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Factors that influence the English language teaching- learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools.

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

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Rosa Banegas Loarte

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DEDICATION

To my dear and lovely Mother and Father who now are in heaven, whom I keep my eternal affection, respect and admiration, because they were the reason of my life, my only heroes, also my sisters, my nieces and my brother in law, who with their dedication and daily sacrifice helped me to complete this important stage of my life.

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

The current research has the purpose of: identify, analyze, and provide suggestions on how to overcome the different factors that influence the teaching-learning process of the English Language in private high schools in Loja.

This study was conducted in five private high schools in Loja city; it was conducted with a sample of fifteen teachers and fifteen students from the grades: 8th, 9th, 10th, first and second of high school. Qualitative and quantitative methods were applied in this research, obtaining information through observation and note-taking of the important aspects of the English lessons.

To complement surveys were applied to both teachers and students; its purpose was to study their perceptions about the different aspects that influence the process of teaching-learning of the English language. Finally the information gathered: observation sheets, surveys, and questionnaires; helped to carry a quantitative and qualitative analysis in order to obtain academics results related to factors that influence the teaching learning process of English. The most remarkable result was that teachers applied a variety of methods to teach English, managing to encourage interaction in the classroom.

Key words: factors, methods, teachers, teaching- learning, students.

RESUMEN

La presente investigación tiene como propósito: identificar, analizar y ofrecer sugerencias para conocer los distintos factores que influyen el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma Inglés dentro de los colegios privados.

Este estudio fue realizado en cinco colegios privados de la ciudad de Loja, en la cual se contó con una muestra de quince profesores y quince estudiantes de los grados: octavo, noveno, décimo de secundaria, primero y segundo de bachillerato. Dentro de la presente investigación se aplicaron los métodos cuantitativos y cualitativos, obteniendo también la información a través de la observación directa por parte de la investigadora y la toma de notas de los aspectos importantes de las clases de inglés.

Para complementar se aplicaron encuestas tanto a profesores como estudiantes para conocer su percepción acerca de los diferentes aspectos que influyen en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma Inglés. Finalmente de toda la información recogida: hojas de observación, encuestas y cuestionarios; se realizó un análisis cuantitativo y cualitativo con el fin de conseguir algunos resultados académicos relacionados con los factores que influyen en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma Inglés. El resultado más relevante fue que los profesores aplicaron una variedad de métodos para la enseñanza del idioma Inglés, logrando fomentar la interacción en el aula.

Palabras Clave: factores, métodos, docentes, enseñanza-aprendizaje, estudiantes

INTRODUCTION

English is one of the most important languages in the world and that is why, many countries give a lot of importance to this language, some countries have even adopted it as their second language; consequently, English allows people to accomplish economic, social and cultural goals. Likewise, teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) is very important in the Ecuadorian curriculum; the teaching-learning process of a language is not just about filling out activities suggested by an English book; teaching a foreign language is a complex process where every detail needs to be planned.

Therefore, in this process, the main actors are teachers and students; besides, approaches, methodologies, techniques, teacher's style of instruction, students' motivation and even physical facilities of the classroom play an important role in learning. Nevertheless, this important process has not been developed in an appropriate way; therefore, students are not developing the English skills needed for succeeding in the English field.

Considering the information mentioned above, the purpose of the actual research is to analyze the main factors that influence the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools. The results of this study will be the basis for new generations of teachers. It will help them to lessen the impact of some factors that influence the teaching learning process.

Teaching English in Ecuador has become an important issue; all private high schools teach this language in order to offer an excellent academic training to their students. To succeed in the teaching process there are many factors that need to be considered. In order to discover these factors, previous researches on language teaching-learning process have been developed which have revealed very important information.

Setati (2002) carried out a study in Sudafrica in order to investigate how the use of English as a language of learning and teaching Science in rural secondary schools in the Vlakfontein Circuit of the Limpopo Capricorn District, influenced the ability of Grade 8 students to learn Science. This study also found out that Educators' attitudes and beliefs strongly influenced the interaction and participation of ESL learners in Science classrooms. The study also revealed that developing language skills prevented ESL learners from asking questions and answering questions in class. The author concluded that there is a need to separate schools and classrooms along three different axes and tailor programmers according to whether they are within English Foreign Language or English Additional (Second) language infrastructures; whether they are primary or secondary; whether they are

about language as subject or language for a subject; because without such specific contextual attentions, educational inequalities will be exacerbated further and some educators and learners will be left 'stranded' at some point on their educational journey.

On the other hand, Paulsen (2001) conducted a study in England in order to find out how new era trends and technologies affect Foreign Language Learning, in this research he discovered that today's students understand computers and the Internet, and their professors are proficient in the languages they teach, so when faculty and students work together, exciting leaps in learning can take place. He also found out that effective technology tools, strategies, and resources assist foreign language instruction by fueling the students' natural motivation to speak another language and get inside another culture.

Likewise, Bhela (1999) carried out another study in India in order to identify the effect of the differences and or similarities between the structures of L1 and L2 on the target language. In this research he found out that the learner's knowledge of the syntactic structures of L1, cause difficulty in L2; the study also revealed that with this knowledge the learner is made aware of the errors made and how they may be rectified. Finally, he concluded that learners have accumulated structural entities of L2 but demonstrate difficulty in organizing this knowledge into appropriate, coherent structures.

It is important to mention that the present research will benefit Ecuadorian English teachers, students, high schools, and also, researchers. Teachers will be aware at the importance of using technology and new resources in the class, and of course, students can benefit from the recommendations suggested in the actual study. Schools will identify the problems that are affecting the teaching-learning process and will find solution for them. Finally, researchers may use the present study for further investigation.

During the development of the current study, a difficulty was found; some students were worried about being interviewed, it may have caused the lack of trustworthy informa.

METHOD

Setting and participants

This research was carried out in Loja city. The participants were fifteen students and fifteen teachers from five private high schools located downtown. Those institutions are known as the most prestigious high schools in the city. The participants were from eight grade of basic education to third year of high school. The students live in urban places in Loja; they were teenagers, and their average age was from 12 to 17 years old.

Procedure

To develop this research it was necessary to carry on a bibliographic research; it was focused on topics related to teaching methodology, lesson design, supplementary material, and classroom resources. In addition, the analysis of previous scientific studies related to the actual research and the high school facilities.

To start with the field research process; it was necessary to ask for permission to high school authorities by sending them official letters, explaining the purpose and objectives of this research. The techniques used in this research were: note taking, questionnaires and surveys. The theoretical sources used to support this research were taken from books, internet sites and the didactic guide.

The field research was conducted in five private high schools it was necessary to observe three English classes in each educational institution; the time spent for these observations was forty to forty five minutes. During the observation process, it was necessary the use of an observation sheet, in order to take more essential details and aspects that help to the effective interpretation of the results.

Additionally, at the end of the class, one student, randomly selected; had to answer a questionnaire, written in Spanish to avoid misperception. The questionnaire inquired questions about how students perceives the English subject, the activities done by the teachers, how they feel about the high school and their classrooms facilities. In the same way, teachers filled out a questionnaire that included twenty questions about own teacher´s education level, the student´s needs, methods, planning, instructions, feedback, timing, and also aspects that related to the educational institution. A personal interview was done, orally, to each teacher in order to identify, their level of acquisition; this survey was made considering the rubrics from the Common European Framework. (CEF)

This study used quantitative and qualitative methods because it collected information related to the frequency of factors concerning students, teachers, classroom and educational institutions from each class during the five observed classes. To gather the data the use of teachers and students, questionnaires were necessary. The qualitative method was applied in order to analyze the information gathered from the observation sheets and surveys; moreover, the data interpretation and essential facts were explained after the tabulation of statistic results.

Finally, all the data was gathered and organized according to each variable the main source of information was the teacher questionnaire; the results were tabulated and represented graphically. Afterwards this information was interpreted taking into consideration the theoretical support which serves as the basis to identify results, conclusions and recommendations for this study.

DISCUSSION

Literature Review

Have you ever noticed how many factors affect the English Language Learning Process? In our country, English is considered to be a very important language to be developed during the school years. Nowadays, however, there are few people showing interest in learning or acquiring a new Language. Ecuador is a Spanish speaking country, but the need of a common language is becoming very important nowadays. Therefore, the current study: factors that influence the English language teaching-learning process in private high schools. Pretends, among other factors, to identify student´s English level in private high schools, their needs in the classroom, moreover it is important to determine the classroom conditions in which English lessons take place.

The teoretical support to be discussed is compound of the following topics: Importance of Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Ecuador, Teaching approaches and Methods, Managing learning, Lesson design, Class size, Classroom space and seating arrangement, Classroom and/or teaching resources, Classroom observation, Student motivation, Learning styles, and Language aptitude. Finally, this literature review also includes previous studies concerning the factors that influence the English language learning process.

Importance of Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Ecuador

There are many reasons why English is one of the most popular and spoken languages in the world. Nowadays teaching a foreign language, like English, is a fact which seems to be increasing in importance and use not only because of enjoyment, communication or technology, but because of culture, education and business issues.

Teaching English has become an important part of the educational system; Maxum (2009, p. 22) affirms:

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) is a big business. There could be as many as a billion students learning English around the world at this time and that is a good reason to consider moving into it. Moreover if you consider the freedom the job gives you to move around the world. Teaching English is something people do when they are ready to change their lives.

For these reasons, the Ecuadorian Government, through SENACYT, is promoting scholarships to English teachers, to be well prepared to teach students and acquire

competences that will help them; consequently, they will teach effectively to their students. It is essential for teachers to have an optimal level according to international standards, in order to assess and teach students of public or private high schools; otherwise, we cannot develop a good educational system. (SENACYT, 2012)

Teaching Approaches and Methods

There are different teaching methods, which are used to teach the four language skills, and whichever they are, they are meant to help to improve the language learning. All the methods that teachers use are necessary; teachers must encourage the students to learn more and specially transmit the information that transcends on the students brain; this is the main objective of each theory.

As in any field, second language teaching has gone through a process with a wide range of theories and methods for approaching this important field. One of the earliest methods of language teaching was the Grammar-translation, also called as Traditional Method. Celce-Murcia (2001) says that this method used the student's mother tongue in class with almost no use of the target language for communication; it focused on grammar and on translating sentences from the target language into the mother tongue (or vice versa), and by no means on the ability to communicate.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) said that it "was the offspring of German scholarship", and that the goal of this method was to "read its literature or in order to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result from foreign language study". Stern (2001) establishes that grammar and translation was viewed "as a mandatory preliminary study of literary works", or that it was even "regarded as educationally valid mental discipline in its own right".

A method that followed the Grammar-translation was the Direct Approach; it was viewed as a rejection of the rigidity of the Grammar Translation Approach and its failure to have students communicating in the foreign language. The Direct Method banned the use of the mother tongue, grammar was learned inductively, literature was read for pleasure, and the target culture was also taught inductively, the teacher had to be a native speaker or to have a native like fluency in the target language (Celce-Murcia, 2001). Stern (2001) explains that in the Direct Method students were strongly encouraged to discover for themselves the grammatical principle involved in a given class or exercise.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) described an additional method. The Cooperative Language Learning method which states that interaction and cooperation are basically the nature of language; this method involves pairs and small groups of learners to promote

communicative interaction in the classroom; for the communicative skills, this method requires to involve the following features: support, cooperation and interaction.

According to Olsen and Kagan (1992), the Cooperative Language Learning method, takes place when a group of learners organize activities, so that the learning is dependent on the socially structure, and exchange of information between learners in the group, and in each learner is responsible for his or her own learning, and is motivated to increase the learning of others.

Content-Based Instruction says that learning a second language is done when the student has a purpose to learn it, a need rather than "an end in itself", through this method; students learn a broad array of topics. According to Richard & Rodgers (2011) the Content Based Instruction prepares ESL students for a wide range of broad academic activities and for studying in a foreign country.

To complete the previous idea Brinton (1989) comments that the use of Content-Based Instruction is perceived as relevant by the learner; it is assumed, by many learners to increase motivation in the language course, and thus to promote more effective learning.

According to Richard and Rodgers (2011) the Total Physical Response is a method that requires teach the languages through physical (motor) activity. Its main objective is to teach oral proficiency the beginning level. In this approach teacher gives commands to students which need to be understood, and students reply physically before they produce the verbal language

Asher (1977) also explains that Total Physical response highlights the primary roles of listener and performer. They listen attentively and respond physically to commands given by the teacher. They are encouraged to speak when they feel ready to speak, that is when the language has been internalized.

Teaching methods, as tools used by professors, are elements that include techniques; these techniques, commonly called activities, integrate the four skills of English, and permit the teacher to involve students in the practice of what is being taught. As Felder (2007, p. 68) establishes: "If we want our language learning classes to come as close as possible to real-life communicative situations, then we have to organize activities that let students use all of the language skills."

