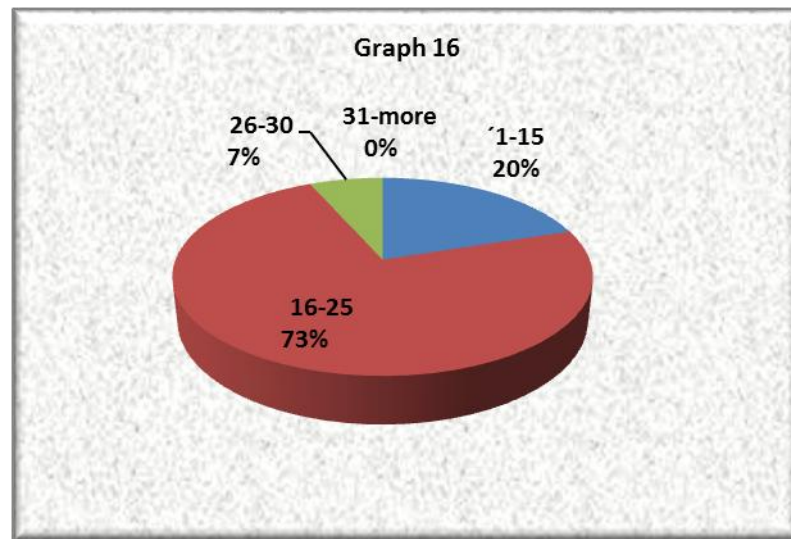
Moreover, twelve students (80%) expressed that they liked the way in which the desks were arranged by the teacher, when working in different types of tasks. Nonetheless, three students (20%) expressed that chairs and desks were not organized by the teacher.

Regarding the observed classes, it could be noticed that in eight classrooms (53%), teachers did not arrange students' writing desks, but in seven classrooms (47%), the teachers considered this aspect.

Likewise, Gower (1995) states that: "classroom furniture always affects the learning atmosphere to some extent but the choice will almost certainly be outside your control. Inevitably, teachers can only have flexible seating arrangement within the constraint of the institution". Gower also adds that the position of the chairs should be arranged according to the size of the class or group work and the type of activity.

In addition to the above, Harmer (1998) states the question: "What is the best seating for a class?" He further states that we are clearly seeing a number of different approaches in the different arrangements of chairs and tables and this raises a number of questions, such as: "Is one kind of seating arrangement better than another?" These questions can be relevant to different seating arrangements. Harmer (1998) suggests a list of the following arrangements, depending on the activity to be developed: orderly rows, circles and horseshoes, separate tables, horizontal rows, clusters of four and circle arrangements, and stack formation, among others.

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



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

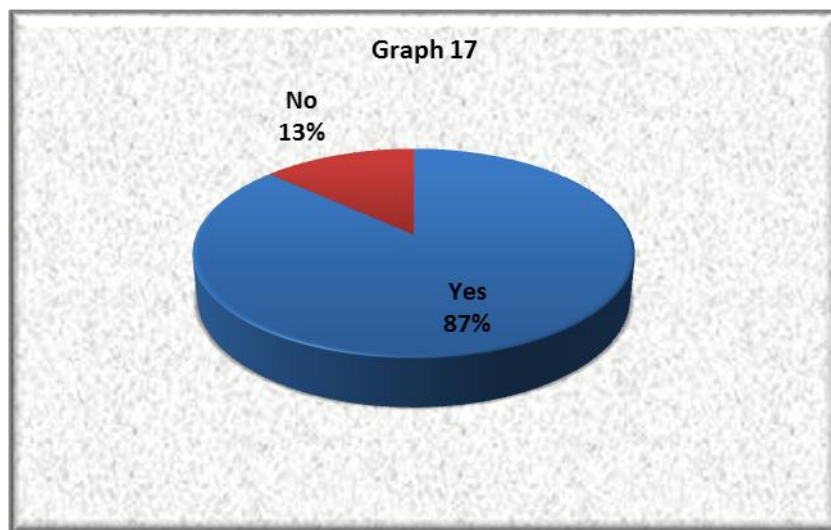
According to the teachers' answer, it was revealed that eleven teachers (73%), think that the students' appropriate number in the classroom should be sixteen to twenty-five. Nevertheless, three teachers (20%) considered that one to fifteen students constitutes a suitable number for a class. While one teacher (7%) thought that working with twenty-six to thirty learners was ideal.

