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

TRABAJO DE FIN DE TITULACIÓN

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DEDICATION

The present work is dedicated with love and gratitude to my family: My husband Fernando, and my son Daniel thanks for your loyalty, support, understanding and endless love.

To my mother, father, brother and sisters; thanks for your love and support through my whole life.

Martha Janeth González Granda

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Teaching and learning a foreign language is a process which requires the collaboration of authorities, teachers, and students. The general purpose of this study is to analyze the factors that affect the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian private High Schools.

The study was aimed to get information to clarify the reality of the teaching and learning processes of English as a foreign language. This research was carried out in five private High schools located on the east of Guayaquil city. The information was collected through classroom observation, questionnaires applied to teachers and students, and interviews made to teachers about four variables: factors concerning teachers, students, classrooms and educational institution. A quantitative tabulation was made to present the results and analysis.

Findings of the actual research showed that most of the observed teachers do not reinforce enough the communicative competence on their students. There is a divergence between what they were doing in class to the techniques that should be used in a communicative approach. Additionally teachers are not taking advantages of the benefits that new technology offers in the educational field.

KEYWORDS: Process, teaching, learning, factors, teachers, students, observation, questionnaires, interviews, methods, technology.

RESUMEN

Enseñar y aprender una lengua extranjera es un proceso que requiere de la colaboración de las autoridades, profesores y estudiantes. El propósito general de este estudio es analizar los "Factores que afectan el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje del Idioma Inglés en Colegios privados ecuatorianos".

El estudio está dirigido a obtener información para aclarar la realidad de los docentes y del proceso de aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera. Este estudio se llevó a cabo en cinco colegios ubicados al este de la ciudad de Guayaquil, los datos fueron recolectados a través de observación en el aula, cuestionarios y entrevistas aplicados a docentes y a estudiantes tomando en cuenta cuatro variables: factores relacionados a los docentes, alumnos, aulas y la institución educativa. Se realizó una tabulación cuantitativa para presentar los resultados y el análisis, los mismos mostraron que la mayoría de los maestros observados no aplican eficazmente la competencia comunicativa. Hay una discordancia entre lo que están haciendo en la clase y las técnicas que se deben utilizar en un enfoque comunicativo. Adicionalmente los maestros no están utilizando y aprovechando los beneficios que ofrece la tecnología en el campo educativo.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Proceso, enseñanza, aprendizaje, factores, docentes, alumnos,   observación, cuestionarios, entrevistas, métodos, tecnología.

INTRODUCTION

The international expansion of English is one of the most remarkable issues of the last half century. It is hard to ignore the great importance of English in every facet of life. Since globalization, many aspects of daily life have changed for many people in a positive way. The opportunities for studying, working and traveling abroad are just some of the several advantages of studying English as a foreign language.

Today there are many people, especially among the younger generations, able to understand written English and even able to write a text in English, but not capable to hold a conversation with a native speaker of the English language.

In the year 2011 the TESOL proficiency test was given to public English teachers in Ecuador. The results showed that 39.3 % of teachers have a A1 level, 35.3 % have a A2 level; 25.6% have a B1 level according to the records published by the CRADLE Project in the Senescyt web site. None of the teachers have an upper intermediate level of English which is the minimum level to work as an English teacher.

The purposes for this study were to assess the English proficiency levels of the teachers in public schools; to organize strategies that contribute to improve the level of English language in Ecuadorian English teachers, and to achieve international standards considering the communicative language components and the language skills as a part of the program: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

In our country, a lot of effort has been devoted by private schools to include in their curriculum the English subject, to increase the teaching time of instruction per week, to extent the teaching of English from Kindergarten to the twelfth year.

Nevertheless, it looks like the grounds for success in the teaching of a second language need to be worked on considering the aspects that are necessary to prove being proficient in the four skills of language. The foundation of education lies in the desire to improve the future professional's abilities, their critical thinking skills so it will be easy for them to get a job.

The current study, 'Factors that influence the English language teaching learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools', has as its specific objectives to: Identify the student's English level and their needs in the classroom; determine the classroom conditions in which English lessons take place; identify the characteristics of in-service English teachers; determine institutional facilities and norms regarding quality of education.

Preliminary research has already been carried out related to the factors that influence the teaching learning process of English. Five studies were included in the literature review of this investigation:

Subedi (2003) worked on finding out the factors that influence the students' achievement in a classroom, factors such as class size, space and use of resources by teachers in grades 9th & 10th of high schools in Nepal. This study found a positive effect of resources and a negative effect of class size on average classroom achievement. Teachers were capable to raise the achievement of the classroom when they used the teaching resources appropriately. In a class, with a large number of students there is an evident decrease of the average level of achievement.

Saricoban, & VeliBarışkan, (2005) made a study about the effectiveness of the 3-week pre service teacher training given at Baskent University (Turkey) in terms of classroom management skills. The results of this study showed that most of the teachers were conscious of the abilities taught through a training program and the

majority of the teachers usually had good management skills. Most of the teachers considered that prevention of bad behavior is more important than maintaining classroom discipline. They mostly got prepared for their lessons, and they had contingency plans in case of emergency.

Narayanan, Rajasekaran, Nair, & Iyyappan, (2008) observed sociopsychological factors like motivation, attitude, language anxiety and gender; these factors affect the learning process of English as a second language in Chennai, South India. The results showed that factors such as motivation, attitude, language anxiety and gender have a great impact on students' English learning. Students need to be motivated, have a positive attitude towards the language, low language anxiety; they need to have a maximum amount of the target language exposures.

Jagero (2011) investigated on school environmental factors that affect both girls and boys in boarding secondary schools in Kenya in an attempt to achieve academic excellence. From the factor analysis, two factors were identified, parental support for education of the student and social economic status of the parents. The results showed that the parental support was the main factor that affected more girls than boys. The main problems facing students was a lack of discipline during prep-time, lack of adequate reading facilities, and inadequate boarding facilities such as restrooms, toilets, and water.

Aduwa-Ogiebaen, & Ayamu, (2006) examined the factors responsible for the poor quality of the teaching of English as a second language in public secondary schools of Nigeria. Findings showed that the use of traditional sources; that is: the chalkboards, English workbooks, text books and dictionary resources were high; more challenging technological sources were rarely used. Regarding methods the results showed that lecture method and intensive reading of textbooks are the only

teaching techniques used in public secondary schools in Nigeria for teaching English language. The schools are overcrowded, the furniture is not appropriate, neither lighting nor ventilation in each classroom.

The actual research was conducted in five high schools; the results of this detailed examination will benefit school authorities in the decision making process to develop training courses for their staff, and to create a curriculum that fits student's needs. It will benefit the teachers on planning lessons that include activities to develop the communicative competence. It will benefit the students as they will have access to well-planned interactive communicative classes.

The study faced some limitations; for example, letters were sent to twelve different schools, but unfortunately the researcher faced a lack of collaboration, most of the educational institutions declined to participate in this process justifying that they do not have the time to do it. For future research work, it would be interesting if the UTPL communicated the interest in doing research by TV, radio, or newspaper, in order to have the support from the schools that would be involved in the research.

The time for students to answer the questionnaires was too short to get clear information about their English proficiency level. The questionnaires for the students should have been made in English. It could provide have help with more information to measure the level of English knowledge of students.

The limited amount of time per classroom observation was a one-hour period per teacher, and around 10 to 15 minutes of the interviews.

In order to get more information about the teaching-learning of English process, it could have been better if the researcher had observed more than 2 hours each teacher and had access to the lesson plan of the class to verify if the class had developed according it.

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METHOD

Setting and participants

The research process took place in Guayaquil, Ecuador. The sample of people observed in the study was made from fifteen teachers of five different private high schools, a total of fifteen students, from eighth grade to second year of high school, were chosen at random.

The students that participated in the research were teenagers between 13 and 17 years old with different proficiency levels. They belonged to a high-middle socio-economic class, and most of them have had access to cable TV, computers, internet, and different technological gadgets. Some of them have taken English classes after school in private English institutes. Additionally, they have had opportunities to travel abroad. All these facts motivate students to be interested in the learning of the English language.

Most of the researched teachers have had many years of experience teaching English: 3 teachers were in the range of 30 to 34 years of experience, 1 around 25-29 years working as English teachers; 1 teacher was in the range of 20-24 years, 1 teachers had 15-19 years of experience, 6 teachers had been working as a teacher for 10-14 year and 3 were between the range of 5-9 year working as English teachers. Taking in account how long they have been studying English 2 of the 15 teachers were native language speakers, they were born in the United States; 3 of the 15 teachers learned English in the United States; 9 teachers learned English in pre-school, and only 1 teacher learned English in College. It is important to mention that most of them acknowledge they were very pleased to work as English teachers.

Procedures

First, an extensive bibliographic research, in books, journal articles and studies, was done about the past and current approaches about teaching English as a foreign language. The literature review was made on different topics regarding variables of the study, and five preliminary studies related to factors that influence the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language were used as the scientific data that supported this research.

Once the literature review was completed, collection of field data began. The materials used to conduct this study were books, journals, internet; letters asking for collaboration, questionnaires for teachers, questionnaires for students, a list of questions for interviews with teachers and a computer to type and save the information.

Fifteen letters were sent to different schools asking for collaboration with this research. After schools had answered the request, in coordination with the English departments of each school, class-room observations were conducted in five of the schools that were willing to collaborate with the study.

The principal method used in this research is the Quantitative method since it was necessary to collect a wide sample of numerical data from participants that answer the questionnaires and interviews, which were organized using statistics, percentages and computational techniques.