Managing Learning

They way teachers manage learning process is crucial in the language development. Guiding a student is not only explaining the book activities, grammar, and vocabulary, or helping students with the pronunciation. In this way students need to be instructed in the way

language is used. Benson &Samara wickrema (2007) state that students will always need clear rules and instructions; they feel secure in a controlled environment even if some of them try to avoid the norms. Lowes & Target (1998) argue that discipline is much easier if each student is self-directed and if they know what they are doing and why they are doing it. This increases each student's chances of being successful and allows them to set their own level of challenge.

The previous criteria is expanded by Gower, Philips and Walters (2009) who suggests that it is also important giving feedback to students. First, because is one of the most important responsibilities of a teacher. Second, by giving ongoing feedback, teachers help students evaluate their success and progress.

Feedback can take a number of forms during class, such as giving praise and encouragement; correcting students mistakes; setting regular test; having discussion about how the group as a whole is doing; giving individual tutorials, and so on. Therefore, it is important to remember that the aim of feedback is to bring about self-awareness and improvement (Gower, 2005).

Another important factor during class management is Time. Mackenzie (2000) explains that in a well-structured classroom, problems and conflicts can be avoided because rules and procedures are clear. When teachers assign enough time to solve activities, students can develop them in a better way; the success of many activities depends on a good organization, teachers have to plan each activity considering the time to be spent in each activity.

Lesson Design

This is one of the main points if you want to have a successful class. You have to design or have a lesson plan to follow during class. You need to know what you are going to do at every moment.

Woodward (2009) asserts when he says that planning is hard for teachers because they have to plan their lessons for each English class that they are going to teach. However, Woolfolk (2007) suggest that planning can be easier, if teachers plan creatively and flexible. Teachers need a wide ranging knowledge about their students, their interest, as well as alternative ways to teach and asses to understanding. It is also important for teachers to have information about how to work with groups, the expectations and limitations of the high school, how to adapt materials and textbook, and how to make students interact with the language into meaningful activities.

To complement the previous ideas, Harmer (1991) also gives the components that a good lesson plan must have. A good plan has five major components, such as: description of the class, recent work, objectives, content, and additional possibilities. All these components must be engaged and coordinated. In the first component, class description, you have to know who are your students, in the second one, recent work, the activities you have done in the last class, in the third component, objectives which are the goals that you want to reach; finally, in content and additional possibilities are all the things that can be done during the class period. It does not matter the class limitations that a teacher may have, the real value is to adapt your lesson plan.

Celce-Murcia (2001) says that a good lesson planning has to be coherent, varied, and flexible; however, according to Path (2011) the success of a piece of work is ensured if it is properly planned. The importance of a lesson plan is that this provides a main objective for each class; it also helps teachers to organize the learning process and helps to avoid repetitions.

Class Size

Some authors like Alan Krueger (2011) say that smaller classes are a determining factor for student achievement. Erick Hanishek (2009), on the other hand, says that other factors such as teacher's quality are more important to focus on, that class size reduction is too expensive, and that those resources should be assigned to teacher training, which will automatically improve students' performance.

Martho (1985),explains that for practicing languages teachers need certain methods and techniques of language teaching which can be effectively used in small learning groups, nevertheless, this become useless when these techniques are applied to large classes. So this is the reason why teachers prefer small classes rather than large ones, because students can assimilate what teacher is saying and the teaching process is more personalized.

Furthermore, Nolasco and Arthur (1995, p. 81) that:

Teachers of large classes often have to cope with limited resources such as shortage of suitable textbook and printed materials, in addition to the physical problems of having large numbers of students in classroom with rows of heavy desks which are impossible to move.

Whereas pair work, for example, is extremely useful for large groups if we want to maximize individual student talking time. To apply that kind of activities, teacher must be well

prepared. Be sure that the activities are clear and according to the level of the students, and most important of all remember to give timing warnings towards the end of the group work.

Blatchford (2003) also mentions that skeptics say that there should be other more cost-effective strategies for improving educational standards. This author explains that there is a consensus among education specialists that smaller classes allowed a better quality of teaching and learning, mentions a report made by an observer who visited a small infant school class of just 15 pupils. In this class, the general atmosphere was very positive, the teacher joked with the children, and there was a lot of personal interaction. The observer also visited a large class with 30 students, and he found out that there was a very noticeable difference, in the smaller class the teacher spent very little time controlling the class, in the large class the majority of the time she just tried to get students' attention to the task, there the teacher was a lot more severe and the children looked unresponsive. In the small class the teacher knew each of the students individually.

Classroom Space and Seating Arrangement

When we teach a foreign language we have to take into account that English requires a lot of dedication and motivation from students and teachers because when teaching a language, teachers do not only teach grammar rules, vocabulary, expressions, speaking, listening etc. Therefore, it is also important to consider the class environment, how the seats are arranged, and if the class is appropriate for the number of students.

Regarding classroom environment, Lowes and Target (1998) state that the perfect or ideal English class must have a cupboard with bookshelves holding grammars, dictionaries and tapes. A mini library for readers, posters on the wall, some made by the students and others produced commercially, either for advertising or as teaching aids, and most important, enough space to develop a good English class.

Savage and Savage (2010) argue that environments send messages and create expectations, they cite an example of how a funeral site should have dimed down lights and be very quiet, these are also the characteristics of the behavior that would be expected in this setting. In a more open and joyful environment you will be able to run, to be louder, and to look happier. Teachers need to have the right setting and space for their classes in order to send the students the message of what they are supposed to do or not do in their classrooms. Silfast (2011) says that different types of educational settings have different demands, for example, conference rooms; pre-school, elementary, and high school areas; vocational or technical areas they all have different educational purposes and all of them have to have specific space demands.

About number of students, and seating arrangement; Philips and Walters (2009, p. 21) state: If the class has more than sixteen students teachers may be able to make a double horseshoe. If the teacher arranges the furniture in rows, it helps if the two halves are slightly at an angle. This kind of seating arrangement can be useful during a whole class interaction, in class open discussion. Nevertheless, if the teacher is planning a pair work activity and all the students are working together in close pairs outside of direct control, they need to be able to look at each other. So either get them to move their chairs slightly towards each other or lift their chairs and work facing someone other than their neighbor, depending on the amount of time the activity is going to take.

Classroom and Teaching Resources

Teaching resources are used to support educational instruction and achieve outcomes from students; as a result, classroom and teaching resources are all the materials that teachers use to teach English and get the attention of their students for understanding and learning of the language. There are many teaching resources that teachers can use in their classes, some of them are: visuals, such as: flash cards, pictures, power point presentations; others like: audio, CD`s, cassettes, audiovisual, realia, on line resources and so on. (Rocha, 2007)

Cunningham (2005) explains that "text books are designed to facilitate good instructions, the rest of the lesson depends on teacher`s creativity, consequently teaching resources are excellent tools for teaching English". This is because teaching resources permit that students learn faster and enjoy the class.

Brown (2001) gives us some good options to apply in class; for instance, songs, jokes, plays, games that can be very useful during English class. All these activities get the student stimulated, relaxed, motivated, attentive, or engaged and ready to learn a lesson. A role-play demonstration, can also be considered because here the teacher can select students and illustrate the procedure to be applied in a lesson segment that follows.

Nevertheless, Farooq (2011) states that teachers don't have to forget that supporting English resources must be designed according to the main objective of the class; the selection of an adequate didactic material constitutes an important step in the educational system.

Classroom Observation

Most of the teachers, before start the class, analyze students behavior; their attitude toward the class and the methods that teacher needs to apply. In addition, observation or

monitoring plays a significant role during the learning process. External and internal factors can change the manner how a teacher plans the class, and see it; but a good attitude and engagement towards it, will allow the strategies to be meaningful for the student. In that way, a person who teaches a foreign language must be really conscious about the importance of giving student the right input and observe every single attitude and behavior to get a good result.

Many authors give their criteria about observation during class, for example Richards (1999) state that classroom observation as nonjudgmental description of classroom events that can be analyzed and given interpretation. Non judgment is holding an opinion or postponing a conclusion. Description means a verbal or written account of classroom interaction, finally interpretation means understanding what went on in the classroom in a particular way, to give meaning to the observed description of teaching and classroom interaction.

For Richards (1999) the main purpose of classroom observation is to evaluate teaching, a purpose with which most of teachers are no doubt familiar, and to learn to teach. Similarly, Gower, Philips and Walters (2009) declare that observation is like monitoring what the teacher and their students are doing and it can be initiated by monitoring how well the group as a whole is getting on and how individual students within the group are reacting.

 There are several methods and organizations that work with peer observation for improving teaching skills; peer observation has been highlighted as an assessment and as a development tool in language teaching. The University of Nottingham (2009) confirms that peer observation is an effective way to improve and to build teaching skills; teachers discuss teaching techniques before sitting in each other's classes, afterwards they provide feedback to each other in order to improve their teaching skills. The MET (Measures of Effective Teaching) Project was established in 2010 with an idea to improve teaching abilities by observing classes; observers typically watch a lesson and then score it and give feedback to the teacher. The Imperial College London (2011) explains that the main purpose of observing teachers is to "enhance practice", after being observed, teachers have the opportunity to engage into constructive analysis of their class, discussing teaching practices in an analytical, reflective way; it has been proven that peer observing is very useful due to the fact that benefits of this exercise often come to both the observer and the one being observed, both can learn from the process.

However there are some negative aspects in observation, according to Borich (2008) most teachers are unaccustomed to being observed and the mere mention of observation provokes uneasiness, nervousness, and tension among both in-service and pre-service

teachers, in the belief that their professional competence is going to be questioned or judged. Lasagabaster (2011) points that the conclusion to be drawn is that the observed person has to feel comfortable psychologically.

Learning Styles

People are different and the way they learn is different too. Maxum (2009) explains that learner`s differences are evident when teaching an English class. Students are different from each other. Some students feel attracted by sounds, others by visuals or videos, most of them may feel comfortable when physically reacting to orders, but, this is not caused by motivational reasons. This happens because of each learning style.

Lightbown and Spada (2008, p. 59) explain "The term "learning style" has been used to describe an individual's natural, habitual, and preferred way of absorbing, processing, and retaining new information and skills". So the major problem of a teacher is to find the learning style of their students and mix it with good methods and resources, to create a unique way to teach a second language.

Moreover, other authors like Flowerdew and Lindsay (2005, p. 62) argue that "Because individual students have their own preferred learning style, and because these styles can sometimes be predicted by factor such as ethnicity, age, type of task and previous learning". In this way teacher has to apply a method which tries to adapt to every learning style.

From Flowerdew and Lindsay point of view, we can be clear that English teacher must know the group of students and know something about each one. This will help teachers to look for the best methodology to work with students according to their preferences, and then evaluate their knowledge by using an appropriate assessment method.

Language Aptitude

It is important that teachers notice the aptitude of pupils when the teacher enters the classroom to explain the lesson. Saville (2006) affirms that teachers can feel that there are students with a natural ability for learning English, which is an important factor. It can influence a lot and it is an advantage, because the student was born with an innate capacity that can be very useful for him.

However, an innate capacity is not enough to acquire a second language; a good attitude is essential to develop the first one. To support this idea, Lightbown and Spada (2011) said that it is difficult to know whether positive attitudes produce successful learning, or successful learning engenders positives attitudes, or whether both are affected by other

factors, but both of them are consider valid. Maybe in one student we can apply the first perception, and with others we can apply the second one.

Subsequently, Saville - Troike (2009) also argues that be a talented students does not mean that you are going to be a successful learner in second language learning. Furthermore, he concludes that language learning aptitude is not completely distinct from general cognitive abilities, and moreover aptitude is not completely certain, but it is an important factor which may influence L2 proficiency.

Sadly, there is not enough investigation about the factors that affect the English learning-teaching process, some studies that are related to the topic will be described below to support the importance of this research

In their study, Nel, N. and Müller, H. (2010) explored the impact of teachers' limited English proficiency on English second language learners in South African schools. They aimed to know how and to what extent does the English language proficiency of teachers could help students become more proficient users of the language.

The investigation took place in Unisa, South Africa and the population sample were participants in their final year of Advanced Certificate in Education: Inclusive Education, whose home language was an African language and who were teaching ESL learners. The research was guided and supported by the theoretical foundation and the conceptual framework in the literature study. The study required the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data resulting in a mixed model research design. The analysis of student portfolios comprised the qualitative component of the design and a survey the quantitative component.

The data revealed that by far the majority of student-teachers (94%) indicated that they finished elementary school. Eighty percent of the respondents reported that they had a language policy in their schools. The age range of the majority of learners tutored by the respondents (79%) was between 6 and 11 years. Besides, it was revealed that teachers made basic errors such as grammatical errors, incorrect use of tenses, noun verb agreement and spelling errors, which was generally applicable to all the teachers.

