UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja

ÁREA SOCIO HUMANÍSTICA

TITULO DE LICENCIADO EN CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN
MENCIÓN INGLÉS

English language students and their motivation to learn the language

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN.

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CENTRO UNIVERSITARIO CUENCA

2016

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DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this research work to my companion of life Oswaldo. I also want to dedicate it to my children, María del Cisne and her family, my twins María José and María de Lourdes, and Francisco; I am so grateful with them because they have supported me all the time through my studies, bad nights, and bad mood, giving me encouragement and help. Without their patience and love, it wouldn't have been possible to become an English teacher, one of the most cherished goals in my life.

Susana Berrezueta O.

I dedicate this work to my husband Juan, who has been there through these years, giving support, advice, and motivation. I also dedicate it to my beloved daughter Juliana, who has walked patiently next to me during my studies and, for always being the inspiration of my dreams.

Ma. Eugenia Pintado S.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Gratitude is the first word that comes to our minds; above all, we want to thank to God and our supportive families that made this dream come true. Finally, we want to express our gratitude to the Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja; especially our thesis tutor Mgtr. Lida Solano, who kindly guided us throughout the accomplishment of this academic goal.

Susana Berrezueta O.

Ma Eugenia Pintado S.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This research is about English language students and their motivation to learn language, which main purpose is to learn about English students' perceptions in relation to their motivation to learn the language in the classroom setting.

The research was conducted at a public high school located in the city of Cuenca. The selected data consisted of one hundred high school English students. The two main instruments used were a student questionnaire, as well as an observation sheet which led to obtain a better understanding of different aspects that motivate or discourage students within the classroom context. The quantitative and qualitative methods were used; the quantitative method was used to tabulate data and the qualitative method was used to gather evidence of pedagogical practices and their impact on students' motivation toward English language learning.

At the end of the study, it was concluded that most of the students are intrinsically motivated and factors such as role of the teacher, instructional strategies, and teaching methods can positively influence students' extrinsic motivation.

KEYWORDS: motivation, intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, hinder, high school.

RESUMEN

Esta investigación es sobre los estudiantes del idioma inglés y su motivación para aprender el lenguaje, cuyo propósito principal es aprender acerca de las percepciones de los estudiantes de inglés en relación con su motivación para aprender el idioma en el salón de clases.

La investigación se llevó a cabo en una escuela secundaria pública ubicada en la ciudad de Cuenca. Los datos seleccionados consistieron en cien estudiantes de inglés de secundaria. Los dos principales instrumentos utilizados fueron un cuestionario para los alumnos, así como una hoja de observación la cual permitió obtener una mejor comprensión de los diferentes aspectos que motivan o desmotivan a los estudiantes dentro del contexto del aula. Se utilizaron los métodos cuantitativo y cualitativo; el método cuantitativo se utilizó para tabular los datos y el método cualitativo se utilizó para reunir pruebas de las prácticas pedagógicas y su impacto en la motivación de los estudiantes hacia el aprendizaje del idioma Inglés.

Al final del estudio, se concluyó que la mayoría de los estudiantes son intrínsecamente motivados y factores tales como papel del profesor, estrategias de enseñanza y métodos de enseñanza pueden influir positivamente en la motivación extrínseca de los estudiantes.

PALABRAS CLAVES: motivación, la motivación intrínseca, la motivación extrínseca, obstaculizar, de la escuela secundaria.

INTRODUCTION

In our globalized world, English has become an important language to be taught at any educational level. An important issue to learn the language is motivation. Motivated learners are willing to pursue and reach their leaning goals for this reason, it is important to research on English language students and their motivation to learn the language.

Furthermore, the main purpose of this research was to learn about Ecuadorian students' perceptions regarding to students' motivation to learn English in their classrooms.

Moreover, for this research two questions have been asked what motivates students to learn English? And what hinders students to learn English?

The importance of this research is to point out the necessity to greatly motivate students in order to acquire linguistic competence in Ecuadorian high schools.

Along with this investigation, previous research studies have been carried out about students' motivation to learn the English language. For instance, one study regarding to motivation and foreign language learning was conducted by Hsuan-Yau and Kuang (2013) in Taiwan, whose purpose was to explore university students' changes and their causes in motivation for studying English. In regard to this study, the authors concluded that motivation is a complex issue and its process is dynamic and controllable. Also, they found that motivation not only comes from students' inner self, but also by socio-cultural context interactions with others. Most of the Taiwanese students' motivation changed, both positively and negatively due to several factors such as: teachers, curriculum, work groups, social experiences and learning environment.

Others outcomes were drawn out in this study. Teachers and curriculum designers should be aware of students' needs in the English classroom; teachers have to give autonomy to their students in a form that will encourage to intrinsic motivation, and classes have to be dynamic and flexible to increase extrinsic motivation. Even though the researchers have contributed with significant findings, some limitations lied in the number of the sample selected, only twenty students were involved in the research and this sample could not represent to the majority of Taiwanese students.

Another key study was conducted by Bernaus, Wilson, and Gardner (2009), whose main goal was to investigate student motivation and achievement in English and their relation to teacher motivation and strategy use in the classroom. The authors concluded that there was a clear connection between highly motivated students and their motivated teachers. Then, the strategies used in the classroom were influenced by the motivation that teachers had. Also, low levels of English achievement were related to the use of traditional strategies.

Moreover, language achievement is associated to characteristics linked to integrative motivation, which students bring them to the class and it is relatively independent of the strategy used. However, this study was limited to students' and teachers' perceptions rather than classroom observation carried out by independent observers.

Finally, Vaezi (2009) carried out a study with the purpose of describing and analyzing Iranian students' integrative and instrumental motivation to learn English. The author concluded that students perceived the language as a positive competence for their future career. In addition, the author found that motivation has to be viewed as one of numerous variables or situational factors that belong to each individual learner. The author also concluded that the teacher, the class atmosphere, the course content, materials and facilities will have a positive influence on the students' classroom learning motivation. Although, the conclusions obtained are great contributions to the learning field they could not be widespread because the study was focused only in one university of a city in Iran.

By conducting the present study, researches, school authorities, teachers, students and educational institutions are expected to be benefited from its outcomes and its conclusions as well.

The present study is an important tool for language practitioners, especially for English language teachers from the high school level who are concerned about student motivation and influential factors, which can help maintain and increase encouragement towards effective language learning. Furthermore, this study may be beneficial for policy makers and curriculum designers in the field of English language education within the Ecuadorian educational context. In addition, by reading the present study, English language practitioners will be likely to become aware of the importance of giving student motivation a central role in their language instruction, as it can foster language acquisition among Ecuadorian high school students.

There were two limitations encountered in this research. The first one was related to the number and length of the observation; only one observation, which consisted of thirty-five minutes long was carried out in each of the five selected classrooms. The second one has to do with the sample size used in the investigation. In order to obtain meaningful significant results, a greater number of study participants was required.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents some scientific content and studies in different educational settings about the impact of motivation, as a main point, inside the classroom. The first part of the literature review contains information about some authors' point of view on how to increase the interest of students to learn a foreign language and the second part consists of information drawn from research studies, which deals with a great variety of perceptions concerning factors that facilitate or hinder language learning. The following topics were examined from a theoretical perspective.

Motivation to learn English

Motivation comes from a Latin verb *movere* that means to move, therefore, motivation is consider what moves a person to make choices (Dörnyie & Ushioda, 2013). Also, Nakata (2006 p. 24) defines motivation as "something that gets us going, keeps us moving, and helps us get jobs done". Besides, Ur (1998) declares that a motivated learner is pleased to invest her/his effort during learning activities. As a result, the teaching and learning progress are pleasant and productive.

Moreover, there are two types of motivation that researchers have written about. They are extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Hammer (2001) states that extrinsic motivation focuses on external factors that stimulate the student's willingness to learn a foreign language, for example success and its rewards. Ur (1998) points out that students who have experienced satisfaction on past tasks will be more extrinsically motivated than the ones that have failed. This author also claims that one of the teachers' jobs is to let students know when they are going to fail, but it is important to have in mind that the over use of this tool can reduce the students' motivation; especially, on those students that have self-confidence issues.

In addition, Deci and Ryan (1985 as cited in Nakata, 2006) suggest four stages of extrinsic motivation. The first stage is about external regulation, which means learning because it is mandatory. The second stage is introjected regulation and it happens when learners study for pressure. The next stage is the identified regulation and it is when learning starts to be important for the learner. And the final stage is integrated motivation, which happens when students decide to learn because it increases their personal identify. For instance, these four points of extrinsic motivation may work as a positive stimulus on the students' behavior, as well as the overall learning process of the target language.

On the other hand, intrinsic motivation is presented when learners enjoy the learning process by itself, or by the desire of feeling better. Ur (1998) notes that this motivation fosters success in the process of language acquisition. Additionally, this author mentions that learners' intrinsic motivation can be influenced by some factors such as: the society around,

the teacher, and the method used.

Also, Csikszentmihaly (1975 as cited in Deci and Ryan, 1985) suggests that people will be intrinsically motivated under conditions of optimal challenge. If the activities are not challenging enough, students will get bored and they will experience anxiety. Therefore, in order to build pure intrinsic motivation, students need to involve with interesting activities that will let students feel free, relaxed, and the process of learning will take its own flow.