From the students' answers, eleven students (73%) said that the number of pupils in their class was good for them in the English teaching-learning process. In contrast, four students (27%) thought it inappropriate.

Contrary to the above, the obtained and registered results in the observation sheets evidenced that in seven classrooms (46%), there were more than thirty-one students. In four classrooms there were twenty-five learners (with 27%). Three classrooms had thirty pupils (20%). Lastly, there was one classroom with fifteen students (7%).

Woodward (2001) suggests planning a strategy when working in large classes, encouraging them to work by groups, where instructions have to be adequately presented and performed inside the classroom.

*Do teachers use teaching resources (TV, Tape/CD recorder, computer, projector, smart board and supplementary materials)?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

Concerning the use of teaching resources, only two teachers (13%) did not apply teaching resources, while thirteen teachers (87%) used CD / tape recorder.

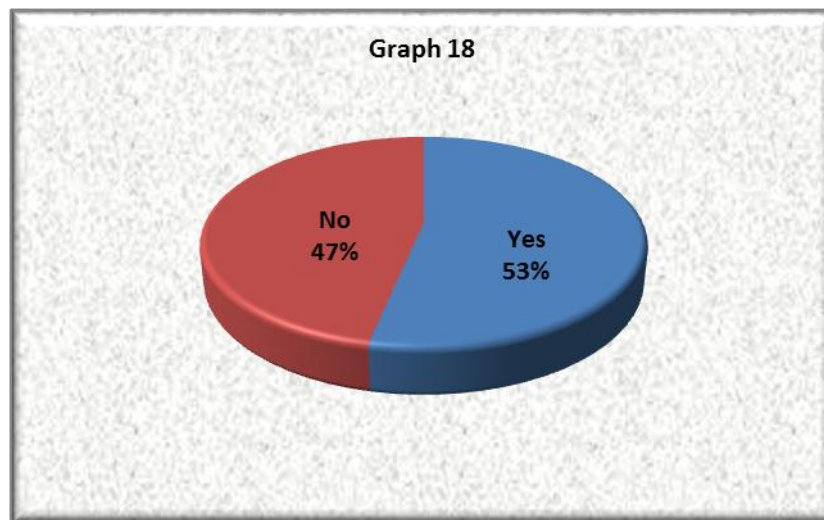
Also, the students' answer to this question confirmed the provided information above in which eight students (53%) said that the teachers used teaching resources, while seven learners (47%), replied negatively.

On the other hand, the observed classes showed that ten teachers (67%) worked in class with textbooks. While two teachers (13%) did use a CD player in their lessons. At the same time, one teacher (7%) used supplementary material.

And, another teacher (7%) used an overhead projector. Lastly, another teacher (6%) used a laptop.

Regarding teaching resources, Gower (1995) suggests the following tips: the use of the board which has to be clean, written with legible handwriting and well organized. He further suggests the use of an overhead projector with slides prepared in advance and presented systematically in the classroom. Likewise, he suggests that one should present videos where students can visualize and hear what they are learning. Worth (1984) also mentions that all presentations capture a student's attention.

*Do teachers consider appropriate the resources they have in class?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

The teachers' eight responses to this question (53%) indicated that they considered appropriate the teaching resources they have in class. While, seven teachers (47%) considered inappropriate the English language teaching resources.

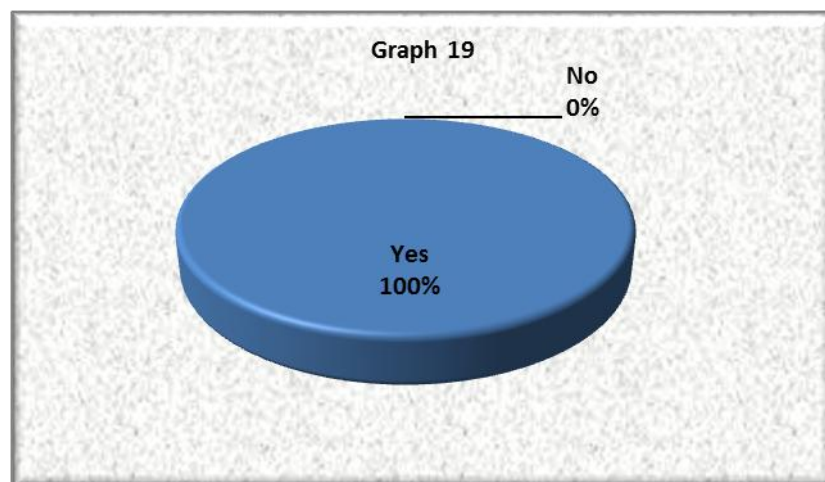
Additionally, the students confirmed this result, matching the same teachers' statistics.