The questionnaires, designed by the UTPL (Universidad Tecnica Particular de Loja), were applied to 15 teachers and 15 students of each school. Interviews to teachers were conducted with the purpose of collecting data to carry out this research. The instruments for data collection were two questionnaires: one for teachers and one for the students. Those inquiry forms were applied individually to

teachers and students. The interviews to teachers were developed orally as conversations with the list of questions that were printed and some of them prefer to write their own answers.

The teachers' questionnaire was designed to: know their level of education; learn if they consider the students' needs and their effectiveness to teach English; identify the method that they use in their classes; to see if they plan their lessons; recognize the kind of activities they do with their students; detect if they consider discipline, timing, feedback, clear instructions; analyze if they feel comfortable with their teaching environment; finally to notice the resources they use for teaching.

The students' questionnaire, which was written in Spanish, was designed to: know if they like to learn English; identify if they consider that the activities they do in class are easy, difficult, motivating; detect if they are happy with the way how the teacher manage their class; investigate if they have interactive classes; be informed if the teacher speaks only in English during class instruction; know if the teacher has good management skills; observe if feedback is part of their lessons; determine if they are comfortable with the classroom size, number of students, classroom arrangement; finally, specify if their teacher uses teacher's aids in the classroom.

The results of this study were found based on the analysis of the information gathered from: questionnaires, observation sheets, scientific support, comparative analysis, and own academic contribution.

The main obstacle found during the research, was the limited time for data gathering; in fact, observation time was of one class period per teacher, and around 10 and 15 minutes for the interviews.

DISCUSSION

Literature Review

The English language has become a necessity for the globalized world; besides, it is one of the most spoken languages around the world; therefore, there is a growing need to provide students with enough tools to have command of the language. The contemporary education has the challenge to contribute with the development, worldwide, of communicative competences in students. In our country, the importance of English has widespread since it is considered a path to social, economic, and technological development. Schools must be kept updated in the area of teaching English as a foreign language for long-term positive results.

The following information is a compilation of different concepts, definitions, and theories about the most important elements that interact and influence teaching which serve as the theoretical support for the current research.

In the last part of this literature review, five studies that can contribute to expanding the view of the influential factors that affect the English learning process will be summarized.

Teaching Approaches and Methods

There are several approaches and methods that have helped teachers become more professional and efficient through the history of the language teaching, starting in the XIX century to the present time.

The Grammar-Translation Method, also known as the Classical Method, initially used to teach the classical languages Greek and Latin, it is based on learning the grammar rules, memorization of a language, and to use that knowledge with the

intention of translating any piece of information from a Second Language to a First Language. "Reading and writing are the major focus; little or no systematic attention is paid to speaking or listening" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001 p. 6). That is the reason why this method does not require teachers to have a fluid and communicative mastering of the Second Language.

Among the characteristics of the Grammar Translation Method, Brown (2007) mentions that the classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little use of the target language; the vocabulary is imparted in the form of lists of isolated words; long elaborate explanations and difficult to understand grammar; instruction focuses on form and inflection of words with little attention to content; classical books are read with the purpose of translation; pronunciation is given no consideration.

Richards & Rodgers (2001) have stated that Total Physical Response (TPR) is a teaching method based on the relation between speech and actions. The purpose of this method is to teach through physical activity. James Asher (1977), a psychology professor who developed this method, based his studies on how children acquire their first language. He concludes that children would respond physically before they began responding verbally.

The general objectives of Total Physical Response are to teach oral proficiency and generate learners who are able of an open communication that is understandable to a native speaker. The initial stage of Total Physical Response is based on meaning rather than in form, grammar is taught inductively. The teacher has the responsibility to provide the best type of exposure to verbal communication, he/she controls the verbal input that the learner receive, providing that the learners construct their own "cognitive map", so the learners can internalize the basic rules of

the target language. Also, teachers should allow to learner speaking abilities to be developed on the learners' own pace.

Furthermore, Brown (2007, p.31) adds in reference to the TPR: "It seemed to be especially effective in the beginning levels of languages proficiency, but it lost its distinctiveness as learners advanced in their competence". This means that this method would need the combination of other methods and techniques to balance its lack of effectiveness for advanced levels. Additionally language acquisition takes place in relaxed environments allowing students to learn in a positive way.

The Natural Approach developed by Krashen and Terrell is based on observations on learners, and how they acquire their first and second languages in real life. It is focused on comprehension and meaningful communication as well as the delivery of the proper comprehensible input and the adequate conditions for the acquisition of the foreign language. The implications for language teaching on this approach are essentially the following: comprehensible input must be presented; any aid to help comprehension is important; visual aids are useful, exposure to a wide range of vocabulary. The focus in a classroom should be on listening and reading. Student work should be centered on meaningful communication rather than on form (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

"The natural approach is for beginners and is designed to help them become intermediates" (Krashen & Terrell, 1983, p.71). It is expected that students become functionally able to interact in the target language. In contrast, according to Brown (2007) the controversial aspect of this method is that students are not required to talk until they are ready to do so, this silent period could be negative for students that are shy or need developing in speech. Consequently this approach needs the support of

other approaches or methods and other forms of input that help students to develop in all the skills required for communication.

The Communicative Language Teaching approach consists in a set of principles that focus in a communicative way of teaching a foreign language. These principles include the integration of the four language skills. The goal in a communicative classroom is to present authentic and meaningful materials that will favor communication through a fluent interaction of the people involved in the process of learning a new language. This learning process is considered a procedure that involves trial and error (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

According to Larsen-Freeman (2000), the goal of Communicative Language Teaching is to prepare students for real communication in the target language; they need to know the linguistic forms, meanings and functions. Students need to learn about cohesion and coherence. They must be able to recognize the most appropriate forms, given the social context and the roles of the speakers. Teachers act as guides answering students' questions and monitoring their performance considering social and cultural aspects.

The Cooperative Language Learning approach central premise according to Richards & Rodgers (2001 p.194) "Learners develop communicative competence in a language by conversing in socially or pedagogically structured situations".

It is necessary to say that when this theory talks about cooperation it does not involve competition. Cooperation implicates learner-centered characteristics. Brown considers that the learner-centered instruction includes:

Brown (2007, p.53) "a curriculum or a classroom that is cooperative usually involves

learner-centered characteristics"

- Techniques that focus on or account for learners' needs, styles, and goals,

- Techniques that give some control to the student (group work or strategy training, for example).

- Curricula that include the consultation and input of students and that do not presuppose objectives in advance.

- Techniques that allow student creativity and innovation.

- Techniques that enhance a student's sense of competence and self-worth.

Cooperative Language Learning involves group tasks, cooperation, cooperative skills building, and student accountability for learning participation. Students and teachers work together in groups to achieve objectives, it allows students an exchange of information and experiences with others (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

The Content-Based Instruction is a method that shows emphasis in learning the terminology of a specific subject or occupation rather than learning about language. "Using content from other disciplines in language courses is not a new idea. For many years, specialized language courses have included content, relevant to particular professions or academic discipline". (Larsen-Freeman, 2000 p.136)

Content-Based Instructions are grounded in two central principles. "People learn a second language more successfully when they use the language as a means of acquiring information rather than as end in itself", "Content based-instruction better reflects learner' needs for learning a second language" (Richards & Rodgers, 2001, p.207) The authors also cite Stoller (1997) saying that this method should focus on activities that favor language skills improvement, vocabulary building, discourse

organization, communicative interaction, and the study of skills and synthesis of content material and grammar.

Task-Based Language Teaching is a method which bases its approach on the use of tasks as the central unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. This approach involves the use of real language in real situations where communication is needed.

The main assumptions of task-based instruction, summarized by Feez (1998) are: focusing on the process rather than the product; basic elements are meaningful activities and tasks that are focused on communication and meaning; language is learnt by interacting communicatively and meaningfully while involved in the activities; activities and tasks from the syllabus are sequenced based on the difficulty of a task, and they will depend on factors such as previous experience of the learner. Task-Based Language Teaching is motivated mainly by a theory of learning rather than a theory of language (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

Managing Learning

When talking about managing learning it is inevitable to think about how the teacher conducts his class. For many years, it has been stated that a teacher has to be a person with an outgoing personality and very creative to be successful in class, but now it is clear that there are other factors that are important to consider, factors like keeping eye contact, proper gesticulation and voice, classroom arrangement, establishing rapport and discipline. In other words, it is necessary that the students trust their teacher and that they feel comfortable with his leadership (Gower, Phillips & Walters, 1995).

On the other hand, Shalaway (1998) emphasizes hat organization start with the first day of school, so when the students enter to the classroom they get a positive first impression. Teachers must recognize certain factors that will set the tone for the entire school year such as the way the classroom looks; the routines; procedures established for classroom routines; the policy about contacting parents and other teachers; the steps taken to ensure the student's comfort. These factors help to motivate students, enhance learning, prevent behavior problems, and effective use of school time.

Shalaway (1998) also mentions that time managing, it is as important as classroom management. Time managing is very challenging, and it is the clue to success of effective class planning. School time is necessary to use efficiently, decide how long each step of a lesson plan will take, deal with classroom behavior problems, establish routines to avoid wasting time, allow students to move smoothly from one activity to the other.

Feedback is another important aspect to consider in managing learning. The British Council BBC Teaching English describes feedback as information from anybody involved in the learning process, teachers, students, even authorities; help a learner improve specific areas of learning.

Feedback can be given as soon as an error is made, as when students are involved in a controlled linguistic task, or it can be delayed if they are working on an activity that needs to focus on fluency rather than in the accuracy. Any time feedback is given it is always going to be essential to make the learning process a success.

Lesson Design

Lesson planning is a very important part of the teaching-learning process. It helps the teacher to be organized on the use of methods and techniques; it makes the teacher feel more confident about the delivery of a class and provides information for future planning.