Activities or strategies that motivate students to learn English

There are some activities and strategies that motivate students to learn the English language. Dörnyei (2001) explains that it is important to start with the strategy in which the teachers' behavior can influence their students, that is, if a teacher is eager to lecture a class, this will affect her/his students' willingness to learn. Also, this author says that students will increase their commitment to their own learning process when they realize that their teacher has the same commitment.

Another strategy is to maintain a nice, warm, and friendly atmosphere to build empathy between teacher and students, which plays an important role in the development of the class. Furthermore, a teacher who accomplishes a mutual good relationship with students can influence them academically, too. A similar strategy is parents' role which can play a supportive part in learners' motivation (Dörnyei, 2001).

Moreover, cohesiveness is another strategy that has to be promoted and reached by the teacher when work group is needed during a class. In order to achieve a social unit, students must have clear norms. These norms demonstrated by the teacher will increase students' motivation (Herrell & Jordan, 2012).

Furthermore, teachers may use other strategies that work throughout classroom activities. For example: a preview/review activity, where students get all the information needed for the lesson, scripts are given to students to participate dialogues, realia are real material to help students learn through their five senses, and communicative games let students talk in a low-stress environment (Herrell & Jordan, 2012).

Teaching Approaches and Methods

There are some important teaching approaches and methods of teaching which are used to conduct learners to a specific action, strategy or direction during the learning process. An approach is a tactic to be followed while a method is the path that can lead to a goal (Salandanan, 2008). The following are the teaching approaches and methods.

According to Harmer (2007), the communicative language learning exposure becomes an important factor on the learning process as well as using the language. Therefore, students

have to produce the language using different language points that are learned during the learning process. Referring to this challenge Curran in Larsen-Freedman (2004), notes that a way to overcome this negative feeling is when teacher become language counselors; in order to become a counselor, teacher needs to gain students trust by creating a respectful environment to learn (Larsen-Freedman, 2004).

Another method is the cooperative language learning, which is also known as collaborative learning. It is a method where students work and learn in groups; so students are involved in cooperative activities, pair work or small groups, where each student works to accomplish the same goal (Richards & Rogers, 2001).

With regard to the same issue, Larsen-Freedman (2004) states that throughout this method, students develop social skills and group interdependence because the final score will depend on the effort of every student in the group. Also, motivation plays an important role because cooperative work is over competition and this promotes learning (Richards & Rogers, 2001).

Another method is content-based instruction, where students learn a different subject than just the language by itself. So, language and academic content are integrated and teachers have to use many strategies to present abstract concepts to students that need to learn a school curriculum in a foreign language (Duarte, 2011). In addition, Larsen-Freedman (2004) mentions that it is key to take into account some principles when this method is used, and these principles are as follows: a new learning is based on students previous experiences, students are motivated when they feel the importance of the language used, multiple examples are needed to ensure students understanding, and real material is used to build context.

Task-based learning is another method. In this method Harmer (2001) points out that students are more likely to learn when they solve a problem. Therefore, students do not need to deal with language forms; they rather perform a task or solve a problem. The explanation of a structure form is explained only after the task is fully completed. Throughout this process grammar mistakes are corrected, imperfections are worked on and any style issues are adjusted after students have worked on a specific task.

Grammar-translation method is one of the most antique approaches and it is based on language translation into the target language. This is done by giving students vocabulary and basic grammar structures. People can translate, but one problem is that they cannot produce communication into the target language. The overuse of this method does not motivate students; it even could block students to any type of natural input that could build learners' acquisition so communicative skills will not be improved (Harmer, 2007).

In addition, Brown (2000) states that translation method focuses on grammar rules, vocabulary is learned as isolated words and students drill disconnected sentences; teacher's

grammar explanation is long and pronunciation has no importance. This approach does not require teacher's special abilities.

The Total Physical Response (TPR) method is associated with communication and movement; language is learned through listening and performing physical actions done by the teacher. This method is excellent for learning verbs and phrases and also stimulates the memory of the learner (Brown, 2000). It is also stated that by the use of TPR method language output is learned through the use of the kinesthetic system, this means by the senses of sight, hearing, and touch (Moretta & Francisci, 2014).

The roles of a teacher

A prerequisite to build a positive classroom atmosphere is related to the teacher. Harmer (2001) argues that the teachers' role will extend students' motivation and will encourage enthusiasm for the learning of the English language. Nunan (1995 p. 245) notes that "the role of a teacher is to provide correct models to set tasks and to provide corrective feedback" Also, the context that teachers work open a variety of setting so different teacher's roles need to be performed depending on the situation (Richards & Lockhart, 1994).

Regarding this topic, Harmer (2001) explains that the role of a teacher is important to motivate students and to improve their learning. Harmer also indicates that the main roles of a teacher in the classroom are the following controller, organizer, assessor, prompter, participant, resource, tutor, and observer.

The teacher as a controller presents all material and each activity to his/her students, and the teacher is responsible to guide the performance of that activity. In this case, students have limited participation, they listen and ask questions, but they don't have the opportunity to produce the target language. There is only transmission of knowledge, however, this knowledge transmission can inspire students due to the teacher's charisma, but not every teacher has this ability. On the other hand, there are some activities when a teacher needs to assume this role for instance, in a question and answer task, or when instructions are given (Harmer, 2001).

Harmer (2001) also indicates that the role of an organizer teacher is one of the most important for learners because it gives them every instruction in advance. It lets students know exactly what they are going to do; this procedure of presenting students the development of tasks is positive, that is, students know exactly what they have to do so they can have full advantage of the activity. Moreover, if students are ready for an activity, it is important to check students' language level and understanding to ensure full comprehension. Also, it is important to present instructions in a logical order, settle down a limited time for the task and provide feedback at the end of the activity.

The teacher as an assessor offers feedback, correction, and constant assessing during a class. Based on those steps, the teacher tells the student if they are using the language correctly. Many students want and need an assessor teacher to guide them all the time. Also, it is important to let students know what is expected from them or set goals to succeed, so students can have an example to reach or even beat (Harmer, 2001).

Moreover, Harmer (2001) warns about judging students during poor performances instead most students would prefer constructive criticism on their lack of performance. Additionally, teachers need to be perceptive to possible students' reactions. In fact, the reaction of students to bad grades could be constructive if they are handed out in a sensitive and supportive manner.

The teacher acting as a prompter can be seen during role-play activities. Sometimes, students have difficulties on this type of activity due to their lack of vocabulary students could be lost or feel incapable of continuing with the activity. Teacher should adopt a supportive behavior, in other words, teachers should encourage their students to keep on working by giving them a hand, a word or a phrase to overcome an obstacle. The teacher always has to be discreet as a prompter and never be too handy to students' needs (Harmer, 2001).

Another role mentioned by Harmer (2001) is when a teacher acts as participant; here students work without the teacher's intervention, then later giving feedback and correcting errors. In this case, teachers stand back letting students get on with the activity, which could be a role play, a discussion, or a group decision-making task.

Additionally, the teacher as a resource is helpful and available for students when an activity requires it. There are some activities which are impossible for teachers to assume any other role; so this role is the only one suitable at that moment. In some cases, students might need information or be directed where to look for answers. When it is necessary a teacher guides learners to find their own answers; for example, in a hardcopy dictionary, in the Internet, or in textbooks. As a result, they become independent learners (Harmer, 2001).

Another role described by Harmer (2001) is the teacher as tutor. This role combines the roles of prompter and resource. Moreover, in large groups this role can be difficult because a teacher acting as a tutor means that a close relationship needs to be taken. However, it is possible to work in small groups in order to go around and give general guidance. Once more, it is fundamental for a teacher to assume this role because students will feel supported and as a result the class will be greatly motivated.

The teacher as observer is especially useful in oral communicative activities since they need to observe all the time in the students' performance in order to offer feedback, individually or in group. According to Nakata (2006 p. 37), "feedback should be flexible enough so that learners can use creative energy and extent multiple form of self-regulation". Thus, teachers

acting as observers need to be sensitive about students' mistakes; this means, that teachers cannot be too intrusive pointing out every mistake during a task (Harmer, 2001).

In addition, Harmer commented that the teacher's roles have to become a teaching aid. This can be performed when he/she uses mime and gestures, or language model, or provides comprehensible input.

Moreover, Harmer (2001) suggests that mime or gestures are useful to teach vocabulary or to check words understanding. This activity is easy to perform in the classroom and students enjoy it. In this case, the words meaning are present explicitly to learners. However, there are some situations that mimic is not suitable, and then the teacher needs to be careful with it.

The teacher can model the target language throughout activities than can be heard or animated with enthusiasm, for instance in a conversation or reading aloud activity. Students will learn the natural rhythm or normal intonation patterns. So students enjoy the experience of listening by capturing their imagination (Harmer, 2001).