Likewise, Chang, M. (2011) researched about factors affecting the implementation of communicative language teaching (CLT) in Taiwanese college English classes. What factors promote the implementation of CLT by Taiwanese college English teachers? and What factors hinder the implementation of CLT by Taiwanese college English teachers? Were the interrogations that he aimed to solve by the end of the study.

The researcher conducted interviews with participants in order to collect qualitative data. The participants in this study were eight teachers from two universities in southern

Taiwan that integrate CLT into the English curriculum. The interviews were conducted in Mandarin Chinese, which is the native language of the interviewees. During the interviews, the researcher asked the interviewees predetermined, open-ended questions, allowing for flexibility in follow-up questions.

Two open ended questions were asked to investigate factors that promote or hinder the teachers' implementation of CLT. During the interviews, the researcher listened to the interviewees' responses for clues to probe for additional information. The interviews were tape-recorded after obtaining the participants' permission. Each interview lasted 45-60 minutes. After the interviews, the researcher translated and transcribed each interview into English. To ensure accuracy and reliability, the translations were verified by two reviewers who are experts in translation from Chinese to English.

The findings of the study suggested a need to offer adequate in-service training for teachers to practice CLT. As pointed out by the participants of the study, qualified teachers should have knowledge and skills to practice CLT. In addition, most of the participants stated that training in applied practices, rather than lectures and theories, was more beneficial to them. Finally, the implementation of CLT involves not only the teacher's effort, but recognition of the teacher's voice and incorporating it into educational practices and policies.

Tabatabaei, O. and Molavi, A. (2012) also investigated about the demotivating factors affecting EFL learning of Iranian seminary students. The investigators affirmed that there is no significant difference between EFL achievement of the motivated and demotivated seminary students. In the same way, Tabatabaei and Molavi aimed to answer these questions: What are the demotivating factors affecting EFL learning of Iranian Islamic seminary students?, and is there any meaningful difference between EFL achievement of the motivated and demotivated Islamic seminary students?

The study was developed in an Islamic seminary schools located in the Province of Isfahan with fifty Iranian EFL seminary students aged between 20 and 30; they used two questionnaires and an interview. The following instruments were employed in this study: Attitude/Motivation Test Battery, Modified Version of Stuart D. Warrington's Questionnaire and the IOPT (Interchange Objective Placement Test). Such a method integrates both approaches to provide a much more detailed and comprehensive picture of the phenomenon under investigation. In this study the qualitative data was gathered through an interview and two questionnaires to boost understanding and interpretation of the results.

In the first stage 50 participants from among Iranian Islamic seminary students in Isfahan, Iran were selected through simple random sampling. Then the researcher distributed the questionnaire about demotivating factors in which the learners were asked to

choose the reason or reasons they might not learn English as efficiently as their other courses and determine the demotivating factors faced by the English language learners from their own point of view. It was based on the principle of measuring the essential factors affecting learner demotivation.

After analyzing the students' opinions and attitudes, three English teachers– who were selected according to their long-time experiences– and the head of the foreign language department were interviewed to elicit their opinions about the demotivating factors affecting the English learning of Iranian Seminary students. Finally a general English proficiency test, namely, Interchange Objective Placement Test (IOPT) was administered to check the students' English proficiency. This test, which comprised three sections, took 50 minutes to be completed– 15 minutes for listening, 20 minutes for reading, and 15 minutes for language use.

Seminary students stated the following items as the main factors of demotivation:

1. The lack of organization of the seminars by the school professors and Islamic Propagation Office about the necessity of learning English as a foreign language.
2. Boredom and tiredness caused by theological lessons taught in Seminary schools.

Akbari, Ramin, and Allvar (2010) researched on the L2 teacher characteristics as predictors of students' academic achievement. The study investigated three teacher-related characteristics: teaching style, teachers' sense of efficacy, and teacher reflectivity. This analysis aims to establish how these characteristics relate to student achievement in an English-language class. The subjects were 30 EFL teachers and their students, 630 male and female eleventh graders. This research work was carried on in several public schools in the Iliam Province in Iran.

The instruments that were used in the study were: The Teacher reflectivity questionnaire, the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale, the Lowman's Two Dimensional Teaching Style Scale, and an end-of-the-year achievement test for eleventh graders in high schools in Iran. The scores of the teachers on each of the three questionnaires were matched against their students' final English scores, and finally statistical procedures were run to interpret the results.

The results showed a high correlation between teacher reflectivity and student achievement outcomes. Reflective teachers seem interested in growing and learning but not for learning's sake or necessarily for increased pedagogical skills, but to help them help their students. There is a positive relationship between a teacher's sense of efficacy and student achievement, teachers with high efficacy believes generate stronger student achievement than teachers with lower teacher efficacy. The results of the present study did not indicate a

high correlation between interpersonal rapport as a component of the teachers' teaching style and student achievement.

The authors concluded that their study provided some ideas on the need of some specific characteristics among teachers when viewed through the students' achievement perspective. These important qualities are: teacher efficacy, teacher reflectivity, and teaching style. The results of the study confirmed that these three variables can significantly predict student achievement.

Hamada, Y. (2011) researched on different demotivates for Japanese junior high and high school learners with the idea of providing a deeper understanding of demotivation for Japanese junior and senior high school learners. The participants in this study were 234 first year Japanese students from two public high schools in Northern Japan, and 217 freshmen from two universities, eight of those students were interviewed. The setting for this study was the Kanto Region in Japan.

The study used a forty four item with a one to five Linkert Scale in order to find out demotivation levels among learners. The results showed that "the nature of English" is more demotivating for junior high school learners, "lessons style and teachers" are also demotivating for high school learners. Among junior high school "learners, tests, nature of English and reduced self-confidence" are more demotivating than other factors. Among high school learners, "reduced self –confidence, lesson style and textbooks" are more demotivating than other factors.

Since nature of English, lesson style, teachers, tests, reduced self-confidence, and textbooks were identified as demotivating; the author considered that these factors needed to be investigated during the interviews. As a conclusion it is stated that the primary focus of the learning process should be the acquisition of language, but with the aim of setting the basis for the communicative skills to be developed.

What we can observe from all the above is that demotivation is a salient phenomenon that should concern every classroom practitioner. The results of the study suggest that as with the other few studies in the field, factors like the high frequency of classes during a week, some more important subjects to be studied other than English, lack of English usage in daily life, lack of enough self confidence among seminary students and finally difficulties in understanding to what they listen to in English, could demotivate learners if they are perceived negatively. Through the data gathered, the null hypothesis was rejected and it was found that there are some demotivating factors that affect EFL learning.

Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

       The present section deals with the description, analysis and interpretation of the data obtained from the observed classes in private high schools. For this purpose, detailed description will be given of each of the factors that influence English Language teaching learning process.

Quantitative Analysis

Factors Concerning Teachers

- *Which level of education do teachers have?*
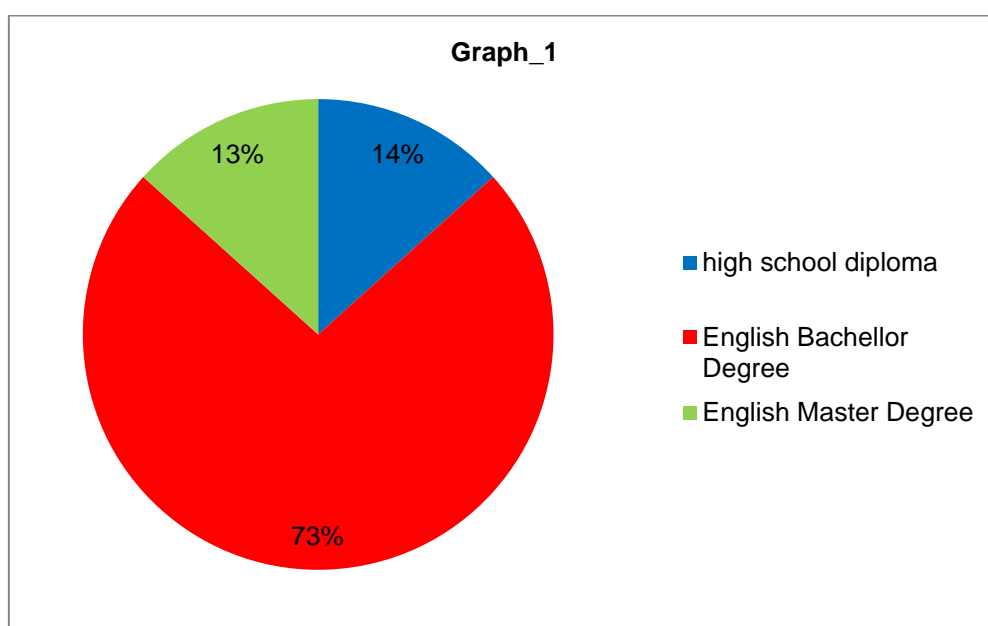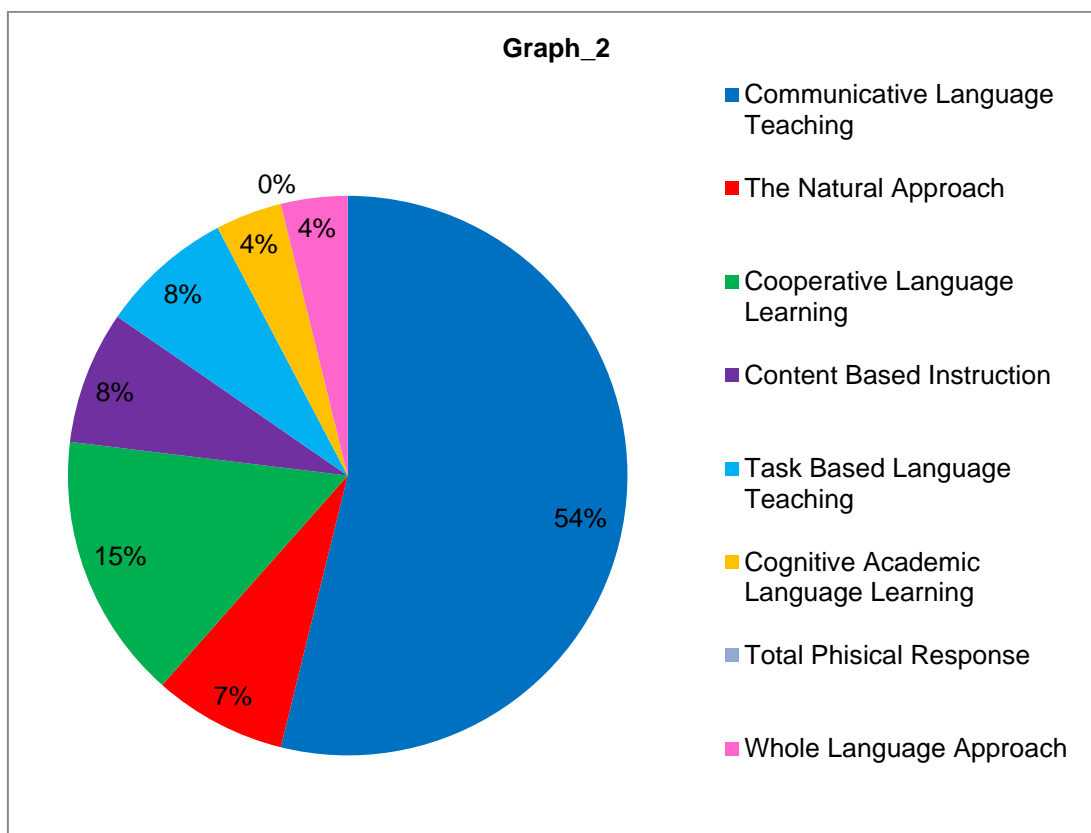

Graph_1

Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

       As seen in the graph above, most of the teachers the 73%, eleven teachers, have a Bachelor's Degree in English. Two teachers that correspond to the 13%, have an English Master's Degree. And, the other two teachers, the 13% left, have a High School Diploma and are studying a Bachelor of Arts in English.(BA). It is good to know that a great part of the teachers have already studied how to teach English. This is a very important factor; because teachers are one of the most powerful extrinsic motivations during learning process.

       In King and Newman (2000) words: since teachers have the most direct, sustained contact with students and considerable control over what is taught and the climate for learning, improving teachers' knowledge, skills and dispositions through professional development is a critical step in improving student achievement.

Which of the following methods was used in this class?

Graph_2

- Communicative Language Teaching
- The Natural Approach
- Cooperative Language Learning
- Content Based Instruction
- Task Based Language Teaching
- Cognitive Academic Language Learning
- Total Phisical Response
- Whole Language Approach

54%, 7%, 15%, 8%, 8%, 4%, 0%, 4%

Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

The varied uses of teaching methods in the observed lessons were low. 54% of the (8) teachers used the Communicative Language Teaching which means that it was used in eight of the fifteen observed classes. The Cooperative Language Learning method was used in two lessons; this stands 15% (2 teachers) . The other methods, which appear on the above chart, were applied once in a while, and it represents the 8%. The Total Physical Response Method was not used in any of the observed lessons.