Burden & Byrd (2007) recapitulated a series of important factors to consider in planning like content, material, instructional strategies, teacher's behavior, structure of the lesson, learning environment, students, and duration of the lesson. Additionally, the authors mention a list of benefits that teachers get when they plan lessons: acquire a sense of direction and confidence; implement organization and sequence; get familiar with the course content; collect and prepare related instructional material; use a variety of instructional strategies; incorporate techniques to motivate students; arrange for appropriate requirements and evaluations.

Brown (2007) summarizes a format of a lesson plan. He considers that the principal thing to do when planning is setting the goals of the lesson; that implies identifying what is the result that the teachers are planning on getting after finishing a lesson. It is also necessary to list the materials and equipment that is going to be used, and what is the most important; to check them to see if they are properly working before the class. There are different procedures that teachers can use in a class: whole class work, group work, pair work, and individual work. The evaluation is a very important part of the lesson because when tutors evaluate, they can assess the students' performance and are also able to make changes or even repeat a class if it is necessary.

Class Size

The view of Dudley-Evans & St John (1998) is that class size can vary widely. The number of learners depends on the purpose, experience, and it does not give the notion of when a class is large. A large class does not necessarily mean a negative environment; a large class can be a problem if instructors are not creative enough to come up with a plan that will deal not only with a large number of students but probably also with different levels of proficiency inside the same classroom. However from a positive point of view dealing with large class gives the teachers the opportunities for innovation; it is an opportunity to develop, in teachers, the abilities to manage groups and take advantages of the situations.

In groups, the role of a teacher is to manage time, materials, and activities, to monitor relationships. One-to-one teaching is different because the role of the teacher is to respond; it involves observation, handling, and interpreting; the aim is to establish an interpersonal learning dialogue, and communication is personal.

In contrast, Woodward (2001) describes problems associated with large classes: noise, too many people in too little space, and insufficient materials for all learners, not being able to respond to the needs of all students and the difficulty of organization and investing of time.

Classroom Space & Seating Arrangements

Recapitulating the idea of Gower, Phillips & Walters (1995) the position and organization of teachers and students in class is of great importance. Where the students sit in a classroom can determine their attitude; how they interact and the types of activities they do. In seating arrangement teachers have to consider factors

such as the student's age, personality, culture, among others. It is important to point out that teachers have the authority to move and organize the classroom according to the necessities of their lesson plan.

Christopher (1992) suggests some points in relations to the seating arrangement: the students should have a panoramic view of the classroom and the teacher; students should not be placed next to windows because they can get distracted. Additionally the author recommends U-shape setting for the students. It is suggested to look at the general setup of the room; the space should allow traffic to move easily, without interruption; the classroom should look like a comfortable place that the students will enjoy; also the display areas should be visible.

Brown (2007) points out the fact that students are affected by what they see, hear, and feel when they arrive to the classroom. If the conditions allow teachers should look around and notice if the classroom is neat; if the chairs are appropriately arranged; if the room has bulletin boards; and if the teacher has the freedom to use them. If these factors can be controlled, teachers should not pass the opportunity to make the classroom as comfortable as possible. It will help to create an appropriate environment in which learners have space, equipment and materials where they can develop their learning skill and perform their tasks efficiently.

Classroom and Teaching Resources

Harmer (2007) presents different points of views about the use of resources in a classroom. Nowadays technology has revolutionized many aspects of education. Currently students have access to more information through the Internet, especially private schools which have greater availability of devices like projectors, computers,

and interactive whiteboards. They are of a great support and motivate students. These resources offer benefits such as, saving time and materials.

Nowadays many schools incorporate technology in their facilities. We find schools where each student has access to a computer, where each class has a projector. This is not a guarantee that education is going to be better, but it gives the opportunity for teachers and students to use resources of the students' interest.

On the other hand, in spite of all the benefits that technology provides, the human resources will always be the most important. Students and creative teachers can learn with almost no resources; if they have creativity and imagination, they can achieve a fun and interesting lesson.

Woodward (2001) dedicates a whole chapter about materials and equipment available that stand out among others:

Different kinds of dictionaries, this tool is used to look up a word or phrase, to find its meaning, check spelling, check alternate uses and meanings, check etymology, synonyms, etc.

The board is another standard piece of equipment, in almost all classrooms you can find a board; they come in different forms, materials and sizes. They can be used to do as many things as: to write instructions, rules; to add visual impact to a lesson; to provide a model for writing, to explain a word, compile brainstorms, to write homework instructions, etc.

The picture pack is a collection of pictures cut from magazines that teacher select in order to use to generate vocabulary, play games, generate dialogues, and bring the outside world into the class.

A central tool, the course book, teachers have to do an analysis of its content and plan according to book, the activities and readings are suitable for their students. Teachers need to work in achieving a connection between book and learners.

Continuing with useful resources, Harmer (2007) classifies classroom materials according to the ways they are used:

Ways of Showing: The board, the overhead projector, the flip chart, computer-based presentational technology.

Ways of listening: the teacher, students, CD players, MP3 players, iPods, mobile phones, Podcasts.

Ways of finding out: dictionaries, concordancers, internet.

Ways of composing: word processor; word editing; pen pals, chat, blogs, etc. Virtual learning: Uses the internet to substitute the physical environment.

Classroom Observation

Fase, Streshly & Gray (2012) have identified important benefits as a result of classroom observation. Therefore, classroom observation helps to improve: teacher's motivation and work satisfaction; trust between principals and teachers; teacher's attitude toward professional development; understanding of teacher's work context, classroom instruction, teacher's perception of effectiveness, positive relationship between principals, teachers, and students.

Mackey & Gass (2005) remind us that observation is a useful tool for gathering information about activities, interactions, instruction, and events that occur in second and foreign language classroom. When conducting a classroom observation, it is important to consider that the quality of the lesson may not be affected by the distraction of having an observer inside the classroom. The

Hawthorne Effect takes place when the observed class shows a positive attitude which cannot be the same without the observation.

Lightbown & Spada (2010) show a variety of observation schemes that have been developed with the purpose of training teachers. These schemes differ in several aspects, including the number of categories they contain, whether they focus on qualitative or quantitative descriptions and whether they are used throughout a lesson or on selected samples of classroom interaction.

Learning Styles

Learners have different capacities to learn and different ways of learning. Shalaway (1998, p.57) presents the opinion of Dr. Dunn and colleagues that explained in an article the following:

Learning style is a biologically and developmentally imposed set of personal characteristics that make the same teaching method effective for some and ineffective for others. Every person has a learning style – it is as individual as a signature. Accepting the concept of learning styles, it is necessary to accept the approach of teaching by developing skills through the learner's strengths.

Learning styles are used to describe the learner's natural and preferred way of observing, processing, and understanding new information and skills. Perceptually, learner styles are based on how the students use their senses to learn. Visual learners are the ones that learn something by seeing such thing; aural learners are the ones that learn better when they are exposed to an auditory input; kinesthetic learners prefer to be involved in role playing since it involves physical action (Shalaway, 1998).

It is important to consider Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. He classifies eight different types of intelligences, some of them more developed than others. These intelligences are described as the abilities students have in determined areas, such as logical-mathematical, spatial, linguistic, bodily-Kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. Students would be more effective if the teacher exploits their personal intelligence with specific tasks that will lead them to success. It is implied that with exercise and practice the not developed areas will be expanded according to the needs of the class.

Harmer (2007) took the opinion of Tony Write, who described four different learner styles within a group: "the enthusiast" looks to the teacher as a point of reference, with the goals of the groups; "the oracular" also focus attention on teacher but towards satisfaction of personal goals; "the participator" tends to concentrate on groups; the "rebel" concerning with the satisfaction of meet their own goals. Teachers should do as much as they can in order to understand the individual differences within a group, and they should endeavor to teach individuals as well as groups.

Language Aptitude

Aptitude is having special skills for something. It is thought that a learner with greater aptitude to learning will learn faster and easily than others. Other learners would succeed if they persevere because of their aptitude for learning languages (Lightbown & Spada, 2010).

The British Council refers to language aptitude as "the potential that a person has for learning language". This potential is evaluated using formal aptitude test that

includes evaluation of ability to manage sounds, grammatical structures, infer rules, and memory. Those tests are useful tools that help teachers to estimate and plan the appropriate training that students need to improve their language performance.

"Learner with a wide variety of intellectual abilities can be successful language learners. This is especially true if the emphasis is on oral communication skills rather than metalinguistic knowledge." (Lightbown & Spada 2006, p.185)

The following paragraphs summarize five previous studies about factors that affect the English learning process. These five studies show influential factors in the learning of English as a foreign language.

Subedi (2003) worked on an eight-month research, with the main purpose of finding out how the students' achievement in a classroom can be affected by the class size, availability, and use of resources by teachers in grades nine and ten of high schools in Nepal. A sample of thirty high schools, 152 teachers involved in teaching, and 556 classrooms were selected.

The methods used to make this investigation were: field study, observation, the inductive method, quantitative research. Instruments of data collection: data survey questionnaire. The hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) technic was applied for data analysis.

About the conclusions, the authors state that there is a positive effect of resources and a negative effect of class size on average classroom achievement. Teachers who used the available resources effectively in the classroom were able to increase the achievement. A class with a large number of students is likely to decrease the average level of achievement.

The author recommends structuring the allocation; using available resources to specific subjects and establishing an optimum class size.

In another study made by Saricoban & Veli Barışkan (2005), the effectiveness of the 3-week pre service teacher training given at Baskent University in terms of classroom management skills was analyzed and evaluated.

The methodology used to make this investigation involved: quantitative analysis, field study, observation, the deductive method, quantitative research. Instruments of data collection: data survey questionnaires applied principally to teachers; a questionnaire covering the subject areas.

The participants were students and thirty EFL teachers chosen randomly from Baskent University in Turkey.