Comprehensible input is developed when the teacher talks to groups, engage conversation, discuss a topic that is been used, or asks personal questions about students' situations. According to Krashen (1985), the best comprehensible input that students need to be exposed is to language that learners understand, but at the same time, it is not too easy for them. Additionally, it is necessary to recognize that students talking time (STT) is a teacher's main goal; in this regard, Harmer (2001) claims that the ones that require the language practice are learners not teachers. Therefore, if teacher talking time (TTT) is overused students won't have the opportunity to produce the target language.

In the following pages, some studies on the English language students and their motivation to learn the language will be considered in order to support the current investigation.

The first study is the one carried out by Bahous, Bacha, and Nabhani (2011), whose purpose was to answer to the following questions: what strategies can help students feel more motivated to learn, as well as what difficulties students experience and discourage them in their language acquisition process.

This study was developed in a university in Beirut, Lebanon, which has a similar education system than the United States of America. The researchers used the qualitative method; also a mixture of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were administered face-to-face. Moreover, informal information was recorded whenever teachers or students mentioned something about the English courses. The sample population was thirty students randomly selected from different English courses; the participants were between eighteen and twenty-one years old. Approvals and ethical issues were taken care of in advance, and they were as follows: anonymity, confidentiality, and voluntary.

The conclusion of this study was that English classes and its content components, methods and skills help students with other classes at the university. Students can learn and get better at other skills as academic writing, following steps to improve writing process, be more organized, and follow models.

In addition, concerning content and teaching, a nice environment needs to be created. Students should choose topics that interest them, oriented towards a learner centered class. In order to set up conductive classes, teachers can present the vocabulary needed for the class in advance. Students come with enough material to work with, fostering their critical thinking. Also, students know some grammar rules, but it is hard for them to use those structures in a written paper. In this study, students said that the role of teachers should be to make the courses meet students' needs and help them improve their language. Moreover, topics should be relevant to students' lives, learners need to be effective communicators, and students prefer classes where the speaking is a vital factor.

Another interesting study has been conducted by Hsuan-Yau and Kuang (2013), whose aim was to investigate the motivational changes in students' English learning motivation. The authors of this study used semi-structured interviews in mandarin because this was students' native language.

Their methodology was applied to English majors and non-English majors. There were eight male and twelve female students. The interviews contained two questions; the first one was about the changes in students' motivation while they were studying English and the second was about students' attitude toward learning English. The students gave permission to record all their interviews.

At the end of this study, it was concluded that motivation is a complex matter, and a dynamic and controllable process. Motivation not only comes from the individual but also from interactions with others. Most participants changed in their motivation for studying English. There are some factors that changed the students' motivation. For example, teachers, curriculum, work groups, social experiences and learning environment.

This study also suggests that teachers and curriculum designers know the students' needs in the English classroom. The teachers ought to give autonomy to their students in a form that will encourage to intrinsic motivation. The classes have to be dynamic and flexible to increase the extrinsic motivation.

Bernaus, Wilson, and Gardner (2009) conducted a research study, whose purpose was to investigate the relationship of teachers' perceptions and students' perceptions of the strategy use in the classroom and its relation to student characteristics.

The researchers were focused on half private schools and half public schools. The teachers' strategies were analyzed by a series of questionnaires used in their EFL classes. The

strategies used were based on the EFL teaching experience of one researcher and her/his classroom observations. The teachers' questionnaires had two parts and were presented in English. The first part had 26 teacher's strategies and the teachers rated the frequency with which they rated each one on a scale from never to always. Twelve items specified the innovative strategies that teachers used in some classes and were student centered. These strategies were referred to as communicative competence. On the other hand, the traditional strategies put emphasis on the language structure and were teacher centered. The second part had 12 items referring to teachers' motivation and they rated their agreement or disagreement with each item.

The participants were 31 teachers and 694 students in the last year compulsory secondary education in Catalonia, Spain. The students were around fifteen years old, who were administered a questionnaire that was written in Catalan. Each part of the questionnaire had 26 strategies; they were rated by the teachers and the ratings had the same scale for teachers and students alike. Additionally, some variables were added and measured by the AMTB and the mini-AMTB (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). The min-AMTB consisted of one item corresponding to each scale on the AMTB; besides, when this measured is used the attention is directed to the major attributes in the social-educational model (Gardner, 1985). These were the variables explored in the study: integrativeness, attitudes toward the learning situation, motivation, language anxiety, instrumental orientation, and parental encouragement.

The first variable was integrativeness, which refers to society-relevant attitudes related to learning another language. In other words, the mind is opened to other cultural communities that influence a person's willingness to accept material from a foreign country as part of that person's own behavior. The second variable was attitudes toward the learning situation. It points out the attitude to learn considering two factors: assessment of the English teacher and assessment of the English course.

The following variable was motivation, the interest level of students in different classes. The interest changes according to objective, effort, attention, emotional reactions to the task, etc. The authors of the study considered three measures into context class: motivational intensity, desire to learn English and, attitude toward learning English.

Another variable was language anxiety. It alludes to the reactions of discomfort and involvement that students can experience when they use the language. Also, instrumental orientation and parental encouragement were also studied by the researchers.

After the application of the teachers' questionnaires and students' questionnaires the researchers drew the following conclusions. High levels of English achievement were obtained in classes with high level of the variables analyzed before so; students are

integratively motivated and parental encouragement is an important factor which indicates that students received motivation from the home environment.

Another conclusion was that there is a clear connection between highly motivated students and their motivated teachers. Besides, the teacher's motivation has an influence on strategy use. This is recognized by the students and can have repercussion in the learning situation and their motivation. The use of the traditional strategies are recognized by teachers and students, but they are related to lower levels of English achievement, but the innovative strategies reduce the language anxiety because the students are less concerned with the evaluation in the classes.

The fourth study was developed by Jurišević and Pižorn (2012), whose purpose was to find out learners competence, perceptions, and their emotional and cognitive interest to learn and to identify motivational goals to learn a foreign language. The study was conducted in Slovenia; 591 students were chosen from 31 primary schools who were learning foreign languages. The participants' ages were from 6 to 8 years old, which means they were first, second, and third graders. Also, the teachers that were involved in this study were foreign teachers and were specialized in teaching to young students.

The items for the research were designed as questions which were suitable for the age group. The questionnaire used was design in nine specific questions to elicit real answers, which were found to be useful according to the participants' age. The teachers of each year were in charge of collecting the data. The parents' consent was obtained before starting this study.

The findings obtained from this study indicate that students on first year are intrinsically motivated for foreign language acquisition; the learners enjoy their lessons very much and they find them interesting. A third part of students like to learn throughout games, another third part of students prefer to learn through a traditional lesson such as by reading and writing.

The conclusions about learning goals drew out that students do not understand the usefulness of learning a foreign language yet. However, students perceive foreign language as an improvement to their social and emotional development. In addition, the researchers found out that learning a foreign language at such young age is a positive point to develop self-concept and feeling of competence since students are communicating in the target language.

Moreover, this research found that intrinsic motivation in foreign language is primarily developmentally dependent (Dörnyei, 2009); meanwhile, stimulation and consolidation to learn depend on stimulus from social-cultural learners' surroundings.

Finally, the study conducted by Vaezi (2009) aimed to describe and examine undergraduate

students' integrative and instrumental motivation toward learning English as a foreign language, and the authors analyzed if motivation had changed once students started their university careers. The study was conducted on seventy-nine students in their first and second year at Birjand University, Iran. The mixed data population group was forty-one females and thirty-eight males, who were studying different careers than English. This aspect, different majoring departments, produced a variety of opinions about learning English, and undergraduate students pursue a future career that can influence positively their learning process.

The results of this study, regarding to integrativeness, showed on three of twelve questions that students were strongly motivated on the other items students felt a moderate motivation level. On other items, which were concerned with having contact with native speakers, got a low level; this showed a lack of contact with native speakers, and that the students' contact with an English community was limited to books or movies only. Therefore, integrativeness was hard to foster as a strong tool for learning English.

The study results, with regard to instrumentality, indicated many of the questions concerning thirteen items addressed that students were highly instrumental motivated toward learning English. Most of the students perceive competency in the English language as a positive tool for their future careers or they need such competency to search information or materials in English. After students got into university, they realized that their language proficiency enabled them to use tools in English since it is the language of global communication. For instance, students are more instrumentally motivated, but integrative motivation drew a high score as well.

The following conclusions were included in the study at hand: Iranian students are motivated instrumentally as well as integratively. The author agrees with some investigators "that in a foreign language situation students are instrumentally oriented" (Vaezi, 2009 p.96). Also, motivation has to be viewed as one of the numerous variables or situational factors that belong to each individual learner. Furthermore, students are motivated to learn because they perceive the language useful.

METHOD

Setting and Participants

This research study took place in a high school situated in the southwestern part of the city of Cuenca, in Azuay Province. The sample consisted of 100 students, who were selected randomly from five different classes. The daytime students' age were between 15 and 18 years old and the evening students were in a range from 20 and 40 years old. Students attending classes at daytime came from lower-middle socioeconomic class and the students attending classes in the evening come from a lower social class. Most of the students also lived in urban areas of the city of Cuenca and only few of them lived outside the city, especially in the countryside. It is important to mention that the daytime classroom size consisted of about 40 students and the evening classroom size was of 25 students. Students belonged to the 10th grade of basic education, and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year of senior high school.