On the contrary, through the observed classes it could be evidenced that ten teachers (67%) used textbooks in their classes. And two teachers (13%) used a CD player. Another teacher (7%) used supplementary material. One teacher (7%) used an overhead projector, and lastly, another teacher (7%) used a laptop.

Moreover, from the observed classes, there was a lack of supplementary material in the classrooms. The establishments did not have audiovisual equipment, projectors, laptops and an English language laboratory. The only teaching resources used by the Educational Institutions visited were textbooks, CD players, markers, whiteboard and erasers. Certainly the use of resources contributes to make the teaching- learning process fun and allows students to enhance their language skills (Siders, 2011).

### *Factors Concerning Educational Institutions*

*Do the Institutions review teachers' lesson plans?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

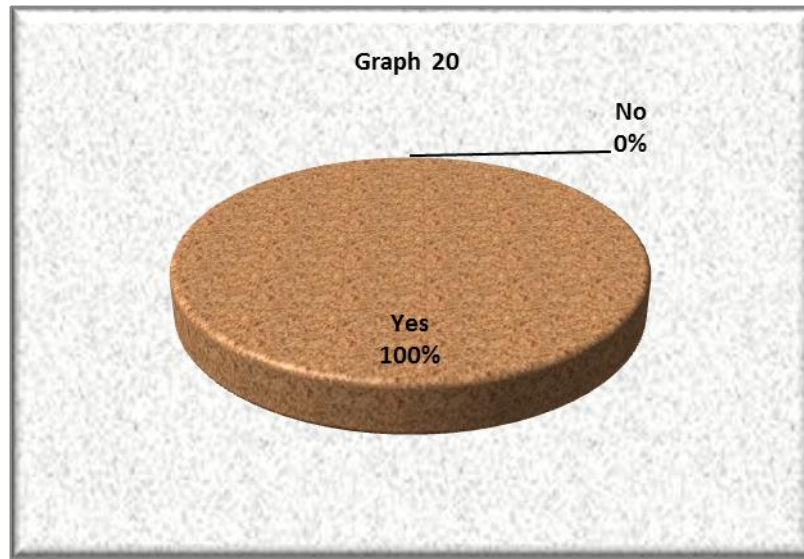


With regards to this question, 100% of the teachers answered positively, declaring that their lesson plans were reviewed by the institutions. However, in relation to frequency, there were some variations; seven teachers (46%) said that their lesson plans were checked by their Institution once a week; four teachers (27%) said that their planning was reviewed by the high school once a month, and finally, four teachers (27%) answered that their lesson plans were reviewed sometimes, once a year or twice a year.

In contrast, from both the observed classes and the teachers' performance, it was evidenced that five teachers (33%) worked developing only one activity during the whole class, making this monotonous. The rest of the teachers (67%) worked with the students in miscellaneous activities.

In relation to the institution's lesson plan review, Gower R., Philips D., and Walters S. (1995) point out that the writing of lesson plans has a number of important functions: an aid to planning, a working document, and a record. Likewise, they mention what points should be included in a lesson plan. And, these are: the aims, procedure, approach and activities, materials, aids and equipment, information about the students and the classroom circumstances, and anticipated problems.

*Does the institution monitor teaching?*



Author: Alvarado Vera Javier Alfonso  
Source: Teacher's Questionnaire

The answers to this question were 100% affirmative by the teachers, stating that their teaching was monitored by the high school authorities.

In relation to the frequency of monitoring, seven teachers (47%) confirmed that their teaching was monitored once a month. Two teachers (13%) replied that their lessons were supervised once a week. And lastly, six teachers, that is 40%, said that their classes were controlled by the high school authorities once a year, or twice a year. This was written by the teachers on the teachers' questionnaire, and there was no direct way to corroborate this independently by the researcher. However, the authorities of the Educational Institution think that monitoring should be regular and frequent so that any errors can be corrected on time.