The results of the investigation showed that most teachers had good classroom management skills. Teachers thought that it was better prevent disruptive behavior than trying to correct it; they also agreed on having a private conversation with a student if a problem persists. The teacher training program on management skills was viewed by most teachers as effective.

Another research was made by Narayanan, Rajasekaran, Nair, & Iyyappan, (2008). They observed socio-psychological factors like motivation, attitude, language anxiety that affect the learning process of English as a second language in Chennai, South India.

They worked with a sample of 408 participants from both sexes from a 5 Engineering colleges, where they made observations and surveys using written questionnaires.

The methodology applied to make this investigation involved: quantitative analysis, field study, observation, inductive method. Instruments of data collection: questionnaires.

The results demonstrated that female students have higher scores than men and are more in number. Females have high instrumentally motivation towards English. Some female students may feel more comfortable discussing issues, and expressing themselves in English language than in their mother tongue. Course books are considered an important factor in the classroom. Females have low English language class anxiety.

In conclusion, both female and male: need to be highly motivated, have a positive attitude towards the language, have low language anxiety, and need to have a good amount of target language exposures.

A different investigation was made by Jagero (2011). The objective was to establish school environmental factors affecting both girls and boys in boarding secondary schools in Kenya in an attempt to achieve academic excellence.

The sample of people involved in the study was 5 head teachers, 140 teachers and 609 students.

The methodology applied to make this investigation involved: field study, observation, the inductive method, quantitative research. Instruments of data collection: questionnaires and interviews.

The principal results found after this study addressed the main problems facing boarding students like: the lack of discipline during prep time, lack of adequate reading materials, and inadequate facilities such as bathroom toilets,

lightning and water.

Parents Teachers Associations and Head teachers should contribute to the provision of physical facilities to improve the performance of the boarding students. They should also work on improving the school environment.

Finally, Aduwa-Ogiebaen & Ayamu (2006) examined the factors responsible for the poor quality of the teaching of English as a second language in public secondary schools in Nigeria. For this study, the frequency of the use of media, the frequency of the use of techniques and the school environment were examined. The population for this research included senior secondary school students in public secondary schools, in the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria.

The methodology applied to make this investigation involved: field study, observation, quantitative research. The collection of data was made using questionnaires.

The results of this study showed that instructional resources and media were used occasionally or rarely. The lecture method and intensive reading of textbooks were the only methods used in teaching English language; group and debate methods are occasionally used. The schools are overcrowded, the furniture is not comfortable for proper sitting, and they do not have appropriate lighting and ventilation.

In the public secondary schools of Nigeria, the use of technology and proper methods of teaching are far away from the communicative teaching method. Teachers should be more student-centered rather than teacher-centered, thriving more on using audio visual aids than just following textbooks.

*Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results*

The description and quantitative analysis of results will be developed question by question based on the results of data collection gotten from questionnaires and interviews. The results were organized under 4 variables: Factors concerning teacher, students, classroom and educational institution. Additionally, it contains criteria of the theoretical support related to the factors that influence the English language teaching learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools.

Quantitative Analysis

Factors Concerning Teachers

Which level of education do teachers have?

Graph 1
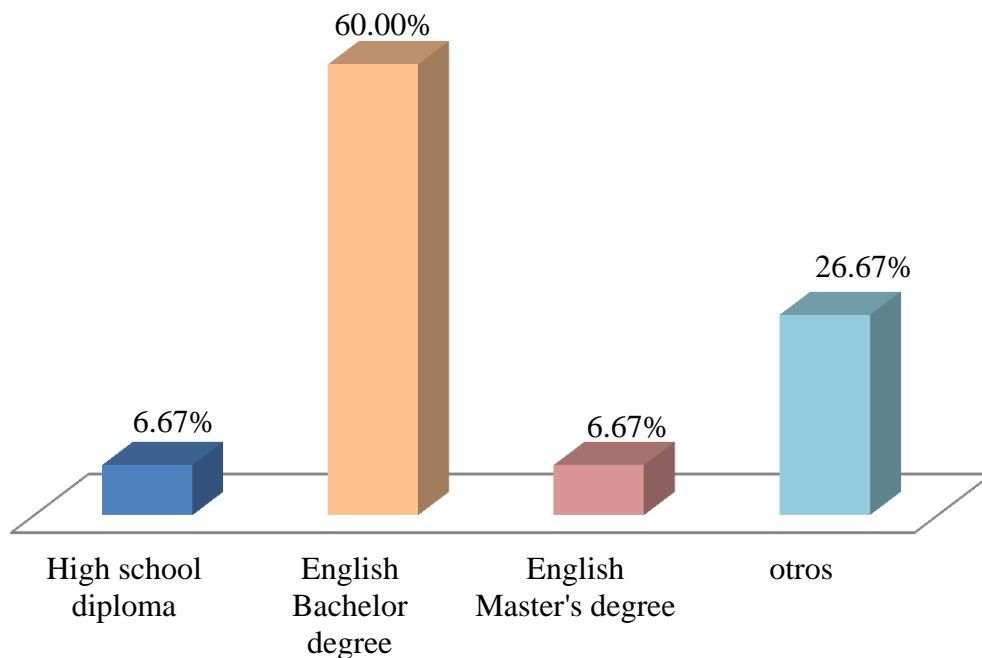
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire.

According to the results of teacher's questionnaire, 6.67% which represent 1 out of 15 teachers surveyed has a High School degree. The teacher does not have formal training to teach English, but he has 30 years of experience teaching the English language.

Nine of the 15 teachers which represent a 60.00% of the sample have an English bachelor degree, 2 of these teachers are in the process of getting a Master's degree.

One of the 15 teachers a 6.67% of the population has English master's degree. And the remaining 26.67 % have degrees in other careers such as: Publicists, Economist, Architect, and Educational Manager, but they are teaching English because they know the language very well.

Most of the observed teachers have many years of experience teaching English one of them has 5 years, the others have around 9 to 34 years. It is important to mention that 2 of the 15 teacher are native language speakers; they were born in The United States, fact that benefits students, by having at first hand a Native language speaker.

As can be seen on the results 9 of the 15 teachers observed have the English bachelor's degree, only two of them are in the process to get a Master degree. Even though they have lots of years of experience teaching the English language, it was observed the lack of interest of the majority of teachers in a constant improvement in their professional development.

During classroom observation was experienced that the level of education of teachers, their proficiency level, and many years of experience teaching the language; do not necessary mean that they are good teachers or that they have the necessary characteristics to be successful teachers. Burden & Byrd (2007) remained

about essential teacher characteristics. First, teachers need to have professional and pedagogical knowledge; teachers must possess rich knowledge of the subject, foundational information about teaching and learning, and information about teaching methods and technics. Second, teachers also must have the necessary skills to use their knowledge effectively; their performance has to be oriented to influence students growth and achievement. Finally, disposition to promote learning for all students, it includes the necessary values, commitment, and professional ethics that influence students behavior.

Which of the following methods were used in the observed classroom?

Graph 2
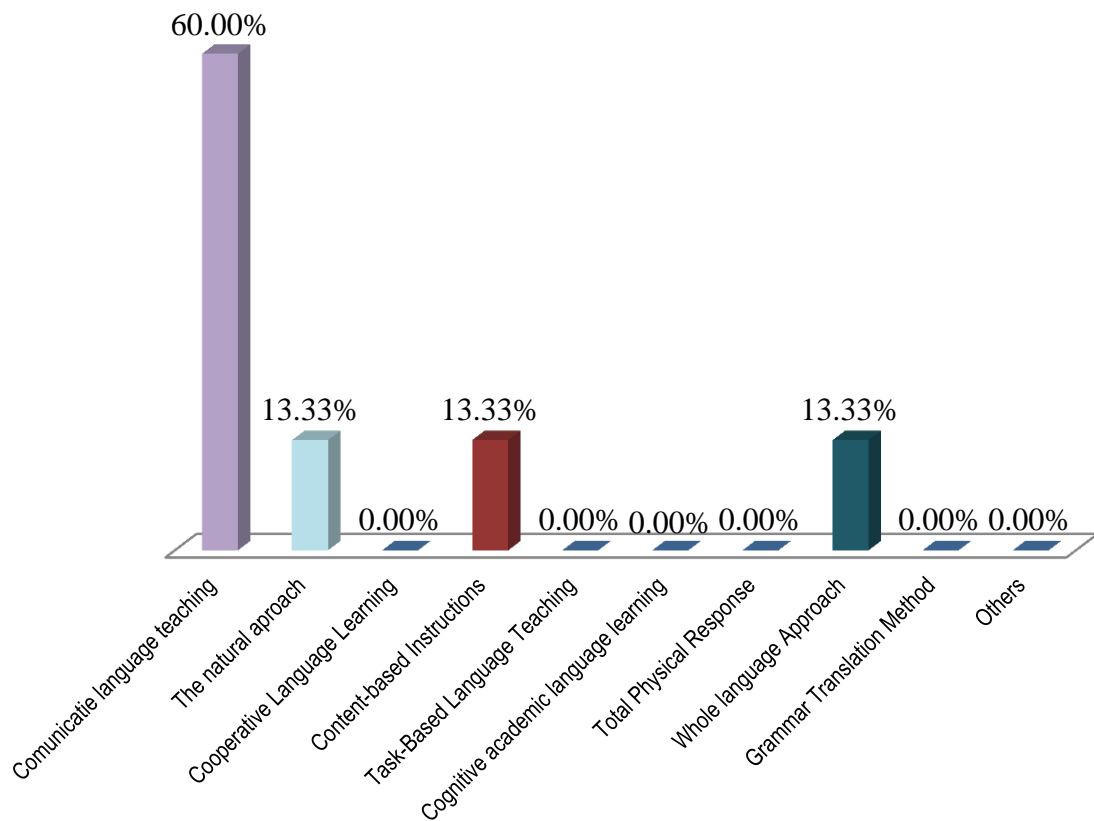
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire.