Procedures

In order to develop the present research study, a literature review was carried out for collecting information about students' motivation to English language. Carrying out a review of the literature contributed to provide scientific support for this work since theoretical information and empirical evidence, regarding the researched topic, were analyzed. The content of the literature review was focused on four important aspects related to the researched topic and these aspects were as follows: motivation to learn English, activities or strategies that motivate students to learn English, teaching approaches and methods, and the roles of a teacher.

In addition to collecting and examining theoretical information about the four main aspects of the researched topic, five previous studies dealing with motivation to learn the target language among EFL students were reviewed in order to learn what has been previously investigated.

To carry out the field research, the permission of the high school's principal and teachers were asked in order to apply the survey and observe the development of the class.

Two methods were used in this research study. The quantitative method was used to collect data by means of the administration of a questionnaire. The qualitative method was applied through class observation. Therefore, five classes were observed each class was taught by a different EFL teacher and an observation sheet was completed. In these observations, it was possible to perceive participants' inclination for learning the target language, their motivation toward language learning at the classroom setting, the way of teaching of the selected English practitioners, key instructional practices about motivation in relation to language learning, critical learning activities, teacher's attitudes, and teacher's roles.

Furthermore, items 1, 2, 3 and 4 contained qualitative characteristics, where the students were required to include reasons after the selection of yes or no as an answer.

Once the data needed was gathered by means of the above-mentioned instruments of data collection, the tabulation process of data took place. In this process, the quantitative method was used to calculate the percentages of the answers obtained in each question, and statistical graphs were made to illustrate the results of the questionnaire. In this regard, Excel Program was used as a tool to create the graphs, which helped obtain a better understanding of the study results. After that, the qualitative analysis was supported, compared and contrasted with the students' answers, the observation sheet, and the literature review.

Finally, key conclusions and critical recommendations obtained from the research topic were put forward by the authors of the present study.

DESCRIPTION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

This section presents a quantitative and qualitative analysis of eight questions related to learners' motivation that were interpreted using key information from the theoretical background and the conducted observations.

Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis

What do you think motivate students to learn English?

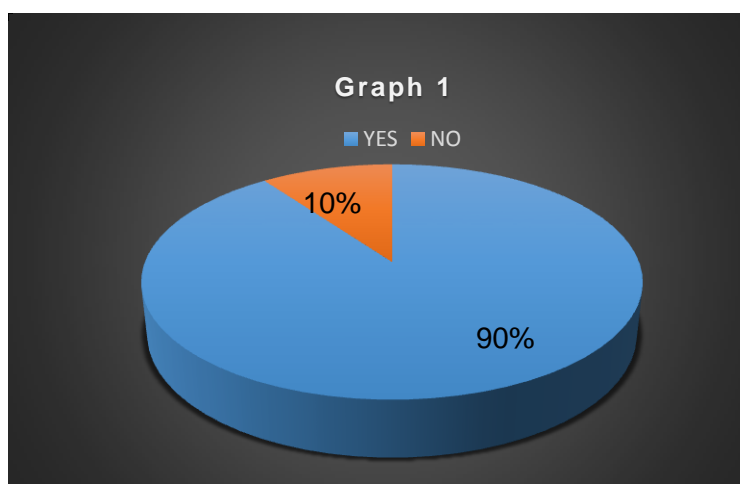**Do you like to learn English?**

Figure 1. Do you like to learn English?
Source: Students' questionnaire
Authors: Berrezueta Susana and Pintado Eugenia

Graph 1 shows that 90% of the students indicated that they like to learn English. The varied reasons behind this large positive percentage are as follows: the language is necessary to travel to other countries, succeed in the future, communicate with foreigners, have good jobs opportunities, and study in a foreign country. Harmer (2001) states that there are several different reasons why learners want to speak English, and these reasons are the following: some students want to move into a target-language community, others want to study in a foreign country, many others think it may be somehow useful in their future; however, other students tend to learn the language only because it is a mandatory subject included in their school curriculum. Also, students think that English is one of the most important languages around the world since it is spoken by lots of people. Therefore, they want to learn it in order to communicate with others effectively.

In addition, as the observations were done, it was noticed that most of the students were

engaged with their classes; they took part in the teachers' activities and showed a good attitude towards the development of the lesson. Therefore, it was possible to confirm that most students like and enjoy learning English at the classroom setting.

On the other hand, 10% of students indicated that they do not like to learn this subject because English pronunciation, written communication, grammar rules, and different verb tenses are difficult to grasp as they attempt to learn the target language through formal instruction.

It was observed that some students were anxious during oral production; others had difficulties to become engaged in the learning tasks, when decreased students' motivation in class. In this regard, Harmer (2001) affirms that teachers need to choose from a variety of methods, techniques, and activities to engage students in the learning process of the target language.

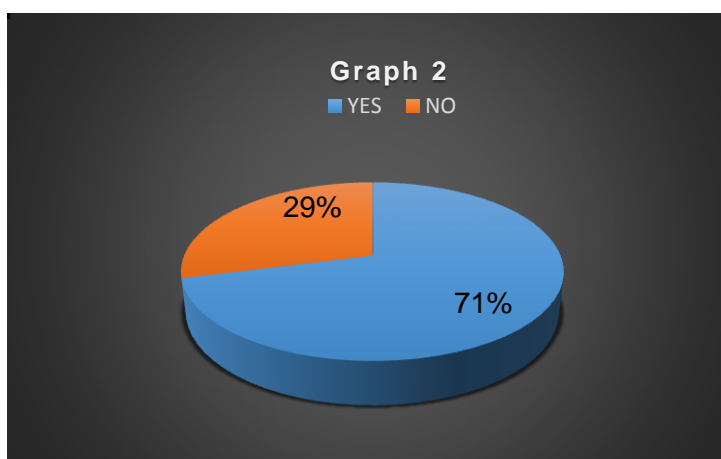**Are you motivated to learn English in class?**

Figure 2. Are you motivated to learn English in class?
Source: Students' questionnaire
Authors: Berrezueta Susana and Pintado Eugenia

Graph two shows that 71% of participants feel motivated during the ongoing learning process; students indicated that they felt encouraged to learn because they like the learning environment and they believed that their teacher is a patient person, who is always willing to teach and help them. Also, students in the first class enjoyed the material that their teacher used. Some other students felt motivated because they perceived English as a necessary and important language for their future and as a tool to achieve their aspirations. This insight confirmed that most students are intrinsic and extrinsically motivated; in this regard, Ur (1998) expresses that a motivated learner is pleased to invest effort during a learning activity. Furthermore, the same author stated that the desire of achievement, high aspirations, hard study, and goal orientation are important characteristics presented on motivated learners.

On the other hand, 29% of participants did not feel encouraged during the learning process of the target language. This could be the result of several factors, such as lack of audio or visual material, fear to be ridiculed in front of peer classmates, and learner boredom due to the overuse of the same activities or sources. With regard to these issues, Csikszentmihaly (1975 as cited in Deci & Ryan, 1985) notes that intrinsic motivation is presented under conditions of optimal challenge, and then if the activities are not interesting, students will get bored and won't feel motivated to learn. In addition to this, students feel discouraged because some of the topics presented are not always clear enough.

In contrast with the positive and negative answers expressed by students, the classes observed demonstrated that most students were not truly motivated because they did not participate spontaneously. Also, it was perceived that students felt anxious when the teacher asked them to answer questions; this could be related to the lack of linguistic competence, such as a poor command of lexicon in the English language. Moreover, students did not answer questions genuinely for an inner sense of learning, they did so mostly for the grades they could get.

Additionally, some teachers used different activities from the ones of the textbook to develop the lesson topics; nevertheless, two teachers worked only on fill-in-the-blank exercises that were included in the students' book. Consequently, it was seen that those students were not motivated enough. In this regard, it is important to recall Harmer's words (2001), who states that enthusiasm and encouragement will be increased by the role of the teacher.

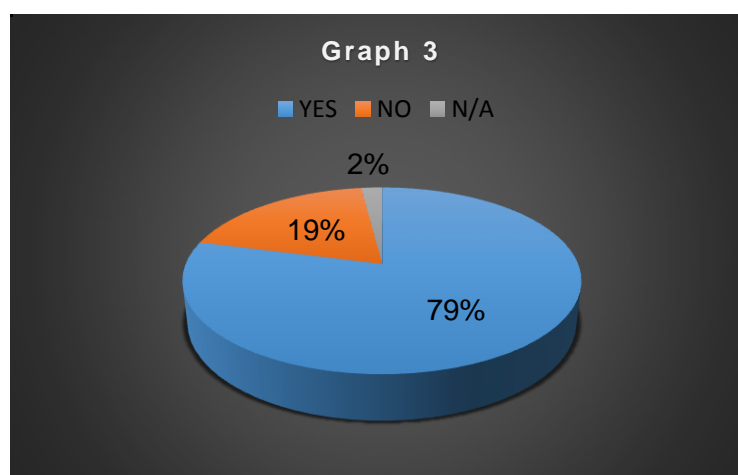**Do you like your teacher's way of teaching English?**

Figure 3. Do you like your teachers' way of teaching English?
Source: Students' questionnaire
Authors: Berrezueta Susana and Pintado Eugenia

Graph 3 indicates that 79% of participants like the language teaching methodology used by their teachers during classroom instruction, 19% of them do not give a positive answer, and

2% do not answer positively or negatively to this question.