For Richards and Rodgers (2008) Communicative Language Teaching reflect communicative view of language and support a wide variety of classroom procedures, like: Learners learn a language through using it to communicate; also, authentic and meaningful communication is the goal of classroom activities. Fluency is very important too and taking into account that communication involves the integration of different language skills; that is why this method is very used by teachers. During the observation process some aspects that were very evident were that teachers did not use only one method during class, they use a

mix of methods, which means that it is not possible to teach through a unique method; instead it is possible to teach by the combination of some of the existing ones.

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

Graph_3

0%

100%

■ YES
■ NO
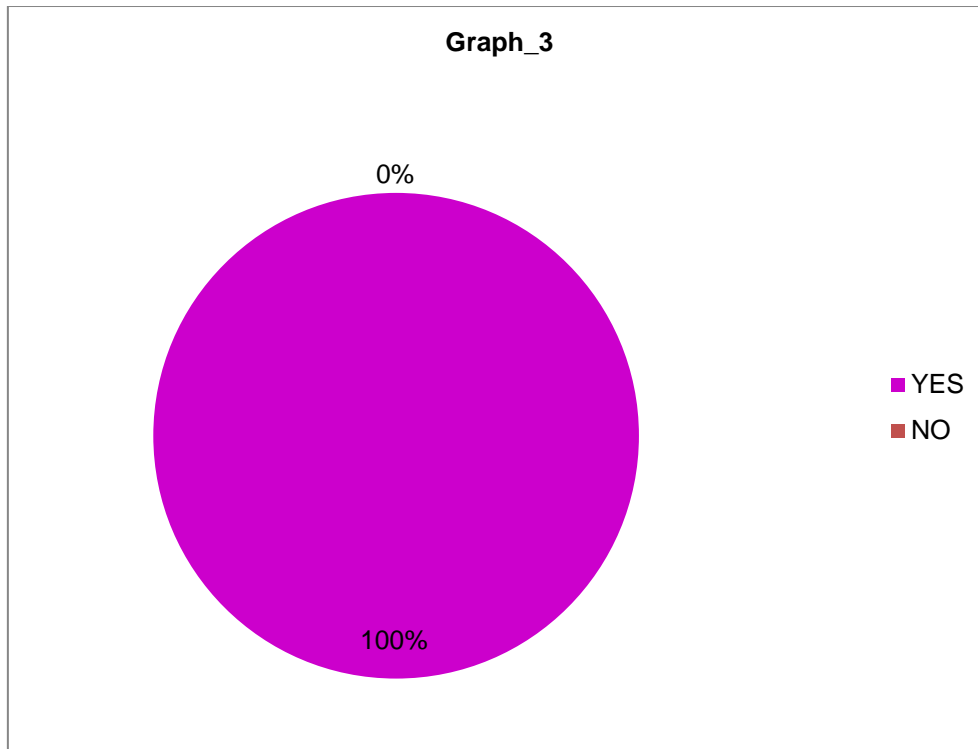
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
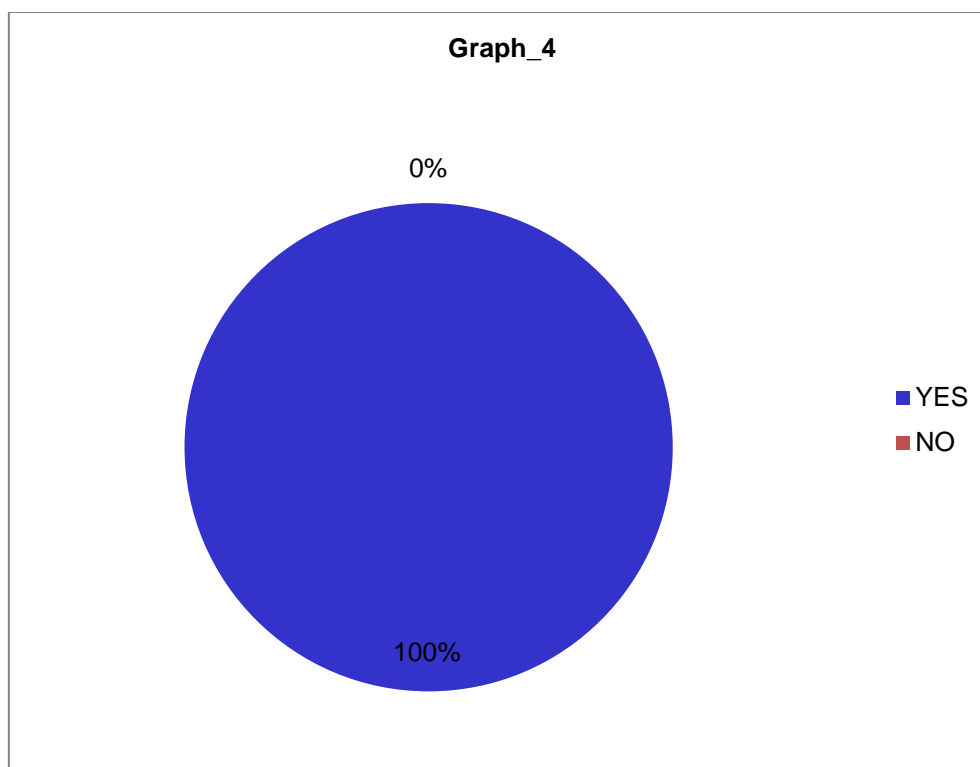Source: Teachers Questionnaire

As we can observe in this graph all of the 15 teachers (100%) said they use whole-group work activities during their English classes. Most of teachers agree that this kind of activities help students to interact in English with their classmates and teacher, this activity is ideal when teachers are monitoring the classes.

The advantages of presenting instruction to the whole class are attractive to many teachers. Whole-class strategies generally require less preparation time and instruction time. Typical whole-class strategies include lecture, discussion, debate, teacher demonstrations, and giving directions. Edwards (1993) says learning and teaching should not stand on opposite banks and just watch the river flow by; instead, they should embark together on a journey down the water. Through an active, reciprocal exchange, teaching can strengthen learning.

I agree with Edwards' thoughts, teachers should make an effort to make each one of the students participate in the process. In the observed lessons it was evident the use of

whole class activities, but I believe teachers should have a balance between whole- group and individual participation.

Do you use individual activities to teach your lessons?

Graph_4

0%

100%

- YES
- NO

Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

Continuing with the analysis, individual activities are commonly used during English classes. It is very common to see students working in their workbook or taking notes. 100% of English teachers (15) used this kind of activity, especially to promote individual comprehension.

Weimer (2012) sustains that participation is an extremely crucial element for learning. It is a proven fact that students learn better and retain more when they are active participants. Learning is an active process and should involve talking. Individual work allows the students to internalize the knowledge on his own learning style.

In this study, teachers affirm that they use individual activities, which was proven in the class observation. It is important to mention that teachers must monitor the students' work and not just focus individual participation as a grading activity, but as an approach to encourage students self-learning.

Do you use group work activities to teach your lessons?

Graph_5

0%

100%

YES
NO
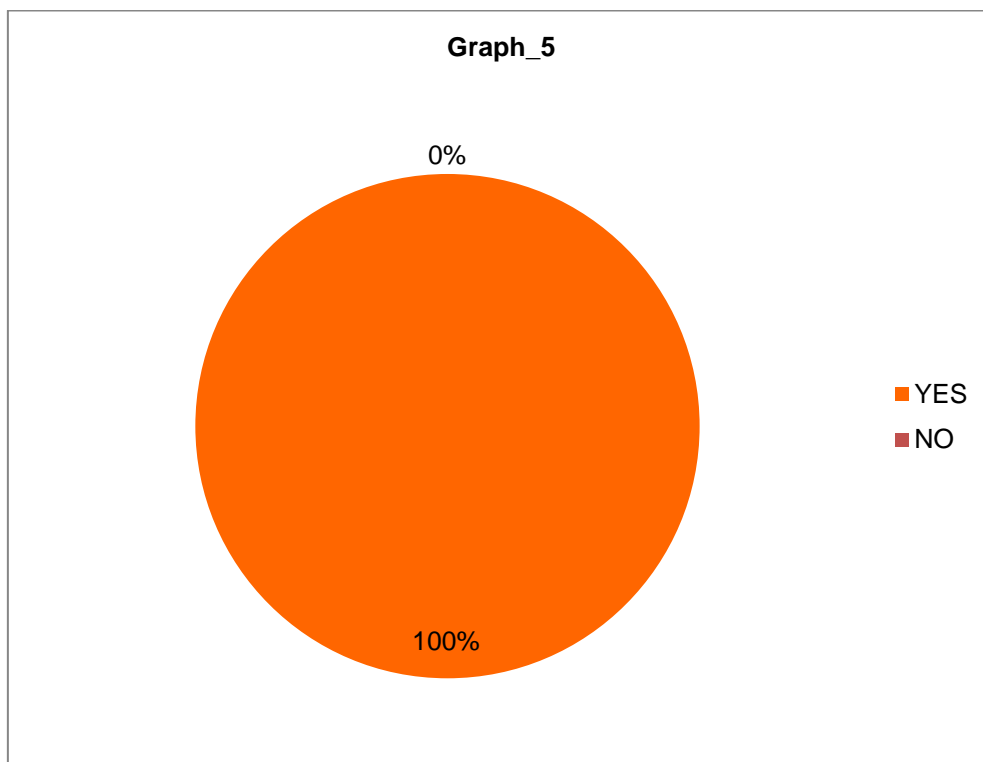
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

All the teachers in the observed classes said they use group work activities in their English classes. This means 100% percent of the interviewed teachers (15) know the importance of promoting collaborative work in the classrooms.

Group projects can help students develop a host of skills that are increasingly important in the professional world. Positive group experiences, moreover, have been shown to contribute to student learning, retention and overall high school succes (Caruso and Woolley, 2008).

After the lesson observation, it was visible that group working has an effect not just on learning but in the students' behavior. Teachers are also benefited from it, they have more time to spot specific problems with some students and familiarize themselves with the different learning styles of their students. Therefore, group activities are an important part of a teaching learning process.

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

Graph_6

0%

100%

- YES
- NO
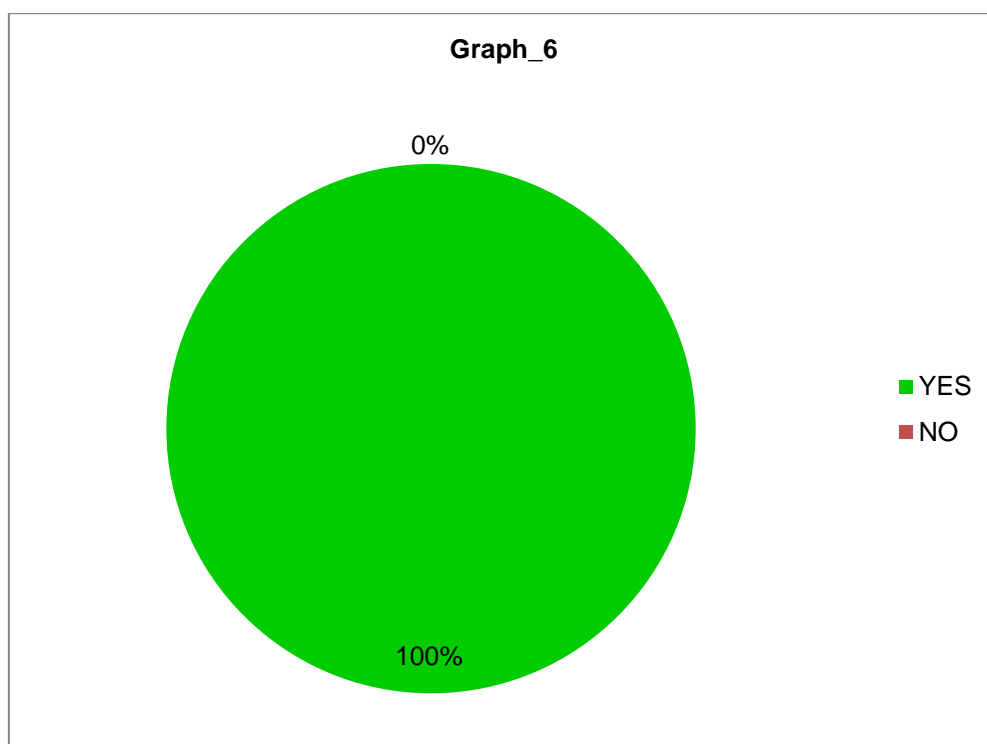
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

All of the interviewed teachers (15) said they use English in their classes. This represents a 100% of population. Nevertheless, during the lesson observation, it was noticeable that students do not make an effort to understand the teachers speaking English but waited for them to translate the instructions.