Even the question in the teacher's questionnaire asked the teacher to select only one method, most of them argued that it was not possible to do so. They explained that the selection of a teaching method depends on the activities they worked on. Their answers to the questionnaire reflect that teachers use more than one or two approaches and methods.

Results show that the most used method in the High Schools researched was the Communicative Language Teaching with a 60.00%, it is 9 out of the 15 teacher answered that way. Despite most of the teachers observed said they use the

communicate approach, they did not use it in the development course of the classes that were observed because most of interaction with the students was based on teacher-student questions and answers practices, where the students did not have the opportunity to use the language in a communicative way. It is known that communication involves cooperative learning, group work, pair work, meaningful activities, and creative construction. The focus of communicative practice is the use of language in a real communicative context, where real information is exchanged.

Richards (2006) proposes that in communicative language teaching, students who participate in cooperative activities, become comfortable with listening to their classmates in group work or pair group tasks, and the participants are expected to take a high degree of responsibility to their own learning. Teachers applying the Communicative Language Teaching Approach have the role of being facilitators and monitors.

Most of textbooks and materials used in the observed private-high schools are based on the communicative approach and are designed with a wide variety of activities to help students to develop the four skills of the language.

The answers to the questionnaires showed that 13.33% of teachers use the Natural Approach, but in classroom observation, it was observed that real and meaningful communication was relatively weak.

The Content based Instruction method got a 13.33%, between teachers, which represent 2 of the 15 participants, a 13.33% of the teachers manifested that they also used whole language approach (WLA) to teach their lessons because WLA sees language as a whole entity. This approach emphasizes learning to read and write naturally with a focus on real communication and reading and writing for pleasure (Richards & Rodgers, 2001).

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

Graph 3

93.33%

6.67%

Yes   No
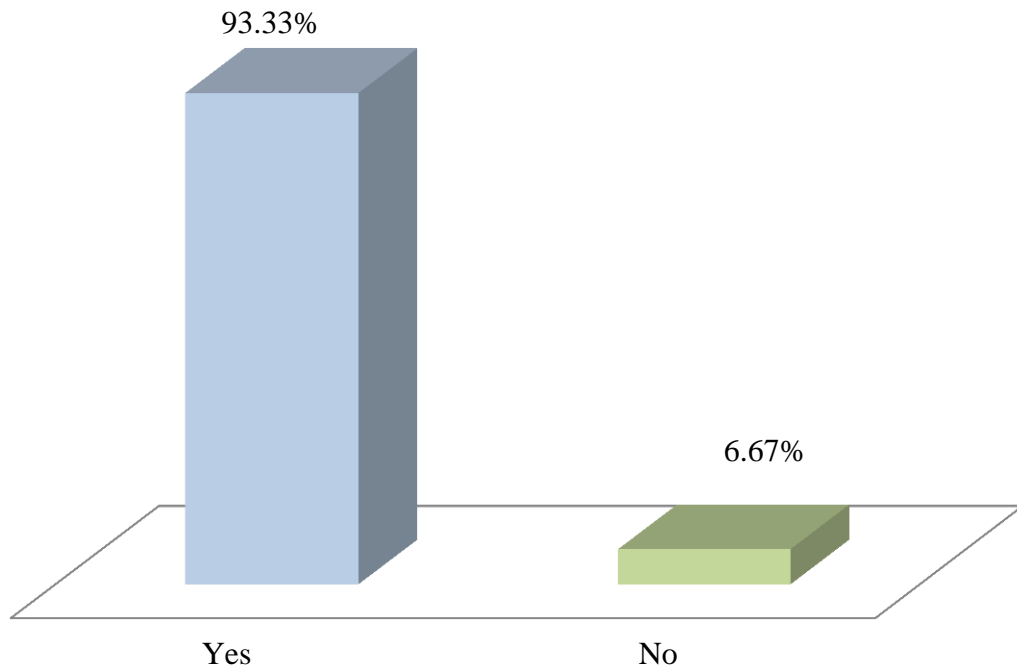
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire.

Regarding to the use of the whole group activities 93.33%, which represent 14 out of the 15 teachers that participated in this research, answered that they use these kinds of activities.

According to most of the observed teachers, whole group activities have many advantages: whole group activities increase interaction time among students; students share knowledge; students excel with it; there is more students' time participation; students develop their communicative skills; it raises students' confidence.

Only one teacher, who represents the 6.67% of the teachers, answered that she does not use whole group activities because she considers the activity is disrupting.

There seems to be a wrong impression or confusion among the surveyed teachers about what whole group is. In the questionnaire, most of the teachers wrote comments that were clearly related to group activities instead of the whole group activities. They for example, mentioned that they used whole group activities to have all the students participating in the group work; they said they use it to make students learn from each other; to share the students' knowledge in groups; to encourage students to learn from each other.

Whole class conversation should be used at the beginning of a lesson, to introduce a topic or at the end of the class to summarize the content of the session; teachers ask questions in order to see what was assimilated by students during the lesson.

The other possibility is that some teachers really do not know the difference between one kind of activity and the other as it was the case of the teacher who said she did not like to use whole group activities because the class gets disrupted; when in fact she was using it.

Harmer (2007) mentions that whole class grouping reinforces a sense of belonging among the group members and that it is suitable for activities where the teacher is acting as a controller. However he also mentions that using whole class grouping is not the best environment to organize communicative language teaching.

Do teachers use individual activities to teach their lessons?

Graph 4

93.33%

6.67%

Yes   No
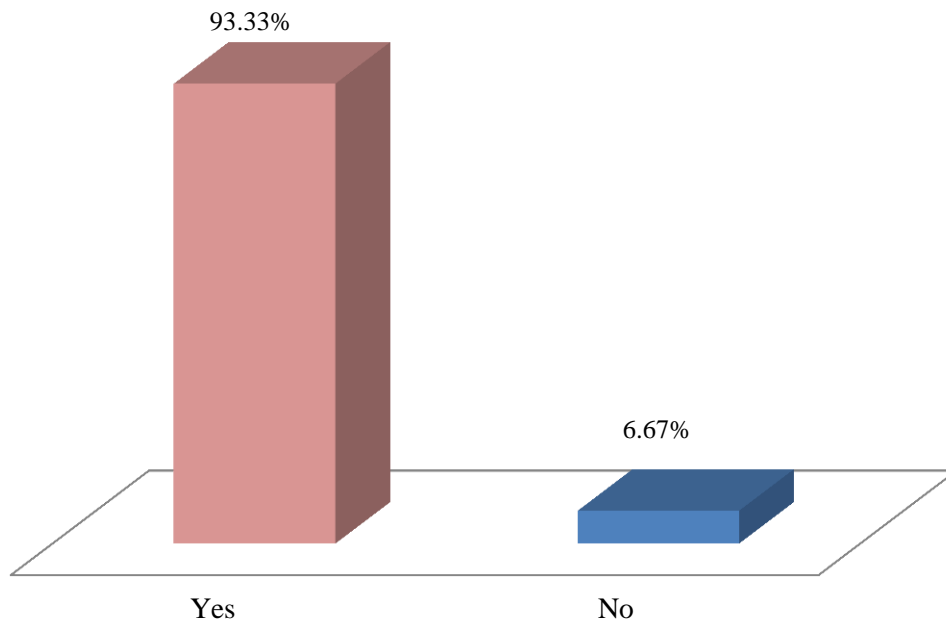
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Concerning to individual activities employed in class, a 93.33%, of observed teachers answered that they use it for different reasons. Among the answers given by teachers we have: some of the students prefer to work alone, it allows teachers to realize the individual progress of each student; it also allows students to become independent thinkers; they can express their own point of view in the language.

Some of the teacher expressed that when students are working individually classroom management is easier to handle and check the results of the learning process is more effective.

A 6.67%, one teacher surveyed think that having their students working on individual activities represent time consuming.

The responses given by the teachers mention the reasons why they use this technique showed a lack of knowledge on the theories that establish the advantages of using individualized learning.

Harmer (2007) mentions several facts about individualized learning. For example, individualized learning is essential in the development of learner autonomy; it is less stressful for students than performing activities in groups or in pairs; it allows teachers to respond differently with each student according to their learning styles and preferences; it can be a way to restoring peace and tranquility to a noisy and chaotic classroom.

Do teachers use group work activities to teach their lessons?

Graph 5

100.00%

0.00%

Yes   No
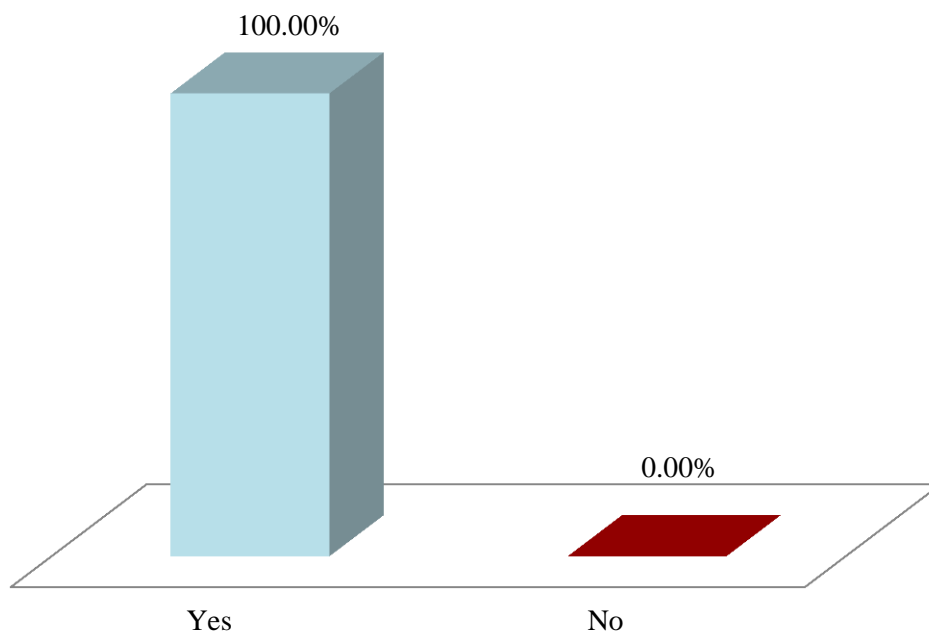
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire.