The above-mentioned high score puts on evidence what Bernaus, Wilson, and Garner (2009) argue that a positive influence in the language students' learning process is experienced when teachers, with high motivation, employ varied strategies during the delivery of lessons. Regarding to students answers, it was found that the participants expressed that their teachers use a good methodology to teach the English language. More specifically, they mentioned that their teachers explain more than once when the topic is not easy to understand, as well as the teachers provide many examples aimed at giving students a good understanding of the lesson topic(s) at hand. These practices helped create empathy between teacher and students. This aspect confirms that teacher's attitude is fundamental to promote students' desire to engage in the learning process (Dörnyei, 2001). Furthermore, Dörnyei (2001) also suggests that teacher-student empathy is built through a nice, warm, and friendly environment. Moreover, it was said that teachers use English more than Spanish, which is perceived as a positive asset in the language learning process by the students.

On the other hand, with regard to the negative answers, students mentioned that they do not like their teachers' way of teaching English because they do not understand well their teacher's explanations and he uses English only and just little Spanish is sometimes employed. The participants believed that Spanish, their mother tongue, can be helpful to check their understanding along the lesson. Students also indicated that their teachers are too severe, so there is little confidence, which generates anxiety among students. Additionally, students argue that the teacher focuses on grammar only, whereas students want to practice oral communication. In this sense, Larsen-Freedman (2004) confirms that in order to overcome students' negative feelings towards learning, teachers need to create a trustful environment. In addition, 2% of participants did not answer item 3 in the questionnaire; therefore, whether or not they like the way their English instructors teach the language is unknown.

Moreover, it could be noticed during the observations that the majority of students were involved with the textbook-based activities and they were participative in classes. Also, different methodological approaches were applied by the teachers, which were aligned to the topic of the lesson and the activities introduced.

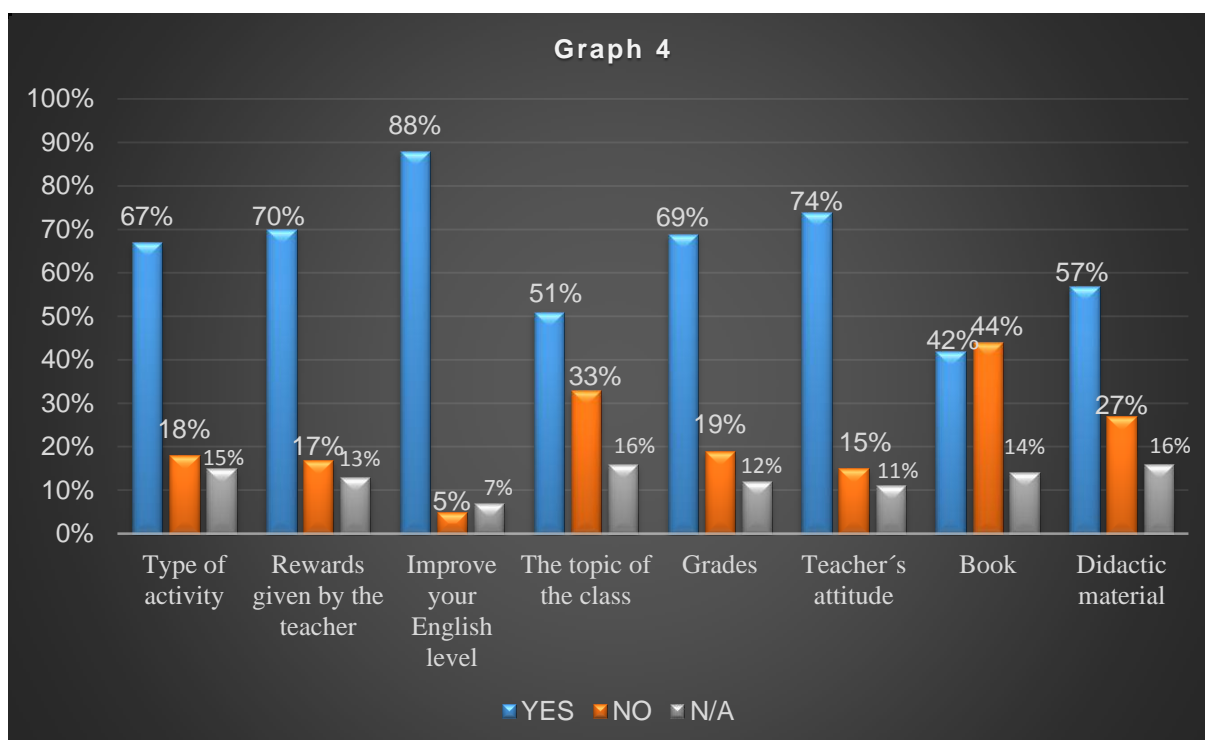**Do the following aspects motivate you to learn English in class?**

Figure 4. Do the following aspects motivate you to learn English in class?
Source: Students´ questionnaire
Authors: Berrezueta Susana and Pintado Eugenia

The graph above shows eight aspects that motivate students to learn the target language. It was found that the aspect about improving the English level got the highest score with 88% of participants' responses. It is clear that the participants like to learn English due to their internal purposes. In this concern Kost (2003) declared that this kind of motivation is innate in students and it is not manipulated by any type of external stimuli. That is, intrinsic motivation is the key to learn. As White (1959 as cited in Deci and Ryan, 1985) notes that effective motivation is an innate source that motivates students to learn. It was observed that students were eager to learn because most of them showed an interest in the activities introduced by their teacher. However, 5% of them did not feel in the same way about this aspect, and 7% of them provided no answer.

It was also found that 74% of participants felt that their teachers' attitude motivated them in the learning process. Through the observations, it was noticed that students responded positively as they were willing to drill some responses together. Also, during an activity the teacher was very understanding toward a student's nervousness to talk in front of classmates and the teacher gave guidance and support. Regarding this issue, Harmer (2007) notes that one important teacher skill is to positively interact with students and this effective teacher can build a positive classroom atmosphere. In addition, Rogers (1996 as cited in Harmer, 2001)

states that motivation is a great matter for teachers as it is for learners, so teachers' attitude promotes student learning. In contrast, 15% of participants were not motivated through their teachers' attitude, and 11% did not provide any answer.

Furthermore, 70% of participants felt motivated when the teacher gave them any reward. It was observed that rewards were mostly related to the students' interest in gaining extra grades, which might be used for future evaluations. In regard to this, Ur (1998) states that rewards increase students' extrinsic motivation. On the other hand, 17% of students did not perceive rewards as a motivational factor to learn, and 13% of them did not give any answer at all.

It was also found that 69% of participants asserted that grades motivate them to learn. During the observations students demonstrated that getting good grades did matter to them. This can be supported by the words of Deci and Flaste (1995), who state that grades are elemental means of extrinsic motivation because they are incentives and motivators for an effective learning. In addition to this, these authors explained that grades bring back constructive feedback to the teachers letting them know how students are leaning. On the contrary, 19% of students did not agree that grades motivate them and 11% did not choose any option.

Regarding the type of activity, it was found that 67% of students indicated that this factor motivates them to learn English; in relation to the observations done, this percentage agrees to the students' performance on activities. In a class, students were asked to use expressions related with food; most of them were comfortable with the activity presented. So it can be said that students were used to work on speaking activities and they knew how to work with their peers during these activities. Leki (2001 as cited in Herrell and Jordan, 2012) states that group activities are more important to build social skills rather than just only provide answers. Also, it is important that the teacher lets students know why they are using a specific activity and how beneficial it will be towards their learning (Nation & Newton, 2009).

On the other hand, 18% of participants disagreed to the notion that an activity can motivate them. During the observations, the activities used were mostly taken from the textbook; therefore, some students did not demonstrate to be engaged or attracted by it. To avoid students' lack of interest in or enthusiasm about learning activities, Nation and Newton (2009) suggest that students' interest can be maintained by a variety of activities; while15% of them did not provide any answer.

With regard to the didactic material, 57% of the research subjects perceived that this aspect motivates them to learn English. It was evident the lack of use of didactic materials; mostly the activities were taken from the textbook. However, it was observed that the teacher used

flashcards in the lessons. This didactic material engaged students in the learning process. In regard to this issue, Herrell and Jordan (2012) point out that the use of didactic material helps learners to acquire the language by adding context to it. However, 27% of them did not feel this aspect as a motivational factor, and 16% gave no answer at all.

Finally, it was found that 51% of participants were motivated because of the topic of the lesson, whereas 33% of them did not demonstrate interest in the topics. And 16% of them gave no answer. The data of the second aspect, concerning rewards given by the teacher, shows that 42% of participants felt motivated using the book, 44% of them experienced no motivation, and 14% preferred not to answer this question. It was observed that the students from 10th, 1st and 2nd year of Senior high school used the same textbook level which means that the topics presented in the course book were already known by the students. In regard to the results obtained, Ur (1998 p. 185) says "the topics dealt within the course book may not necessarily be relevant or interesting".