In relation to Institution monitor teaching, Richards (2001), points out that it is essential to monitor teachers' performance in the classroom, because supervisors can identify problems in the teaching-learning process and find possible solutions.

## Conclusions

- Although, 80% of the English teachers in service are University graduated professional, it sometimes seems they are not effective at teaching, due to 47% of the educators consider that they do not have the appropriate resources to develop both the lesson plans and the students' skills.
- Teachers apply different methods and techniques to all the students in their classrooms; the three most used are: Communicative Language Teaching method 33%, the Task Based Language Teaching method 27%, and the Cooperative Language Learning method 20%, this is in relation to 87 % of the teachers who consider students' needs to teach English successfully.
- The number of students in the classroom is an important factor which influences positively or negatively the teaching and learning process. Large number of students implies more work and sacrifice to teachers who sometimes are not able to control teenagers' behavior.
- Classrooms where English classes take place are uncomfortable for the 60 percent of the students according to the observed classes, because there is not enough space to walk inside the rows due to the great number of students, and this is the reason by which it is possible for them to disturb each other.
- According to what it was observed, teachers do not consider and apply supplementary material inside the classes. In fact, this situation determines a boring routine which does not influence and does not promote students' motivation. Although, teachers recognize and are informed that there are many

materials available on Internet for lesson planning, teachers do not have enough skills to download prepared material to be applied inside the classroom, 67% is limited to use only the textbook and 13% CD player.

- Even though all the Educational Institution review teachers' lesson plans, however, in relation to frequency, there were some variations; 46% said that their lesson plans were checked by the authorities of the high school once a week, 27% once a month and finally 27% once a year. Therefore, it is very important and necessary to have this kind of supervision continually, which it can be an aid to planning, a working document, a work record and a help to solve problems.

## Recommendations

- It is recommended that English teachers design an appropriate and daily planning of their classes and activities using a variety of teaching resources and extra supplementary material, so that English classes can be funny and interesting for the students.
- It is recommended that the teachers look for continuous trainings in order to improve their methodology for English teaching periodically. This will upgrade their knowledge that allows them to improve the way in which they dictate their classes.
- It is recommended that teachers use adequate techniques to support students' work inside the classroom. In this way, everything is related to what teachers want to reach, if they want to develop communicative competence where students are able to interact under any circumstance, In addition, in order to develop students' interaction and cooperation, teachers should apply Cooperative Language Learning, where students and teachers can interact and learn simultaneously. Finally, in order to provide a good environment in which the students work individually, Task Based Language Teaching should be performed in the classroom by the teachers.

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# ANNEXES



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

MODALIDA ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA

CARRERA DE INGLES

TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

<b>EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:</b>	
<b>DATE:</b>	
<b>YEAR:</b>	

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?

<b>Students' Needs</b> ( <i>age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation, and learning styles</i> )	
YES ( )	NO ( )

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

<b>Students' Level</b> ( <i>Basic, Intermediate, High Intermediate, and Advanced</i> )	
YES ( )	NO ( )

4. Which is the level of your students?

<b>*Students' Level</b>			
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? _____		

**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? _____		

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

YES ( )	NO ( )
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**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 ( )
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**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 ( )
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**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 ( )
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**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? _____	

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

YES ( )	NO ( )
Why? _____	

**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!!!!!!**



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

*La Universidad Católica de Loja*

MODALIDA ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA

CARRERA DE INGLES

STUDENT'S 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 ( )	Dificiles ( )	Muy Dificiles ( )
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4. ¿Te gusta la forma de enseñanza del idioma Inglés que usa tu profesor?

YES ( )	NO ( )
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¿Por qué?

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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 ( )
---------	--------

**GRACIAS!!!!**



**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA**

*La Universidad Católica de Loja*

**MODALIDA ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA**

**CARRERA DE INGLES**

**OBSERVATION SHEET**

<b>EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:</b>	
<b>DATE:</b>	
<b>YEAR</b> (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 ( )
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\* 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	( )
---------	-----	---------	-----	---------	-----	-----------	-----

**8. Do students have enough space to move and participate in dynamic activities?**

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

**9. Is the seating arrangement appropriate for the teaching-learning process?**

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

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 %	( )
------	-----	------	-----	------	-----	-------	-----

### 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)?

<b>TEACHER'S LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY:</b>											
C2	( )	C1	( )	B2	( )	B1	( )	A2	( )	A1	( )