This graph shows that 100% of the teachers use group work. Nevertheless, they mentioned that they do not use it in all of their lessons.

All of them mentioned, in the questionnaire, that this is a very effective strategy for students to learn a language. They consider that pair work and group work activities give the students more chances to practice speaking; they feel confident talking with partners or friends. Students participate in the lesson much more actively, share knowledge and experiences. Students can realize what their weaknesses are. Group work gives the learners opportunities to really use the language to communicate with each other.

Even though educators are aware of the benefits of these kinds of activities, little group work interaction was observed in all of the schools visited. It is worth noting that the surveyed students wrote that their teachers use group work and that they enjoy working with their peers.

Brown (2007) mentions that in a communicative class, a lot of interaction should be going on between learners. That is why interactive classes should do a significant amount of pair work and group work, use authentic language in real contexts, produce language for meaningful communication, and practice the four skills of the language.

Harmer (2007) points out some of the advantages of group work activities. They increase the number of talking opportunities for individual students. In groups, students share different opinions and get contributions from others. Group work promotes learner autonomy by allowing students to make their own decisions. The learners develop important personal and social skills.

Teachers need to focus more on the facts mentioned. Their answers show that they consider speaking ability as the one being developed during group work. In fact when students gather in pairs or groups the four skills of the language are being

developed since they need to read instructions, listen to each other, speak to each

other and write some kind of report about the activity performed.

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

Graph 6

100.00%

0.00%

Yes   No
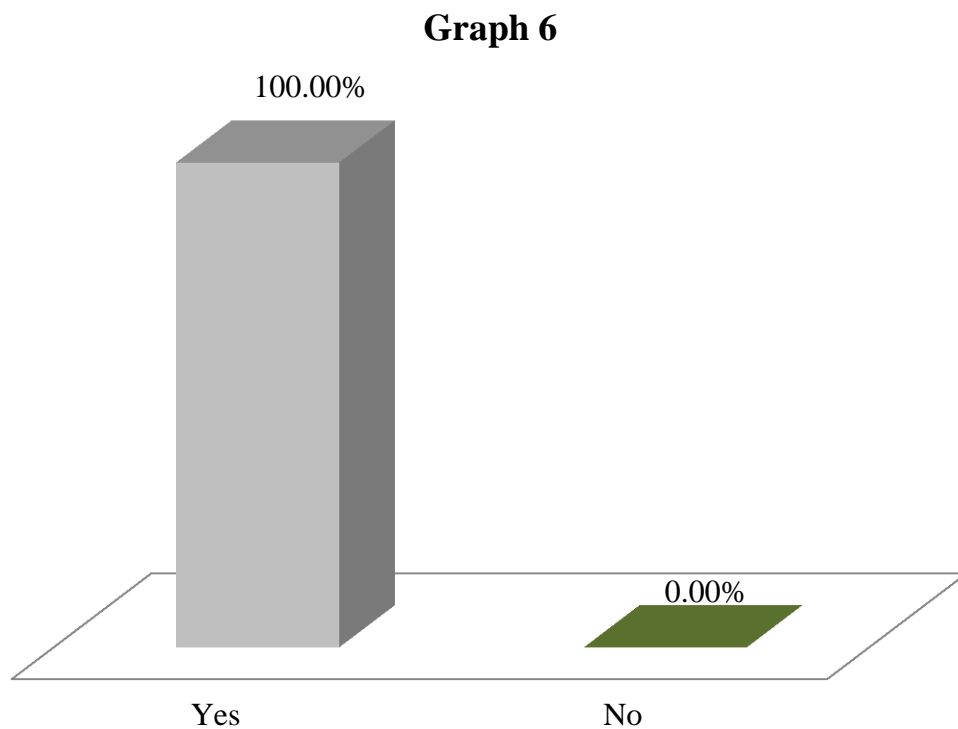
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire.

The results in this question show that 100% of the teachers use English to

instruct their classes.

The teachers' responses regarding this topic were that speaking only English

in class is mandatory. They have to do that, because students must get used to

hearing the language to train their brains into thinking in the foreign language.

Teachers consider that the most the students are spoken to in English, the more they

learn.

It was observed that teachers encourage their students to only use English in class. When the message was not conveyed, teachers used different techniques to help students understand, like using synonyms, mimics, pictures, paraphrasing, and circumlocution. Some of them also advise their students to use English-English dictionaries in class. When a student spoke in Spanish, the teacher encouraged the student to explain what he or she wanted to say in English.

Students in their questionnaires confirmed that their teachers speak in English most of the time.

Even though that the responses from teacher's questionnaire shows that teacher speak 100% English in class. During classroom observation, it was observed that one of the teachers used Spanish to talk to her students. At the beginning of the period she spoke in English. She read a passage from a book and asked some questions but none of the students answered them, what made her feel frustrated. She then switched to Spanish and spent the rest of the class time talking about behavior and discipline.

Harmer (2007) mentions that since English is the way of communication in classroom students should be encouraged to use the language all the time to achieve considerable progress. The author also expresses that the teacher is a principal source of useful comprehensible input, while more time teacher speaks English in class, it is better for the students. However, the first language could be useful to develop skills of translations.

English Language became not only the focus on learning but also the way of instructions. "The idea that the only language teachers and students can use in foreign language classroom is the one they are learning came about because of the Direct Method" (Harmer, 2007, p.132).

Do teachers plan their lessons?

Graph 7

100.00%

0.00%

Yes   No
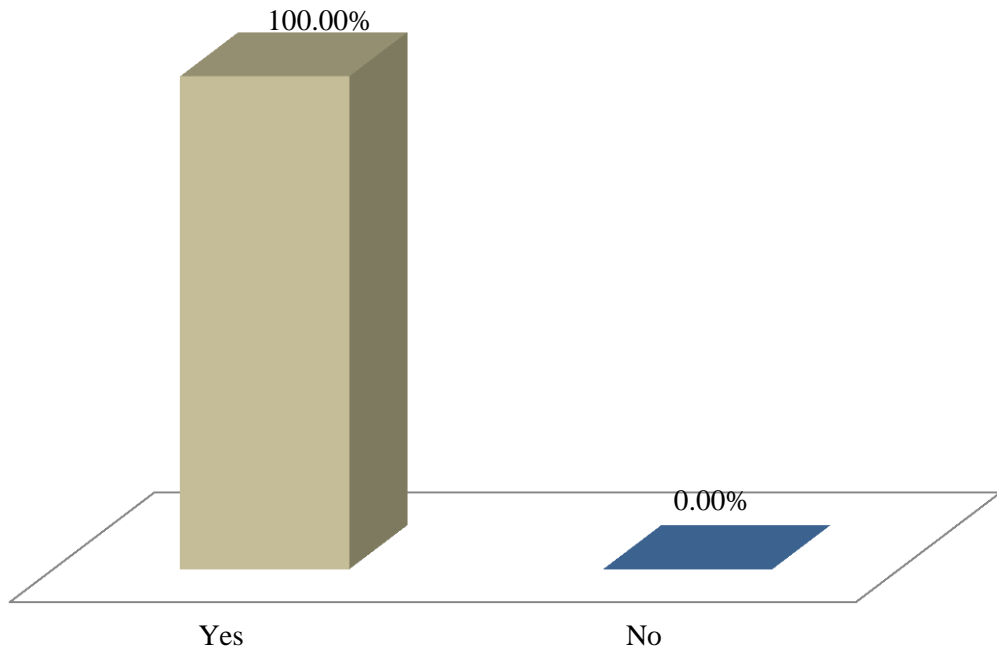
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire.

Regarding planning lessons, 100% of the teachers answered that they plan their lessons.

According to their answers in the interviews, teachers expressed that planning is one of the most important things that a good teacher has to do in order to succeed in the classroom. When teachers plan they are more effective and organized.

Planning allows teachers to focus in the principal objective of a lesson or unit. Planning helps to keep the pathway of what to do in class and set the appropriate pace for the lesson. Within a plan can be arranged the time for the different parts of a lesson, the contents, the activities, games and routings that will be used in the lesson. Additionally, planning lessons are mandatory in all institutions.

Teachers have to present their plans periodically to the coordinator of the English department in order to be approved.

According to Burden and Byrd (2007) planning gives teachers sense of direction; it helps them organize content; it encourages them to use a variety of instructional strategies and activities; it is necessary to incorporate techniques to motivate students to learn in each lesson; it meets some appropriate requirements; planning satisfies administrative requirements.

It was not possible to detect if the activities developed in class corresponded to a specific plan for the day because the access to lesson plans was not allowed. It was clear that teachers followed the activities that are in the text-books step by step.

Woodwards (2007) suggests that "…a good course book can give a sense of clarity, direction and progress to a student". "Written by experienced teachers, it can provide a balanced syllabus and ready-made materials".

On the other hand using only the textbook prevents the teacher from selecting a variety of activities that can be planned according to particular group interests.

Woodwards (2007) also mentions that a book does not cover all of the things the teachers and the students consider important. Therefore, teachers have to complement the plan according to the needs of their students. They have to use additional material that fits the tastes of learners.