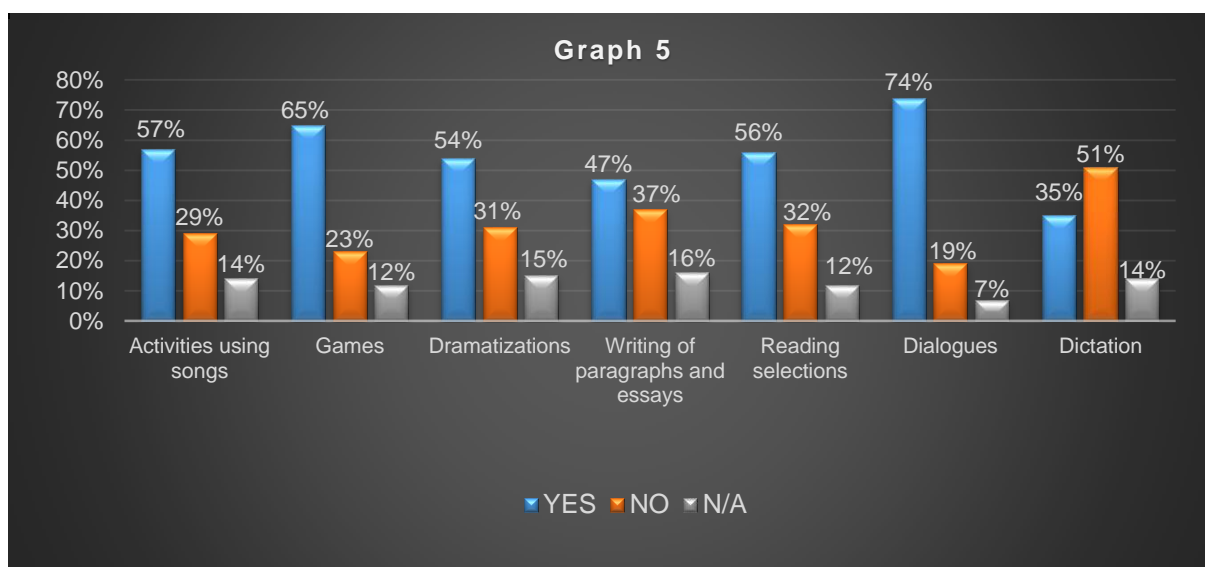**Do the following activities motivate you to learn English?**

Figure 5. Do the following activities motivate you to learn English?
Source: Students' questionnaire
Authors: Berrezueta Susana and Pintado Eugenia

The graph above indicates that 74% of participants believed that the item regarding dialogues and their relation to English language learning, is the most motivating activity for them. During the observation performed, it was seen that some students practice some dialogues; however, not all of them were willing to participate. The students, who engaged in dialogues, were happy to do it and open to seek their teacher's help, especially when it came to pronunciation. That is why Nunan (1995) establishes that the role of a teacher is to provide

correct models throughout a task and offer feedback. Nonetheless, 19% of them did not feel that dialogues motivate their leaning, and 7% of them did not reply to the question.

It was found that 65% of participants recognized that games are useful tools for motivating them to learn. It was observed that in some classes teachers used games as a supplementary activity, and this strategy encouraged students to learn because it was noticed that they actively participated throughout the lesson. In this regard, as stated by Harmer (2007), language students learn better when they are involved in a low-stressed environment. Also, games maintain learners' interest, and new content can be introduced by means of games as well (Nation & Newton, 2009). In addition, Herrell and Jordan (2012) mention that games provide students authentic reasons to communicate in English. However, 23% of participants did not agree and 12% of them did not select any answer.

Regarding the activities based on songs, it was found that 57% of participants believed that these types of activities motivate them to learn English, while 29% of them disagreed and 14% did not provide an answer. According to the observation performed, it can be stated that there was no evidence about the use of songs in the English classes. Nevertheless, the data, which was collected through the questionnaire, indicated that a high number of students feel motivated when songs are incorporated into the learning process. Concerning this issue, Dörnyei (2001) points out that teachers need to create an amusing and supportive atmosphere in classes and the use of songs can create this kind of environment. Also, Shaw (1992 as cited in Silberstein, 1994) observes that "songs bridge universality and culture-boundedness" (p.95).

Furthermore, it was found that 56% of participants indicated that reading selection motivates them to learn English. During the observations, it was found that students limited the reading selections to short reading texts, taken mostly from the textbook. Reading is viewed as an important skill in students' language acquisition because it enlarges students' vocabulary, as well as because through the act of reading spelling is practiced and writing is improved (Harmer, 2007). Also, the same author states that engaging language learners in reading is part of a teacher's job, so the teacher needs to find effective ways to encourage students to do so. In contrast, 32% of them did not perceive the same, and 12% of them did not answer at all.

According to dramatization as a motivational factor in the language learning process, it was found that 54% of the participants agree with this fact. With regard to this, Harmer (2007) affirms that role play activities may help students to be involved in real-life situations, which allow students to hide behind a character and this let them express themselves more freely than if they were acting their own ideas or feelings. Unfortunately, this helpful activity was not used. On the other hand, 31% of participants believed that dramatizations do not increase

their interest toward language learning, and 15% of them did not reply to this question.

It was found that 47% of participants' positive answers were in favor of the writing of paragraphs and essays. During the observation conducted, it was identified that teachers did not have their students engaged in these writing activities. Most of the writing done in class involved completing sentences or writing short sentences. This could be the reason why students did not feel motivated toward writing long sentences and structuring paragraphs. In this concern, Harmer (2007) says that writing is an activity that helps students practice and work with the language they have been reviewing. However, 37% of participants provided a negative answer, and 16% of them did not give an answer.

Regarding dictation, it was the factor that obtained the lowest percentage. In this sense, it was found that 35% of participants liked this activity, but 51% of them disliked it, and 14% gave no answer. It was observed that this kind of activity was not practiced enough, so students did not have the opportunity to improve this skill. Also, students struggled with sound-spelling correlation among words. Concerning this issue, it is important to say that dictation helps students to learn the target language because it gives them the opportunity to focus on the structure of the language (Nation & Newton, 2009).
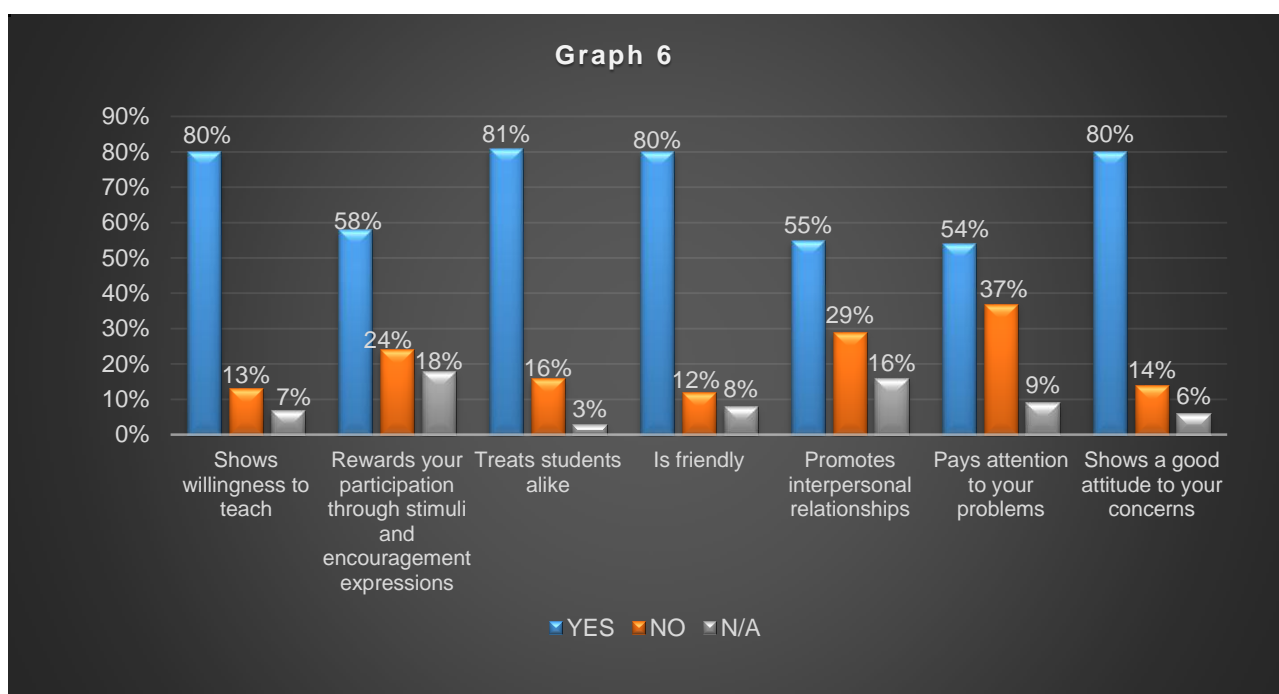
What is your teacher's attitude in class?