Recent foreign language pedagogy research supports the use of a communicative approach to teaching. In an ideal classroom, stimulating and provocative instruction is delivered in the target language, and students are committed to interactive lessons conducted almost exclusively in the target language. Some foreign language students may simply need gentle encouragement to become part of this practice; others seek explanation and justification of the value of target language use (Brown, 2001).

Consequently, teachers must use the target language in class and patiently make their students do the same. In the observed lessons, it was obvious that the teachers found it easier to translate, but it is important to have in mind that the immersion to the language is what help the most to learn English.

Do you plan your lessons?
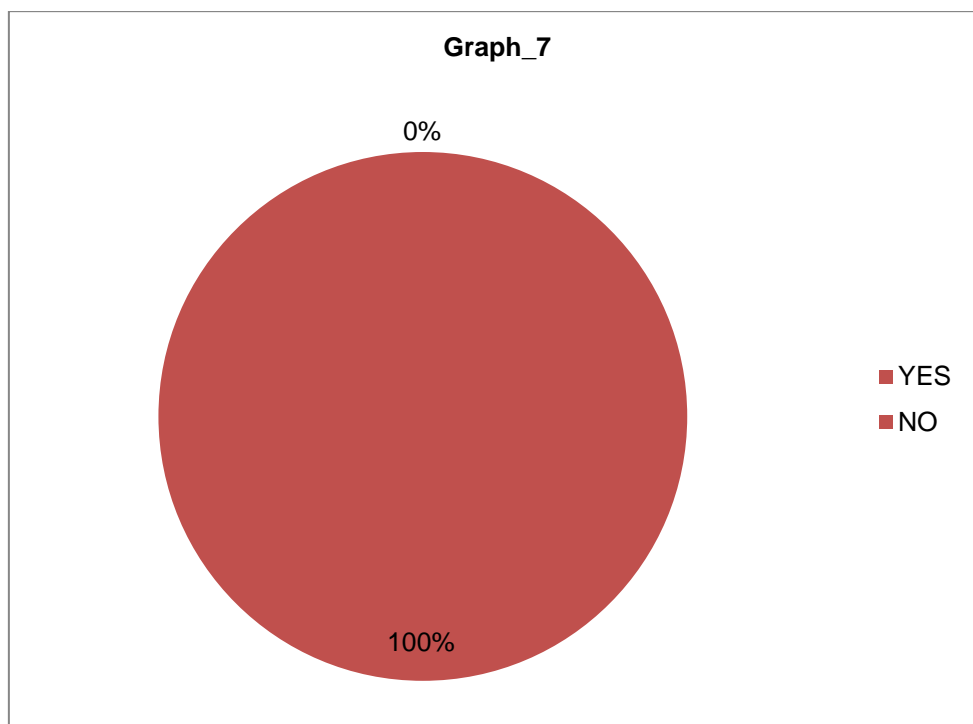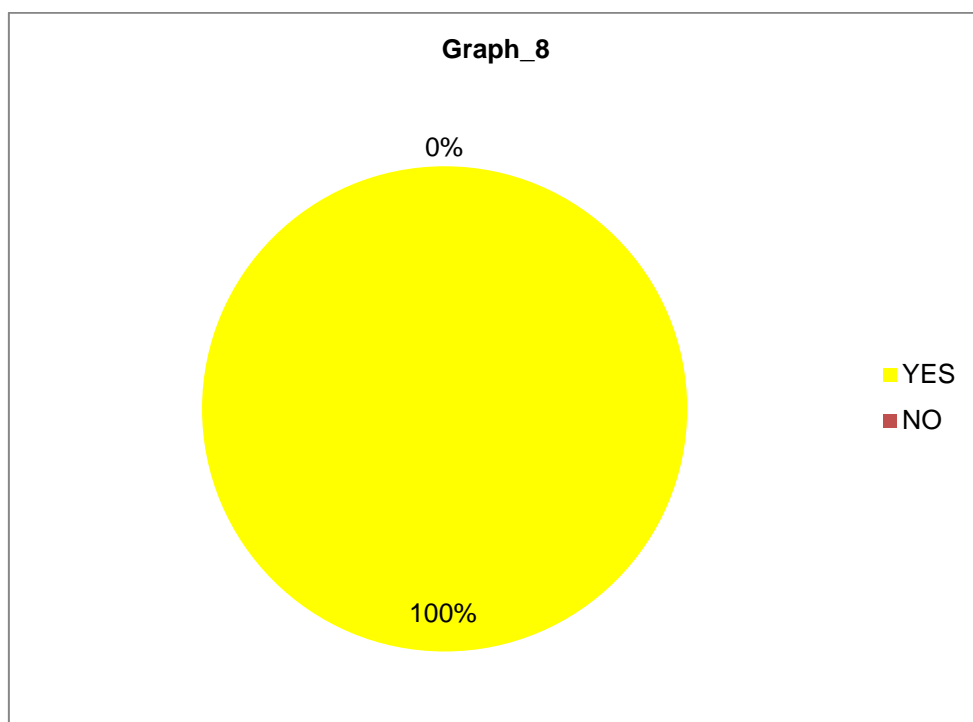

Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

According to the teachers' responses in the interview, the fifteen instructors plan their lessons. This means the 100% of the educators have their activities designed before the class.

Spratt (2005), says that a lesson plan is a set of notes that makes you think what and how you are going to teach a lesson; it guides you and makes you identify all the components of what and how you will bring the students about in a given activity. In an English class there should be a lot of language learning and practicing, so planning should focus on these activities. Students and teacher need to feel they have a relaxed atmosphere physically, socially and psychologically.

For this reason, a good lesson plan must be related to the skills that are being taught, and it has to be appropriate to the students' age, and English level. The teacher's lesson plans are designed to indicate how the class in going to be developed. However it was noticed that not all the lesson plans were planed carefully.

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

Graph_8

0%

100%

■ YES
■ NO

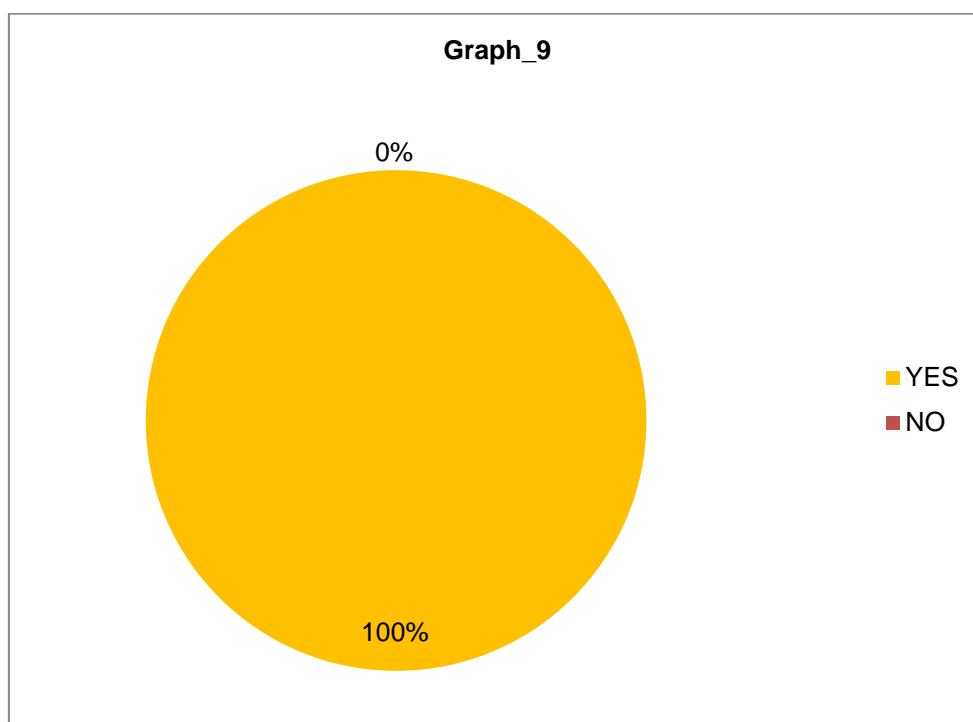Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

In the teachers' questionnaire, the fifteen teachers affirmed they consider aspects such as discipline, timing, feedback, and instruction in their classes. This 100% of the educators (15) said they are aware of these different factors that make an effect on the development of an English lesson. The control of these characteristics, discipline, timing, feedback and instruction, in the classroom is called Classroom Management.

Harmer (1991) affirms that effective teaching and learning cannot take place in a poorly managed classroom. If students are disorganized and disrespectful, and do not follow rules and procedures which guides to misbehavior, then chaos becomes the norm. In these situations, both teachers and students suffer. Teachers struggle to teach, and students most likely learn less than they should.

According to the class observation, managing a classroom involves a lot of practice, practice and knowledge of the students. The interviewed teachers showed effort to control the classroom, but each group and each day is a different scenario. The teachers do not have to feel disappointed if one day the class is a mess, what they have to keep in mind is what the correct action to take on each case is.

Factors Concerning Students

Do you consider Students' needs to teach English successfully?

Graph_9

0%

100%

■YES
■NO

Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

All of the fifteen teachers believe that students' needs are very important to teach successfully, this means 100% of them agree with this perception. People are different and the way they learn is different too. Teachers must know the group of students they are working with, and they should know something about each student.

Felder (2007, p.69) affirms that "When mismatches exist between learning styles of most students and the teaching style of the teacher, the students may become bored and inattentive in class and do poorly on tests. Professors, confronted by low test grades, poor attendance and dropouts, know something is not working." Therefore it is very important to pay attention to the students' needs and different learning styles.

During the observation process, it was noticed that most of teachers take into consideration students' needs. They try to develop several activities for all students. In consequence, it is clear that teachers knew their students; this previous knowledge will help teachers to find the best methodologies to work in class according to students" learning preferences, thus obtain better results in the teaching-learning process.

Do you consider Students' level to teach English successfully?

Graph_10


0%

100%

■ YES
■ NO
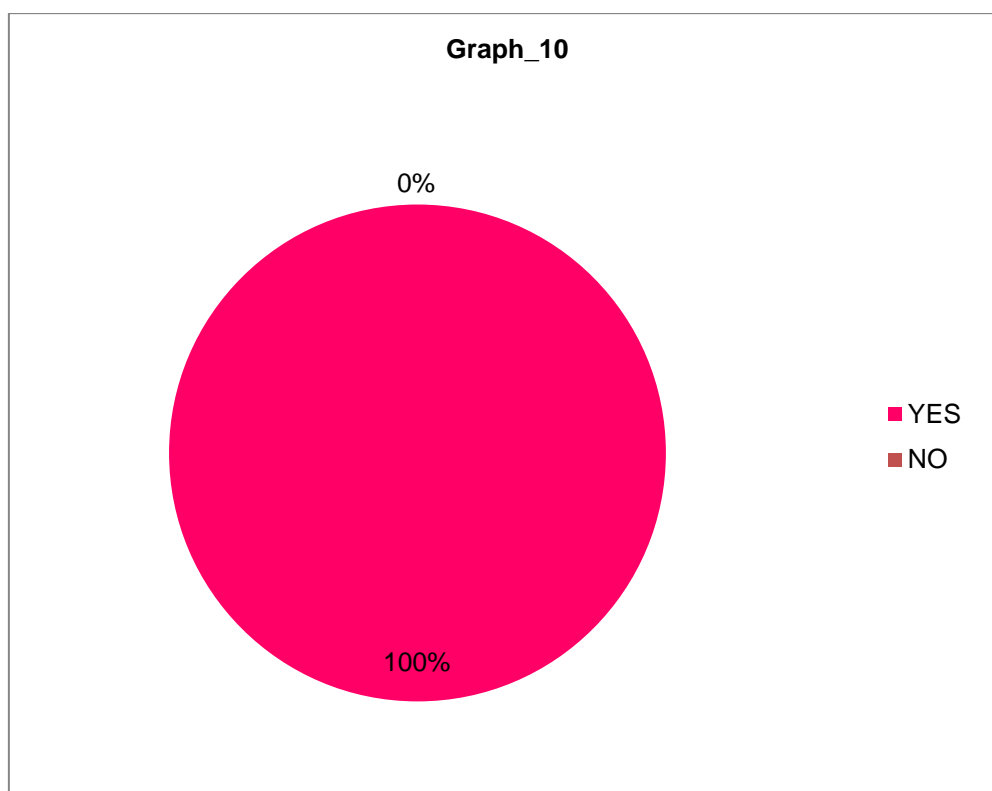
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

The results of the questionnaires evidenced that 100% of the fifteen surveyed teachers take into account students English level to teach English successfully. Most of students explained that activities proposed by teachers are easy; nevertheless, in the observed class, it was noticed that some students had difficulties to solve some activities.