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

Graph 8
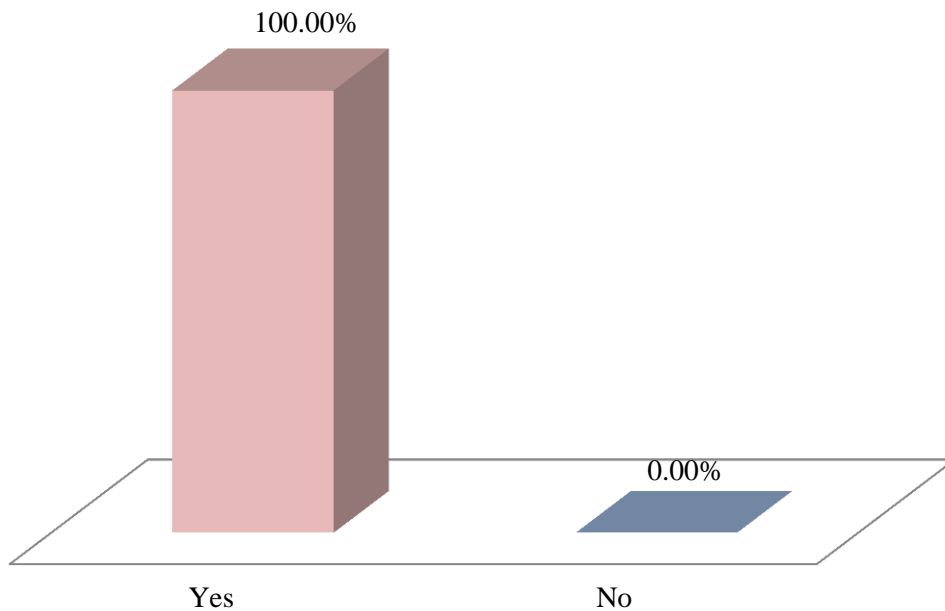
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire.

The results about this question showed that 100% of the teachers take under consideration the features of discipline, timing, feedback, and instruction when planning their lessons.

Teachers have different opinions about this topic. For example a teacher said that this kind of planning will lead to a successful class and it will help students stay focused on the topic being explained. He also says that it is important to consider these elements to plan the class, and apply them. Another teacher said that it is important to know the group in order to plan lessons. One more opinion is that without discipline it is impossible to transmit or acquire information. It is in general accepted by teachers that taking in consideration: discipline, timing, feedback and

instruction, when planning, help them to have a better performance approach with the students.

Most of the students surveyed replied positively to questions number 7, 8, 9, and 10 related to discipline, time, feedback and instructions respectively. They answered that their teachers control discipline; they assign specific time for activities and tasks; they give appropriate feedback about their mistakes so they can fix their errors and improve; they give clear instructions. Only one of the students answered that his teacher provides neither clear instructions nor feedback.

Discipline is a factor that should not be overlooked. Brown (2007) comments that with discipline, teachers gain respect of their students; they set the rules of turn taking of group work, respect among the students.

Shalaway (1998) mentions that effective use of school time involves several aspects, such as planning, establishing routines, paperwork, seatwork, classroom environment, using learning centers, etc.

During the observation it was noticed that timing works well for the teachers because the classes went smoothly with minor interruptions and distractions.

Even though, comments about feedback were not given by teachers; it was observed that during class instruction feedback occurred when the students made mistakes and when they were doing a good job.

The British Council considers giving feedback as an art. Positive feedback involves reinforcement, encouragement, personal development. It implicates appreciating someone for some good work done, and encouraging them to continue to do so, but it also means giving constructive suggestions to help students to bring out their best and to reach their potential.

In dictionary.com "Instruction is the act or practice of instructing or teaching; education". While instructing is a process or act of imparting knowledge in education definition; instruction can be given by teachers in class room orally or written according to the approach that is being developed in class. Teacher's instructions should be clear, concise and useful to students with the purpose to achieve student's understanding and accomplish the goals of the lesson.

Factors Concerning Students

Do teachers consider Student's needs to teach English successfully?

Student needs (age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation and learning styles)

Graph 9

100.00%

0.00%

Yes   No
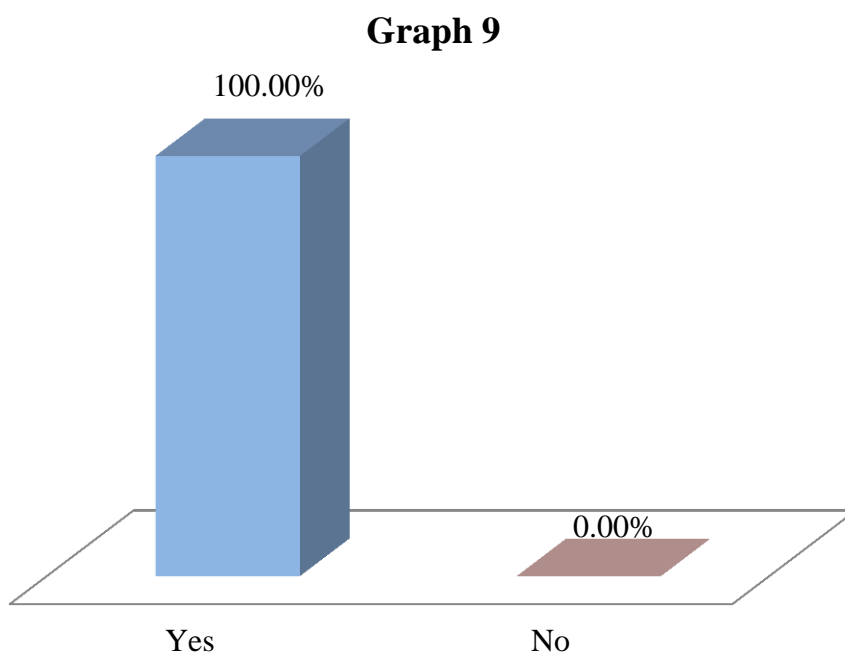
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

As observed in the graph above, the result shows that 100% of the teachers answered affirmatively to this question.

It is their opinion that every student has different abilities to learn and that this must be taken into account. Teachers think that they must know their students' interests, their learning styles, and their personality. The learning process is different

for every student. The students' needs should come first. Teachers consider they can even plan lessons on the same topic for different groups because the student's needs will vary according to the different groups.

Regarding questions one and two where the students were asked if they liked to learn English and if they felt motivated to learn it with activities such as games, group work and individual work, most of them said that they like these techniques because they enjoy the class and have a lot of fun.

Even though all teachers think that considering age, personality, interests, aptitudes, learning styles is necessary to have a successful class, most of the time they really do not select the contents of their teaching. They do not have the chance to consider these factors because they go by the textbook they use in class. It has been mentioned before that every group is different, has different needs, so, saying that teacher consider their student's needs is just a subjective answer to this question.

Nevertheless some teachers did made some modifications of the exercises that were not in the textbooks, to talk about topics of the interest of their group of students.

Schools put their effort on selecting a course-book that they consider appropriate for their students' age and level of proficiency, but we know that book contents do not necessarily have topics of interests for Ecuadorian students. Teaching a new language means teaching a new culture also, that is why it is necessary to teach around the new culture, but it is also necessary to remember that we have to assign the students to work on real life tasks that are going to incorporate the knowledge of the new culture with our culture.

In order to do this, it is necessary to apply cooperative learning in the class where the students are going to talk about what they would like to learn and what is

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their purpose of learning English. Teachers could give their students options from which they could select and then have some kind of negotiation to decide on the topics they will be covering during the year.

Brown (2007) comments that textbooks are material support for language instruction. Teachers main concern should not be choosing a textbook since that is not part of their responsibilities, but to make the very best use of it. Standard textbooks prescribed by the school curriculum can in fact be a useful resource.

Do teachers consider Student's level to teach English successfully?

Graph 10

100.00%

0.00%

Yes   No
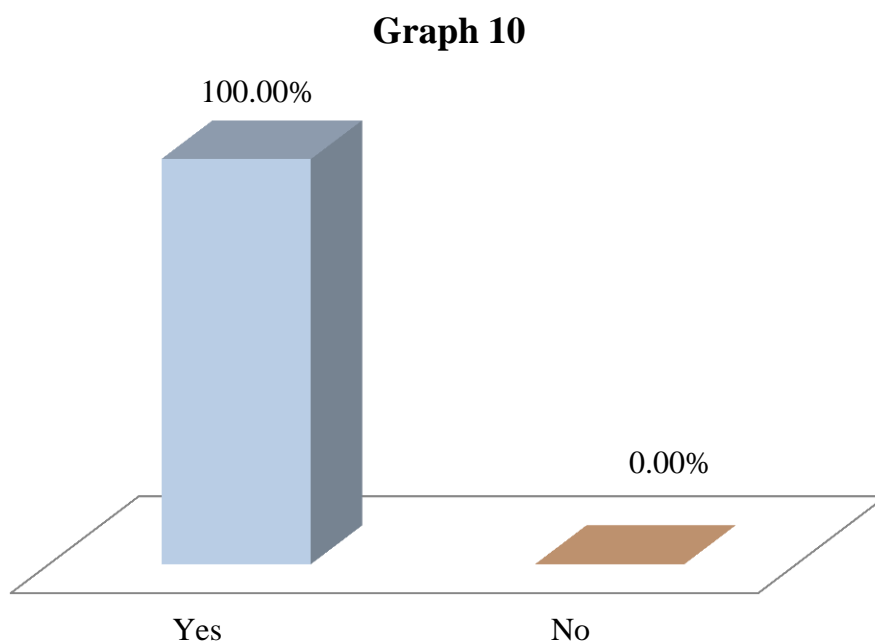
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Regarding to consideration of students level 100% of the teachers said that they consider it when they plan their classes. Concerning students, 9 of them said that the activities carried out in class are easy to understand while 6 students think the tasks are difficult. These facts give us information regarding their proficiency

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level. The ones that feel comfortable in their classes are in the appropriate level, whereas the ones that struggled are probably not in the correct level.