Figure 6. What is your teacher's attitude in class?
Source: Students' questionnaire
Authors: Berrezueta Susana and Pintado Eugenia

The graph above shows the results obtained about the teachers' attitude during the course of

instruction. The students had seven options to choose from, which are as follows: shows willingness to teach, rewards your participation through stimuli and encouragement expressions, treats students alike, is friendly, promotes interpersonal relationships, pays attention to your problems, and shows a good attitude to your concerns.

The option with the highest percentage is concerned with threating students alike, which got an 81% of acceptance among the students. During the observations conducted, this aspect was evident because students were treated in a similar way, which created a positive atmosphere. In this sense, rapport can be maintained when all students are treated equally, which in turn shows teachers' good professionalism (Harmer, 2007). On the other hand, 16% of participants indicated that their teacher does not threat everyone alike, and only 3% of them decided not to answer this question.

It was also found that three different aspects got the same participants' acceptance with 80%. These aspects were the following: the teacher shows willingness to teach, is friendly, and shows a good attitude to students' concerns. All these three important factors motivate students to learn. On the other hand, the negative percentages perceived by students were 13%, 12%, and 14% in each factor respectively, and 7%, 8%, and 6% provided no answer for each factor correspondingly.

With regard to the three aspects mentioned above, it was observed that most of the teachers had a good attitude in the classroom, and they were friendly with their students. Teachers showed a positive attitude towards teaching and they were even-handed to students' concerns. Dörnyei (2001) notes that a strategy to motivate learning on students is to keep a nice, warm, and friendly atmosphere to build empathy between teacher and students. As Harmer (2007) explains a good teacher is someone who is able to blend his/her own personality with his/her professionalism. Also, the same author mentions that a good teacher thinks on his/her feet, this means absorbing the unexpected to use it as an advantage for students. In addition to the aforementioned notions, it is pivotal to keep in mind that "a good teacher is someone who teaches not only with mind, but also with heart" (Helly, 1996).

With regard to rewards, it was found that 58% of participants are motivated by means of being rewarded. During the observed classes, teachers tried to motivate students by giving them extra points. Therefore, it was evident that some students won this reward, but the rest of the students were not motivated because there were a few students only who always won those rewards. This happened because only few students were willing to participate due to their high linguistic competence in English. In this concern, Ur (1998) states that "learners who have succeeded in past task will be more willing to engage with the next one" (p. 278). However, 24% of them disagreed and 18% provided no answer.

Furthermore, it was found that 55% of participants believed that their teacher promotes

interpersonal relationships. In regard to this, Harmer (2007) expresses that in order to manage a class effectively, it is crucial to build a relationship between teacher and students. According to Zandvliet, Brok, Mainhard, and Tartwiijk (2004), interpersonal relationships are foster through some important elements that need to be presented in a classroom, which are the following: to give support and guidance, a relationship built on trust, frequent conversation, and create a non-judgment atmosphere. In the same way, interpersonal relationships provide a strong background to ensure that all students are engaged in the learning process (Doyle, 1986). All these factors were corroborated during the observations performed since some teachers worked in groups and other teachers were willing to give advice, ideas, and even laugh at students' jokes, which helped to create a good learning environment. However, 29% of students disagreed and 16% of them did not give any answer.

Finally, the aspect with regard to paying attention to students' problems got the lowest percentage, and this was a 54% of acceptance among the students. In the observations performed, it was seen that teachers address students' problems in a general way, but there are some students who need more reinforcement or personalized attention. In regard to personalized assistance, teachers often do not have enough time to address students' problems individually. Nevertheless, it is imperative to bear in mind that a teacher should find time to listen to students' problems (Harmer, 2007). On the contrary, 37% of them believed that their teachers pay no attention to their problems and 9% of them decided not to answer.

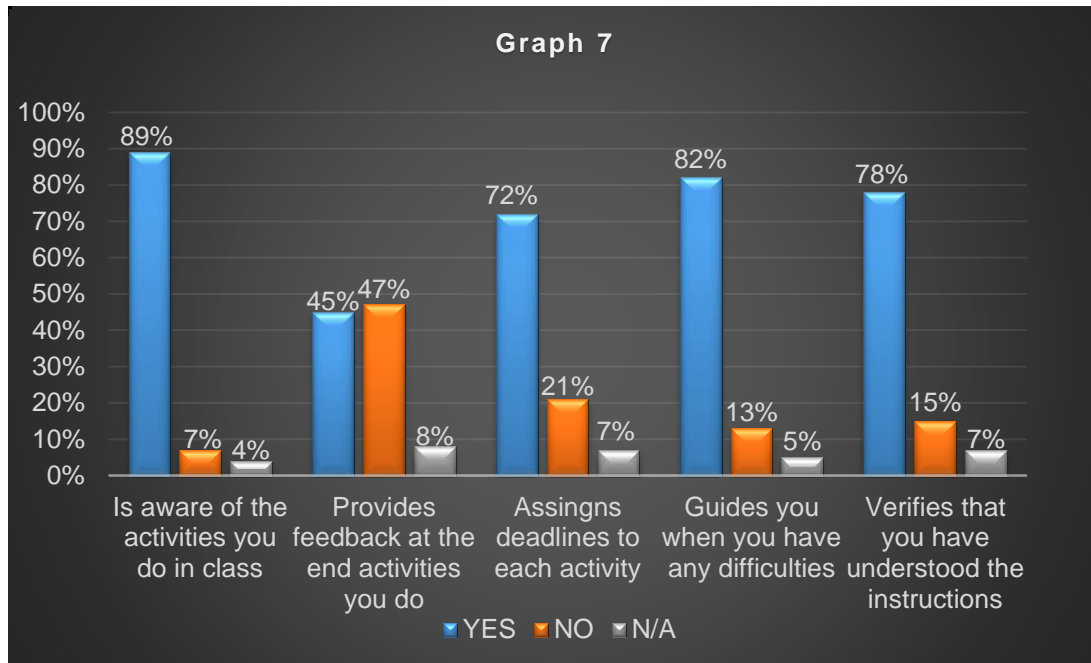**What is the role of your teacher in class?**

Figure 7. What is the role of your teacher in class?
Source: Students' questionnaire
Authors: Berrezueta Susana and Pintado Eugenia

The graph above indicates the results of the question about the teachers' role in the class. It was found that 89% of participants agreed that their teacher is aware of the activities developed in classes, 7% of them did not agree with this fact, and 4% did not answer. The observation procedure gave a wide picture of the development of a lesson. For example, the teacher walked around the class to check that students were using the new vocabulary words to fill in the blanks in the textbook. As Harmer (2001) says when teachers act as an observer, they can know how well students are working and learning at the same time. However, this teaching strategy was not used in other classes and the difference was significant. The students that were sitting at the back of the class were not engaged in it; they did not focus on the activities, and the discipline was not the appropriate for a positive learning environment.

Another result found was that 82% of participants considered that their teacher guides them throughout any difficulty, 13% of them disagreed with this fact, and 5% did not give any answer. It was corroborated in the observed classes that teachers were helpful in guiding students through speaking activities. For example, a class had to present a dialogue, and the teacher was able to help her students effectively, especially with pronunciation. A teacher acts as an assessor by guiding students when they face difficulties and this guide has to be given with sensitivity and support (Harmer, 2001).

It was also found that 78% of participants believed that their teacher checks students'

understanding; for instance, by making sure if students understood instructions, 15% of them gave a negative answer about this fact, and 17% did not provide an answer. During the observation performed, a teacher acted as a facilitator, providing clear instructions about an activity that students were expected to work on. In the activity, students repeated some expressions and then make use of them in order to express opinions. In regard to this teachers' role, Harmer (2001) states that a teachers' role as an organizer and facilitator checks students' language level and understanding to ensure learners' full comprehension of an activity.

Furthermore, it was found that 72% of participants mentioned that their teachers assign deadlines to each activity, 21% of them gave negative answers, and 7% did not provide an answer. In the observation done, all teachers gave students deadline time for each activity, including fill-in-the-blank exercises, dialogues, or the selection of the best word to complete sentences. Setting up an established deadline helped the students stay focused on the completion of the learning activity and be aware of the importance of time management. In this regard, Harmer (2001) points out that a teacher as an organizer let students know when it is time to stop in each activity.

Finally, it was found that 45% of participants considered that their teacher provides feedback at the end of activities, 47% of them did not agree with this option, and 8% gave no answer. This fact was not confirmed during the observation; instead teachers limit feedback to write the correct answer on the board. Nakata (2006) suggests that a good amount of feedback can develop learners' creative energy. Moreover, the role of the teacher as an assessor gives feedback, correction, and constant assessing during all the development of the class (Harmer, 2001). So, feedback is more than just giving the correct answers.

What do you think hinders students to learn English?