Something important to mention is that not all students have the same English level. For example, one student may be strong in speaking skills while another strong in reading. Harmer (2001) mentions that a concern with teaching the multi-level class is holding everyone's interest and meeting everyone's needs, no matter their level. A good approach could be to include a variety of modalities and strategies: use visuals, stories, and movies. These are amazing tools in a multi-level class because a variety of students of different levels will relate to and gain something from them.

According to this, the interviewed teachers demonstrated they consider their students' English level in their classes because they used a variety of tools and techniques to give all the students the opportunity to acquire the knowledge.

Which is the level of your students?

Graph_11

35% Basic
23% Intermediate
28% high intermediate
14% Advanced
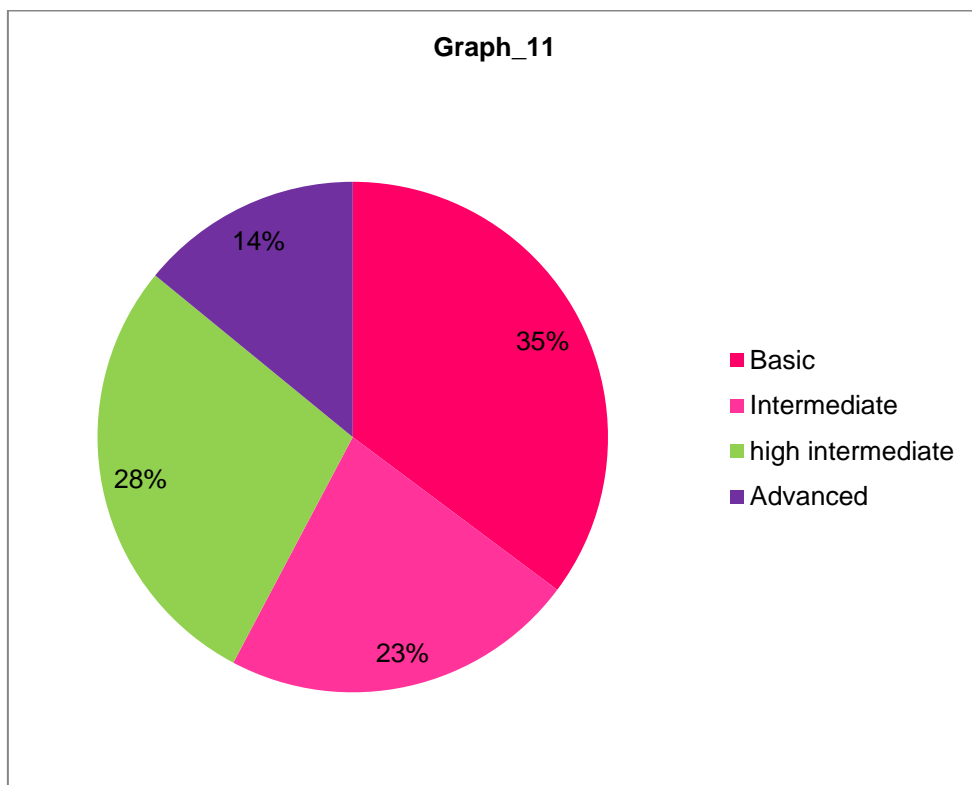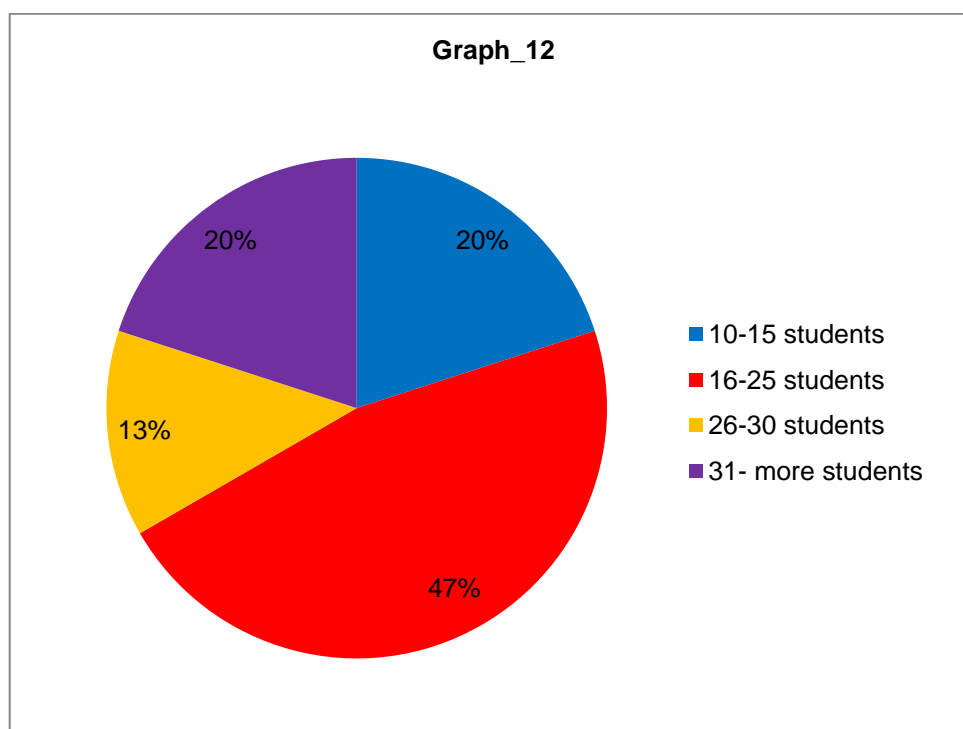
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

According to the following question for teachers the 35 %(5 teachers) said that their students are in Intermediate level; 28%(4 teachers) said that their students are in High Intermediate; 23% (3 teachers) said that their students are in Basic level and just the 14% (2 teachers) said that their students are in Advanced level.

EFL learners vary widely in their level of English language proficiency, and furthermore, EFL students may have varying levels of oral and written English proficiency. Do not assume that students who can converse easily in English will have the literacy skills necessary to understand the written directions for a standardized test. This is important to keep in mind when designing and scoring the assessment, as well as when making decisions about the level of proficiency (Martho, 1985).

The observation showed almost the same results. But there are some students who belong to a different level and did not have the required skills to be part of that level. For **them, it is necessary to identify their language skills. Furthermore, it was obvious that some** students were bored because they finished their assignments faster than the students that have understanding problems. Therefore, it is essential in a classroom, to determine correctly the English level of each student.

Factors Concerning Classroom

How many students do you have in this class?

Graph_12

- 10-15 students
- 16-25 students
- 26-30 students
- 31- more students

20%   20%
13%
20%
47%

Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

About this question, the 47%, (7 teachers) responded that they have between 16-25 students per classroom; the 20% (3 teachers)said that they have 10-15 students; the 20%(3 teachers) said that they have 31 and more students, and just the 13% (2 teachers) answered that they have 10-15 students in their English classes.

Most of the teachers feel good with the number of students they have in class; however, Martho (1985) explains that for practicing languages teachers need certain techniques of language teaching which can be effectively used in just small learners groups, nevertheless, this become useless when these techniques are applied to large classes, it means that the result can vary.

In the observed English classes, most of the teachers had 16- 25 students per class; it was also notice that English teachers share the same criteria with Martho because most of them find some limitations when they have to work with large classes, it seems that for them it is better to have small group of students.

Do you feel comfortable working with this number of students?

Graph_13

Legend: YES, NO

7%

93%
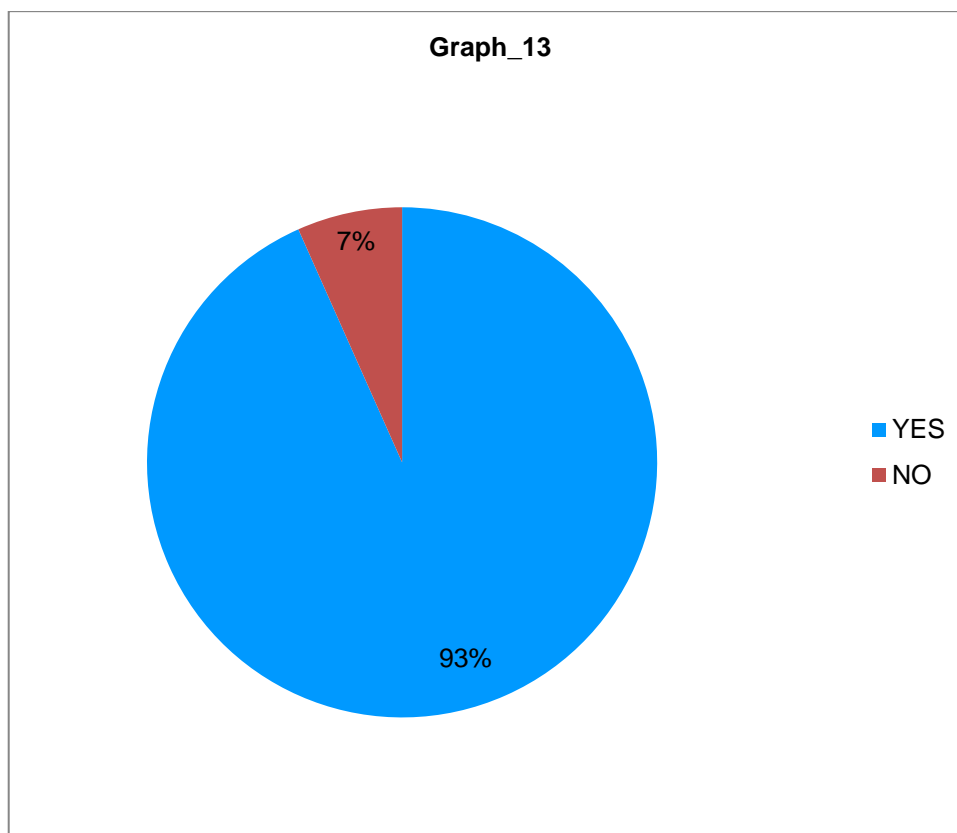
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

As it was explained before there were 16 to 25 students per English class, mostly. The 93% of the teachers, fourteen of them, feel comfortable with the number of students they have. Only one teacher (7%), said he was not comfortable with the number of students in his class. Nevertheless, it was observed that teachers who have many students have problems to control and manage the class in the right way.

To support the previous result, Nolasco and Arthur (1995) explain that this happens to teachers who manage large classes because they often have to cope with limited resources, in addition to the physical problems of having large numbers of students in classroom and also because it is very difficult to control all students.

Regarding number of students in class, interviewed students expressed that they feel good working with the number of classmates they have because most of classrooms are big enough for them. It is important to notice that even if the students feel comfortable in a large class, according to previous studies it is not academically correct to have too many students in a classroom.

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

Graph_14

YES
NO

27%

73%
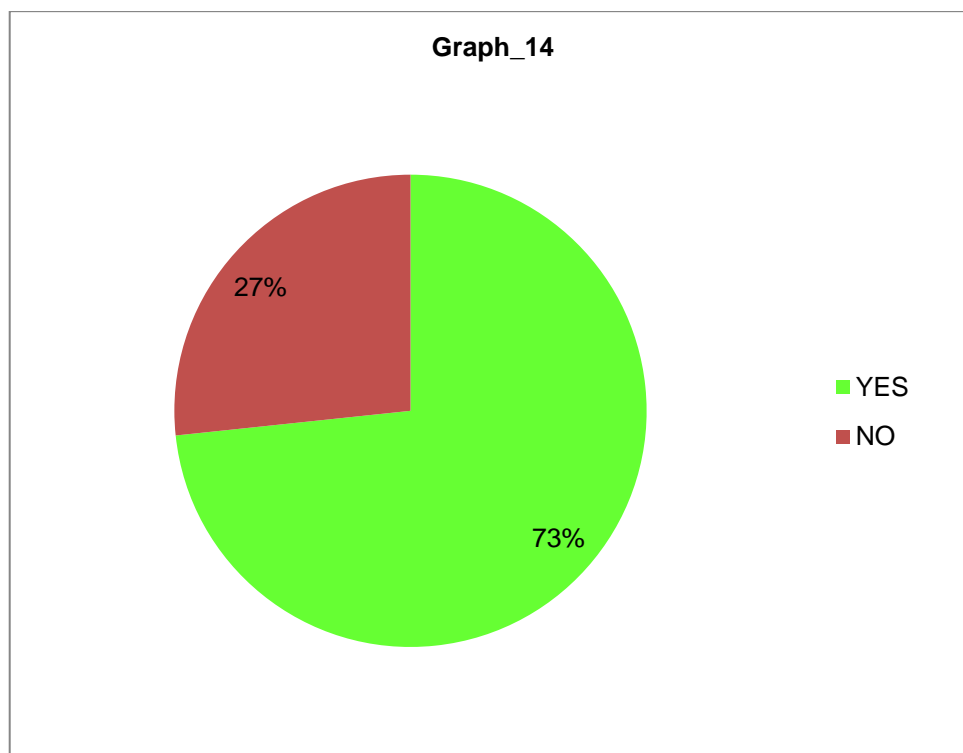
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

The 73%, eleven teachers, think that they have enough space to work with this group of students; the other 27% four teachers said they are not comfortable with the classroom space.

The space is fundamental for English classes. Lowes and Target (1998) state that classroom space can be a negative factor when it is too small, because teachers need enough space to move, in order to monitor the class and see what students are doing. They think that an ideal English class must have enough space to work, a mini library, dictionaries, posters on the wall, supplementary material, and appropriate seating arrangement.

It was observed that in a few private high schools the space was reduce; therefore, it is necessary to emphasize, to the authorities of these institutions, that teaching English requires an adequate space to develop all the activities that the teachers plan.

Do you arrange students' seats in relation to the activities planned for your classes?
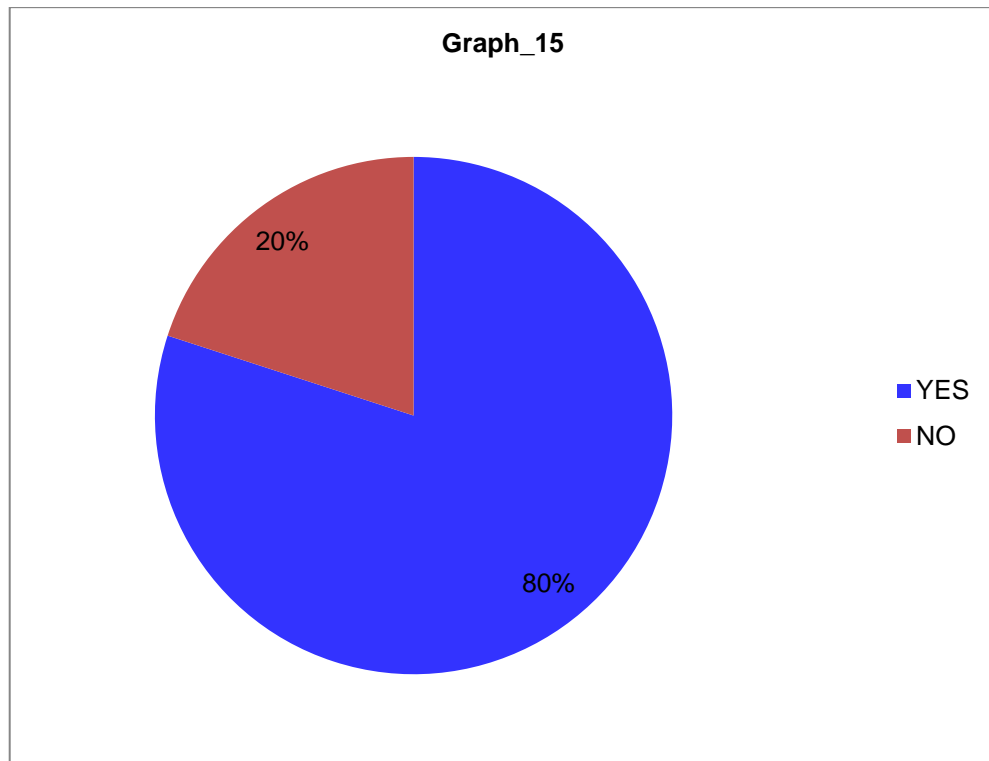
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

Seating arrangement is an important physical factor that influences teaching learning process. The 80% of the teachers (12) said that they arrange students seats in relation to the activities planned for classes. The other 3 teachers (20%) say they do not give much importance to the seating arrangement.

Philips and Walters (2009, p. 21) argue that if a class has more than sixteen students, a good option for teachers is to make a double horseshoe arrangement because this kind of seating arrangement can be useful during a whole class interaction, in class discussion open pair work, and many other activities.

It is easy to agree with Philips and Walters opinion; besides, it is advisable for teachers, to take advantage of the arrangements they can make in the class to develop more interactive activities. During observation, it was evident that most of private high schools have their seats arranged into rows or horseshoe. The seating arrangement depended mostly on the number of students of each class.

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

Graph_16

0%

21%

56%

23%

- 10-15 students
- 16-25 students
- 26-30 student
- 31- more student
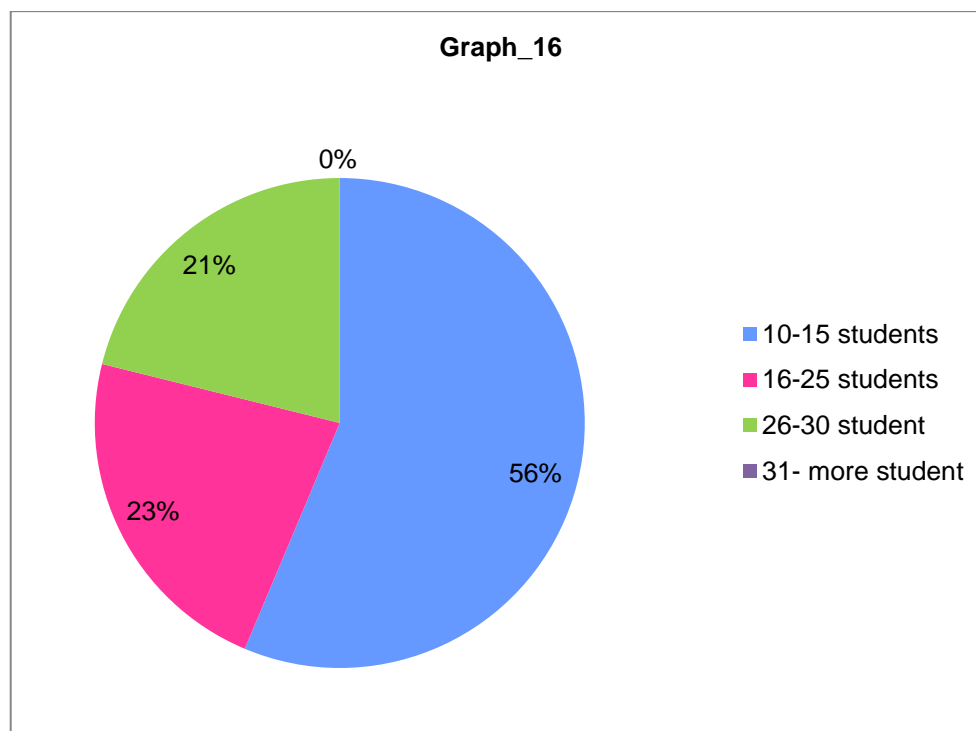
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

Regarding the appropriate number of students to teach English, the 56% of teachers (8) believe that the appropriate number of student to teach English is between 10 to 15 students; the 23 % of the teachers (4) answered 16 to 25 students; the 21% of the teachers (3) answered that the best number is 26 to 30 students; therefore, 31 or more students was not an appropriate number of students to teach English.

Lowes (1998) states that all students have the right to engage in a variety of literacy activities, to have meaningful interaction with peers and teachers, and to receive frequent and adequate feedback. Students need teachers who have the time and skills necessary to honor individual learning styles and accommodate individual student's instructional needs. These student rights must be the foremost consideration when making decisions concerning the number of students allowed in a classroom.

During the observation time, it was possible to share with many teachers and most of them said that the number of students is a factor that they consider very important because having less students provide them many benefits: greater opportunities for participation, greater individual attention, and more time to provide instructions. Therefore, it is important to

consider the number of students per class to have better results in the teaching- learning process.

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

Graph_17

0%

100%

■ YES
■ NO
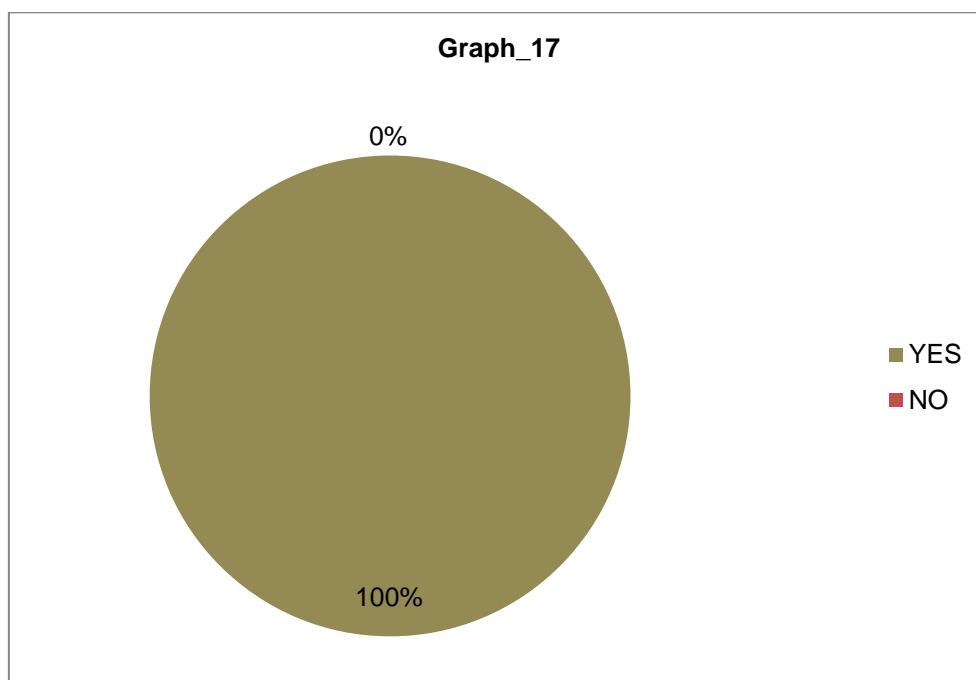
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

The results above show that all teachers use teaching resources and supplementary material; they are important because they catch the students' attention and make the understanding of the new language easier. Furthermore, the most used resources are the tape and CD recorder, and the less used ones were projector, and computer, but the one that was not used was the smart board because none of the researched high school had one.

Voltz (2010) asserts that supplementary resources are used to support instruction and create outcomes for diverse students; they can be textbooks, workbooks, or worksheets. In the same way, Berardo (2006) affirms that the main purpose of supplementary material is to engage the student into the topic, enhance their interest, and make the lesson enjoyable. It also helps to explain things that without materials, teachers would have to translate into their mother tongue for students to understand.

The observation showed the same results; the use of additional teaching resources is important because they make a class interesting; they awake the curiosity in the students, and permit them to learn faster and enjoy the class. Considering that fact, it is necessary to take into account that supplementary material must be interesting and motivating. Therefore when choosing it, the teacher has to think of the students' needs and the topic of the lesson.

Do you consider appropriate the resources you have in class?

Graph_18
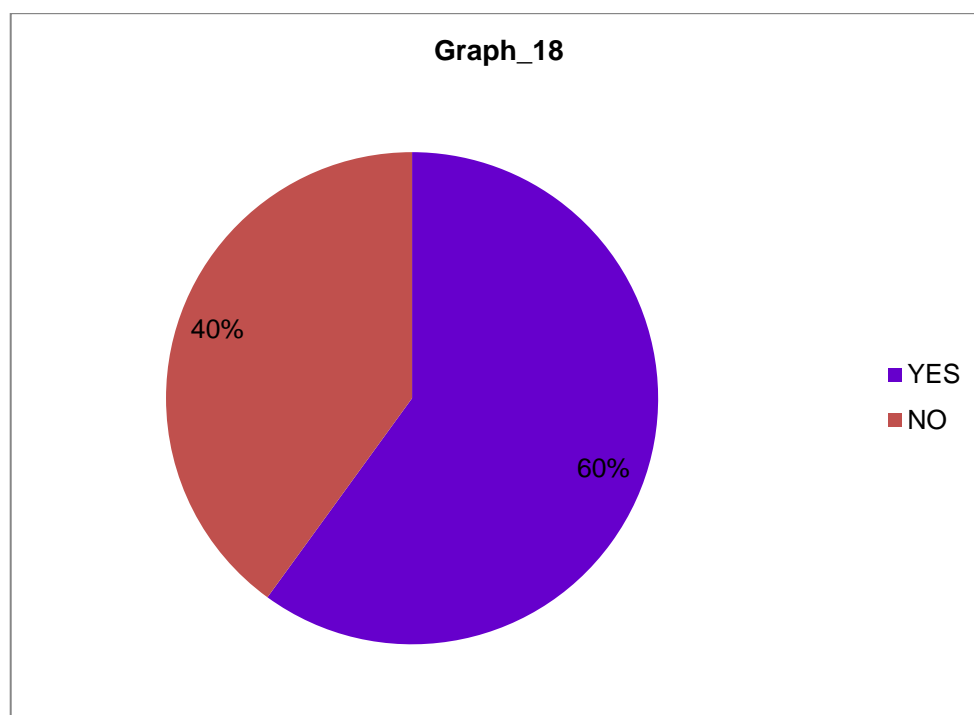
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

In the graph above, 60% of the interviewed teachers, nine educators considered appropriate the resources they have in class. The other 40%, six English tutors, said they were not comfortable with the resources they had.