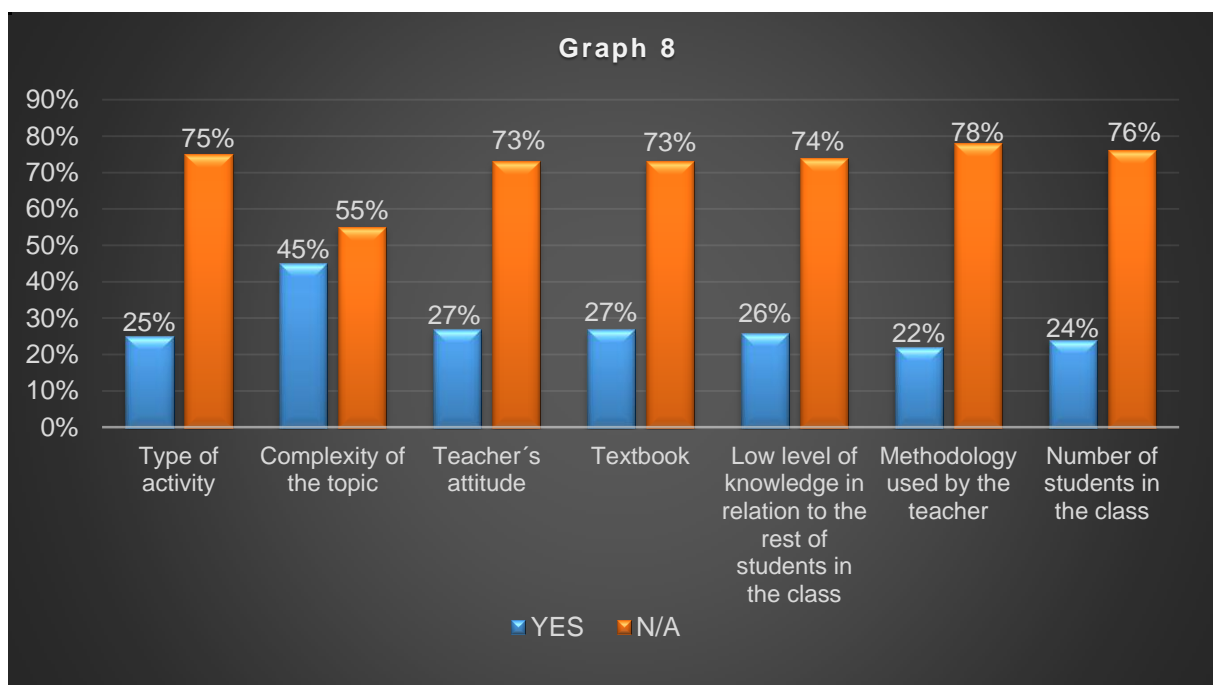**What aspects hinder students to learn English?**

Figure 8. What aspects hinder students to learn English?
Source: Students' questionnaire
Authors: Berrezueta Susana and Pintado Eugenia

This question shows low percentages of participants' positive answers across the different aspects, which means that less than half of the entire sample expressed that the aspects above hinder their language learning.

Students expressed that the main aspect, hindering their learning process, is associated with complexity of the topic since 45% of them provided an affirmative answer. They affirmed that when a new lesson is presented to them, they usually do not understand key vocabulary or phrases related to the lesson, which makes their learning difficult. Also, the participants indicated that some lessons are not aligned with their English proficiency level, which hinders them to learn the target language effectively.

During the observation performed, it was seen that some students were able to grasp the content of the lessons faster than others. Despite this fact, the teacher kept going on with the lesson; as a result, some students were left behind with no support. With regard to this issue, Nation and Newton (2009) express that teachers need to give many opportunities to students to practice the language before introducing new language. Also, teachers need to be aware of the different learning styles among learners since they are visual, others are auditory-musical, and others are kinesthetic (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

In addition, it was found that teachers' attitude got 27% of participants' responses. Some participants said that their teacher does not show a positive attitude in the classroom. They argued that their teacher is generally in a bad mood during the course of classroom instruction. Nevertheless, in the observation performed, this type of attitude was not evident. Therefore, here it is important to point out that teachers can affect students' motivation by creating enjoyable and meaningful lessons for their pupils (Lightbown & Spada, 2006).

It was also found that the textbook and type of activity are closely related. The first one got 27% of participants' acceptance and another one got 25%. The participants provided the following insight about the above-mentioned items: the activities are focused on the textbook only and there are no other kinds of activities; besides, the textbook is not interesting but confusing. The observation performed revealed that the activities in the class are mostly taken from the textbook, which makes the lessons repetitive and uninteresting. Dörnyei (2001) emphasizes that a good strategy to promote motivation is to personalize the classroom environment. If this strategy is incorporated into classroom instruction, textbook activities will need to be modified according to students' needs or interests. Also, teachers have the option to come up with their own activities in order to engage students (Harmer, 2007).

Moreover, 26% of participants indicated that the factor that hinders them to learn is their low level of English knowledge in comparison to the rest of the class. They recognized that they do not understand the language; so they have no motivation in the class, which prevents all students from achieving the same learning outcomes at the end of the lessons. Duarte (2011) mentions that teachers should adapt instructions to cover different levels of language proficiency in classes. In the observation, it was seen that some students got distracted easily due to their lack of knowledge, while others were working actively during the class. It is important to say that teachers need to be sensitive to students' level in order to guide them towards success (Larsen-Freedman, 2004).

With regard to class size, it was found that 24% of participants perceived that their classes are big; so it is believed that this aspect also hinders student learning, especially it affects discipline. Students expressed that they would like to have a personalized class, but this is hard to accomplish within a classroom setting consisting of over 30 students. In fact, a class is made up of about 40 students at most public schools. This issue was corroborated in the observations since it was noticed that the teacher presented a lesson to the whole class and some students needed more attention than others. Harmer (2007) states that class size affects how a teacher will teach at school; in small classes teachers can provide assistance to pupils' individual needs; nevertheless, large classes are more suitable to group work and the teacher needs to be feasible and time-efficient.

Finally, 22% of participants expressed that the methodology used by the teacher hinders their learning. In the observation, it was seen that the teachers worked on dialogues, group work, and reading out loud activities. However, students explained that their teacher uses the same teaching methods so they get bored throughout the lesson. Also, some students indicated that the teacher should add different activities to make the class more interesting. With regard to this, Nation and Newton (2009) observe that by using short and different learning activities, teachers can maintain students' interests and encourage them to participate.

CONCLUSIONS

Most students showed high levels of intrinsic motivation because they are aware of the importance of learning the English language, such as using their knowledge of the target language in their university studies and having better opportunities in their future careers. However, some students showed a lack of interest in the class and it was noticed through their poor participation.

Teachers' positive attitude is an essential factor toward effective language learning in the classroom. In this sense, it was evident that teachers' helpfulness, guidance, and patience had a positive influence upon the learning process of the students. This helped students feel encouraged and engaged throughout the lesson.

The class activities used by the teacher do not motivate students to learn; this is because almost all the teachers did not use a variety of didactic materials and resources to encourage students in the learning process. In fact, some teachers were limited to use only the textbook, flashcards, and whiteboard.

The use of very few communicative learning tasks was evident across the five different classrooms. This prevented the language learners from using English for communicative purposes within the classroom setting. This means that teachers employ largely non-communicative, traditional language teaching methodologies most of the time, which leads students to experience an inappropriate motivation toward language learning.

Work group activities, including dialogues, make students feel more comfortable at using English in front of their classmates and teacher. The use of this strategy engaged and promoted students' participation throughout the development of lessons.

The content of the lessons was beyond students' linguistic competence, which hinders students to learn English in a meaningful manner. Additionally, this issue increases boredom and lowers participation among the students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

English teachers should use appealing supplementary activities, such as games and songs. In this regard, incorporating games and songs into language classroom instruction may help students become motivated towards the learning process of the English language.

It is important for English teachers to provide their pupils with meaningful practice on and strengthen all four skills to learn the target language effectively, specially the writing skill. This remark should be taken into account since most students struggle writing in the English language; therefore, it is pivotal to improve students' self-confidence at writing and lower their anxiety during writing tasks as well. This in turn will help students to become more engaged and motivated.

Teachers should design and deliver lessons based on the current level of English proficiency of their students. In this way, lessons can be more meaningful and relevant. Consequently, students will not feel unmotivated and discouraged toward the learning process of the English language at the school setting.

It will be imperative for English teachers to teach lexicon and grammatical structures communicatively. This means that vocabulary words and grammar should not be taught in isolation because that may cause a lack of interest and or demotivation in learning the target language among students.

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ANNEXES

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

OPEN AND DISTANCE MODALITY

ENGLISH DEGREE

Observation Sheet

INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
YEAR:	

1. **Students feel motivated to learn English in class.**

YES	NO
Why?	

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

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

Notes:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Students' attitude in the class

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

4. Teacher's attitude in the class

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

5. Teacher's role in the class

The teacher:	YES	NO
is aware of the activities students do in class		
gives feedback at the end of the activities		
assigns a time limit to each activity		
is friendly with the students		
guides the students when they have any difficulty		
very that students have understood the instructions		

is fair with all the students		
provides confidence for the students to voice their concerns		

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

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

Others:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. The following aspects hinder students to learn in English.

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

Others:

_____

_____

_____

_____

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

OPEN AND DISTANCE MODALITY

ENGLISH DEGREE

Dear student,

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

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

<u>Informative data:</u> Please fill in the information below

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

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

1. Do you like to learn English?

YES	NO
Why?	

2. Are you motivated to learn English in class?

YES	NO
Why?	

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

YES	NO
Why?	

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you!