In any way teachers must be careful in picking the right additional materials otherwise they will not be useful. The two main objectives of supplementary material are to serve as a reference aid or help with the language, the most common supplementary materials are: dictionaries, grammar books, maps, markers, pictures, and provide ideas to understand the process of teaching and learning, like flashcards, posters, videos (Hernández, 2008).

In the observation, it was evident that the materials were designed according to the aims of the class; the selection of an adequate didactic material constitutes an important step in the educational system. Students liked the resources that teachers used during classes;

most of the teachers used dynamic material and made the classes more interesting because the role of the resources is to conduct a good class, and to describe all the aspects that teachers think are important at the moment to present the different contents in front of the class, in a simple way.

Factors Concerning Educational Institution

Does the institution review your lesson plans?

Graph_19

once a week
once a month
other

7%

20%

73%
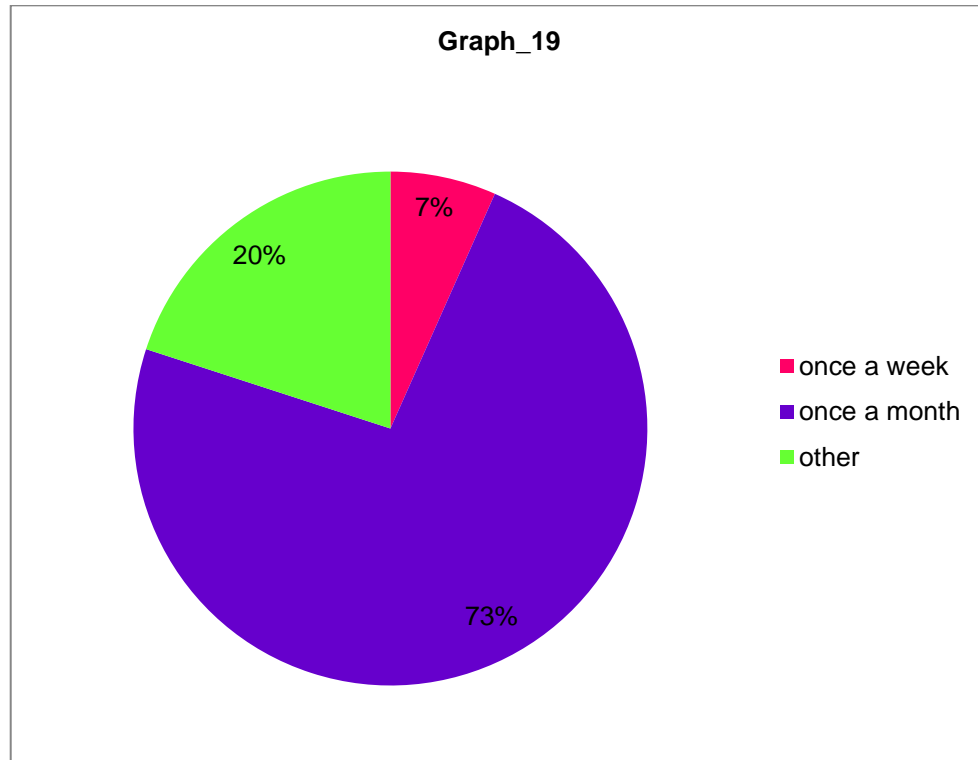
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

All private high schools review their teachers' lessons plan. The 73%, eleven teachers explained that the institution review their lesson plan once a month; just the 20% (3 teachers) said they have their lessons plan reviewed once a week. And the other teacher said the high school only reviews the lesson plan once a term.

Woodward (2009) is right when he says that planning is hard for teachers because they have to plan their lessons for each English class that they are going to teach. There are several reasons why a planned lesson is better. One of them is that having a lesson plan helps you maintain focus. Not all planned lessons are fabulous and not all unplanned lessons are a disaster, but even a bad lesson will be less ineffective if it is planned, and even a great lesson can be greater with a good plan.

The teachers' lesson plans are designed to indicate how the teachers are going to develop their classes, the materials they are going to use, the time they are going to spend on each activity and so on. Moreover, during the research, it was noticeable that some

institutions have an English area that is in charge to make sure that the activities proposed in the lesson plan are developed during the class.

According to the new Educational system it is responsibility for the teacher to present a lesson plan with the topics that he or she is going to develop during the school year; this plan must be approved by the high school director. If the supervisor does not approve the lesson plan, the teacher must make changes until the plan is correct.

Does the institution monitor your teaching?

Graph_20
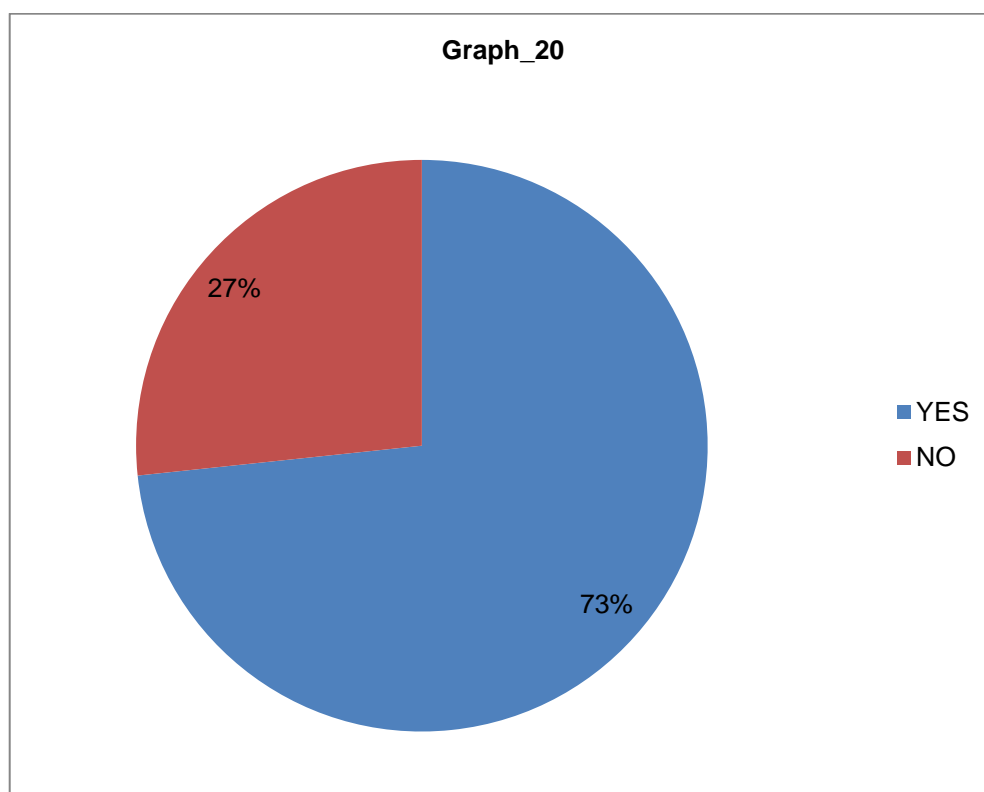
Author: Rosa Banegas Loarte
Source: Teachers Questionnaire

Eleven teachers (73%) affirmed that the institution monitor their English class. The other four English tutors (27%) said the high schools do not supervise their classes. Monitoring is not about spying how good or bad a teacher is; instead, it has deeper goals in education.

Like Gower, Philips and Walters (2009) explained: the aim of monitoring is to observe what the teacher and their students are doing and evaluate how well the group as a whole is getting, and how individual students within the group are reacting.

During the observations it was noticeable that private high schools have an English area with a supervisor who checks what the teachers are doing during classes. Monitoring is not always performed by an authority; an English colleague can observe each other classes and then share opinions about the development with his fellow workers.

Conclusions

One of the main factors that influence the teaching-learning process of the English language, in private high schools, is that some of the teachers do not have the required qualifications needed to work as high school English teachers; as a result, the knowledge imparted to students would be of a poor quality.

In spite of the fact that private high schools are equipped with technology, it was clearly noticed that teachers do not take advantage of the benefits that technology offers for the teaching-learning process; consequently, students get technology deprived.

The study findings show that having large classes generates difficulty in the teaching-learning process; it produces discomfort in both students and teachers; therefore teachers and students' rapport is not the best; hence, the teaching-learning process does not develop effectively and, as a consequence students' achievement is not as expected.

Even though teachers included objectives, materials and activities during the development of their class; in the observed classes, it was noticed that none of the teachers had their lesson plan ready at hand. The lack of a physical plan may derive in improvisation, and consequently in poor teaching quality.

The research reveals that teachers applied a variety of methods to teach English; it was evident that teachers promote interaction in each classroom; although some of educators were not really clear about the aspects that each method required in the teaching process of the language; therefore the misapplication of methods causes the lack of skills development in the students.

Recommendations

Teachers should remain in constant training in the teaching- learning process, in this way they will be able to obtain their title that qualify them as English teacher, and consequently, graduated teachers will be able to teach, their students, in a more professional manner.

Teachers should make use of the technological equipment that is offered by educational institutions with the purpose to improve technological skills and in this way to offer students dynamic and creative classes.

Educational Institutions should avoid an excessive number of students in each classroom because teachers need to have enough space to involve students into interactive classroom activities.

Teachers should plan every single class taking into consideration their students' needs and classroom space; furthermore, teacher ought to carry the physical plan to class in order to use it as a guidance for the lesson.

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UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

MODALIDA ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA

CARRERA DE INGLES

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?**

CommunicativeLanguageTeaching	( )
The Natural Approach	( )
CooperativeLanguageLearning	( )
Content-BasedInstruction	( )
Task-BasedLanguageTeaching	( )
CognitiveAcademicLanguageLearning	( )
Total Physical Response	( )
WholeLanguageApproach	( )
GrammarTranslationMethod	( )
Others _____	( )

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

Whole-groupactivities	( )
Individual activities	( )
Groupworkactivities	( )

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

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

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

Discipline   (   )
Feedback   (   )
Activitiesmanagement   (   )
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:

_____

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

TV   (   )
Tape/Cd recorder   (   )
Computer(s)   (   )
Projector(s)   (   )
Smartboard   (   )
Supplementarymaterials   (   )
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)?

TEACHER'S LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY:
C2   ( )   C1   ( )   B2   ( )   B1   ( )   A2   ( )   A1   ( )

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:
DATE:
YEAR:

1. ¿Te gusta aprender Inglés?

SI ( )   NO ( )

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

SI ( )   NO ( )
¿Por qué?
_____

3. Consideras que las actividades realizadas en clase son:

Muy fáciles ( )   Fáciles ( )   Difíciles ( )   Muy difíciles ( )

4. ¿Te gusta la forma de enseñanza del idioma Inglés que usa tu profesor?

SI ( )   NO ( )
¿Por qué?
_____

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

SI ( )   NO ( )

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

SI ( )   NO ( )

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

SI ( )   NO ( )

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

SI   ( )   NO   ( )

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

SI   ( )   NO   ( )

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

SI   ( )   NO   ( )

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

SI   ( )   NO   ( )
¿Por qué?

_____

____

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

SI   ( )   NO   ( )
¿Por qué?

_____

____

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

SI   ( )   NO   ( )
¿Por qué?

_____

____

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

SI   ( )   NO   ( )

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:
DATE:
YEAR:

15. Which level of education do you have?

High school diploma ( )   English Bachelor'sDegree ( )   English Master'sdegree ( )
Others: _____

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

Students' Needs*(age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation, and learning styles)*
YES   ( )   NO   ( )
Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____

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

Students' Level *(Basic, Intermediate, High Intermediate , and Advanced)*
YES   ( )   NO   ( )
Why?_____

_____

18. Which is the level of your students?

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

19. 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 _____   ( )

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

YES ( )   NO   ( )

Why? _____

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

YES ( )   NO   ( )

Why? _____

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

YES ( )   NO   ( )

Why? _____

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

YES ( )   NO   ( )

24. Do you plan your lessons?

YES ( )   NO   ( )

Why? _____

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

YES ( )   NO   ( )

Why? _____

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

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

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

YES ( )   NO   ( )

Why? _____

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

YES　( )　　　　　NO　( )

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

YES　( )　　　　　　　　　　NO　( )
Why? _____

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

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

Why? -

_____

-

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

YES　( )　　　　NO　( )
Whichones?

_____

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

YES　( )　　　　NO　( )
Why?

_____

33. Does the institution review your lesson plans?
YES　( )　　　　NO　( )
If yes, howfrequently?
Once a week　　　　Once a month　　　Other_____

34. Does the institution monitor your teaching?
YES　( )　　　　NO　( )
If yes, howfrequently?
Once a week　　　　Once a month　　　Other_____

Thanks for your cooperation !!!!!!