It was witnessed that almost all of the observed private schools generally grouped their students based on language proficiency: basic, intermediate and advanced. Coordinators prepare the proficiency tests and give them to their students to evaluate their knowledge of the language. Also they determined the proficiency of the students based in what they see in classroom, whether the interest of student is to learn the language or just to pass the subject. Teachers take into account that some students are fast learners and keen to learn languages. In spite of the tests results, teachers commented that it is common to find students placed in a certain level due to their parents' requirements or based on the students' request; it makes the learning process difficult for them.

According to Brown (2007) the appreciation of the level of proficiency of the students differs according to the institutions criteria. That is why he suggests having certain sense of relativity when the terms beginning, intermediate and advanced are used. "What is beginning for some may not be for others. Certainly the language-teaching profession does not lay unique claim to such subjectivity." (Brown 2001, p.110)

Additionally, Brown (2007) expresses that teaching beginners is considered the most challenging level to teach. Beginner students are highly dependent on the teacher.

In intermediate levels, students have progressed to an ability to sustain basic communicative tasks, to practice some minimal fluency, to deal with improvised circumstances, to self-correct on occasion.

Advanced levels develop fluency with a great degree of accuracy; students in this level can handle almost every situation. Students in advanced levels are more independent, the role of teacher as a provider of feedback takes less prominence. *Which is the level of the students?*

Graph 11
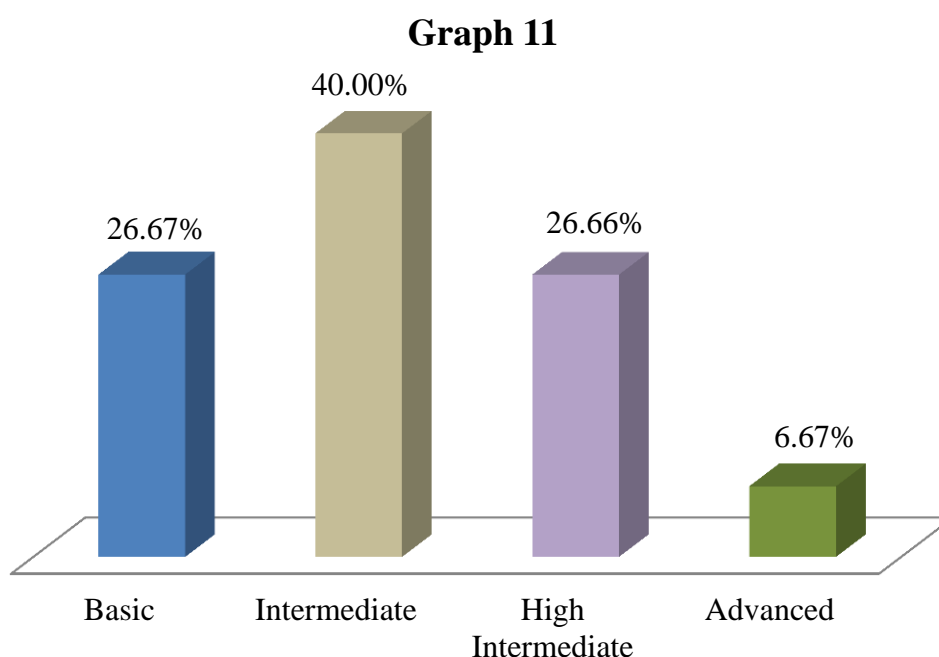
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

The graph above shows the results of student's proficiency level in fifteen different classes. Teachers selected the level of English knowledge of their students. It was their answer during the interview, but they did not say anything about the standards they used to identify students proficiency level. As it can be observed in the graph, their proficiency levels vary: basic, with a 26.67 %, intermediate with a 40.00%, high intermediate with a 26.66%, and advanced with a 6.67%.

The interviewed teachers indicated that sometimes, even though the students are placed according to their proficiency level, two levels can be observed in the

same classroom, either basics with intermediates or intermediates with high intermediates.

Brown (2007) considers that it is often found a wide range of proficiency levels among students in the same class room, in that case teachers are faced face with the problem of challenging the higher-level students and do not overwhelming the lower-level students and at the same time keeping the middle group well placed toward their goals.

Regarding proficiency levels of students, Brown (2007) expresses that it is usual to hear in schools the terms "beginning", "intermediate" , or "advanced" ; teachers differ among themselves about what those words mean; what is intermediate students could be considered beginner in other institution or for other teacher. So, certain sense of relativity must be taken into account when these terms are used. Therefore, it is necessary defining proficiency levels and adopting a common reference about what each level means.

In public schools this year a new project called "Fortalecimiento del Inglés", was launched in which international standards are considered to establish the level of proficiency in the English language. Such standards are based in the Common European Framework of reference for languages (CERF). The proficiency levels identified here are: Basic User level A1, A2. Independent users B1, B2 where users can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity. And Proficient User C1, C2 where language is used effectively for social, academic and professional purposes.

It is important to mention the main objectives of the project; this project will contribute to an enrichment of English learning in the country. The document number SENPLADES-SIP-dap-2011-655; CUP91400000.0000.372704) : First design, validate, and socialize the new English curriculum area, aligned to the

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), to tender new English texts aligned to the new curriculum, and give away free. Second, establish and implement the new regulations assessment (standardized tests) in English for entry into Teaching and aspiring teachers appointment in the area of English and Third, establish a system of ongoing training to teachers in the English department to ensure the sustainability of the project, it has the purpose to work in the professional development of teachers of English in exercise, and improving training in this career.

The Ecuadorian private high schools should use standard set of guidelines where the terms beginners, intermediate and advanced may be uniformly understood. And place students according to international standards as the Common European Reference Framework (CERF)

How many students do you have in this class?

Graph 12
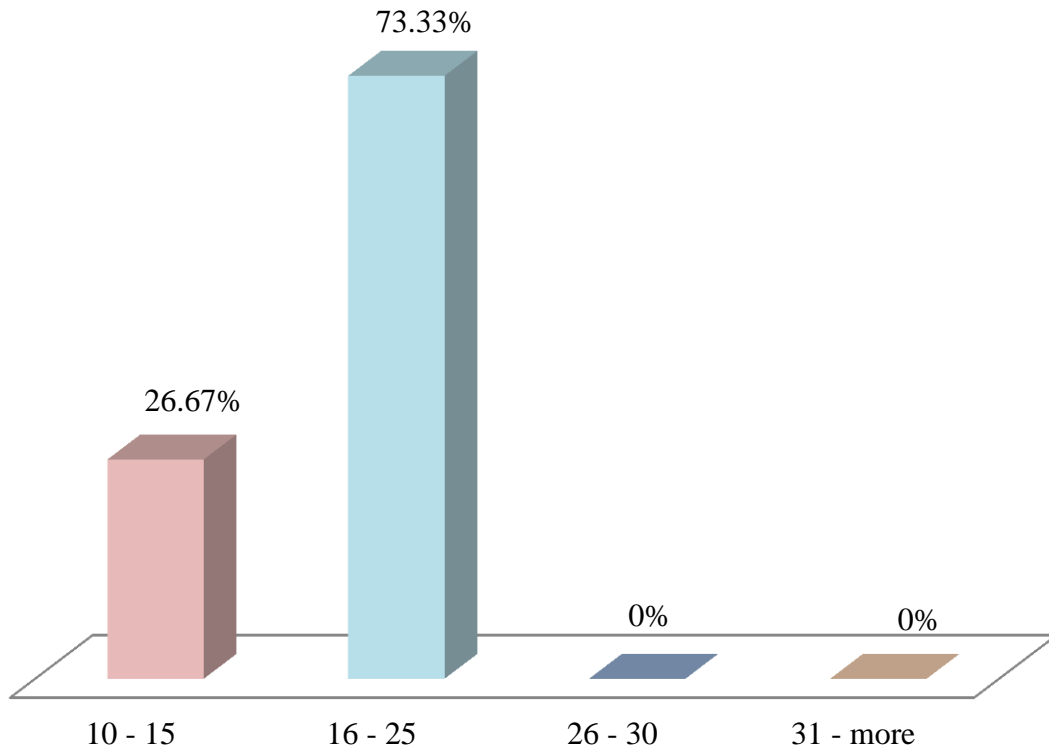
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Regarding to the number of students in the class 26.67% of the teachers answered that their class rooms are in the range of 10-15 students. 73.33% of the teachers replied that in their class rooms the number of students fluctuates between 16-25 students per class.

Students agreed on feeling comfortable with the number of classmates in their classes because they feel that the fewer the students, the higher the teacher attention time is on them.

During classroom observation, attendance was 100%. It was confirmed that the number of students present were the number of students mentioned in the surveyed.

It is important to mention that class size is an important factor to consider when talking about effectiveness. Teachers with smaller class sizes are capable of giving students individual attention which helps learners to achieve their goals. Nevertheless small class size alone does not ensure good education. There are other factors that should be well-thought-out.

Brown (2007) considers that having an effective class is having a good rapport with students, making class time interactive, optimizing the use of pair work and group work, giving appropriate feedback, improving quality of teaching, encouraging amount of parent involvement, having good school leadership.

"Ideally, language classes should be comprised of no more than 12 to 15 students (LoCastro, 2001). They should be large enough to provide diversity and student interaction and small enough to give students plenty of opportunity to participate and get individual attention." (Brown, 2007, p. 245).

Do teachers feel comfortable working with this number of students?

Graph 13

100.00%

0.00%

Yes   No
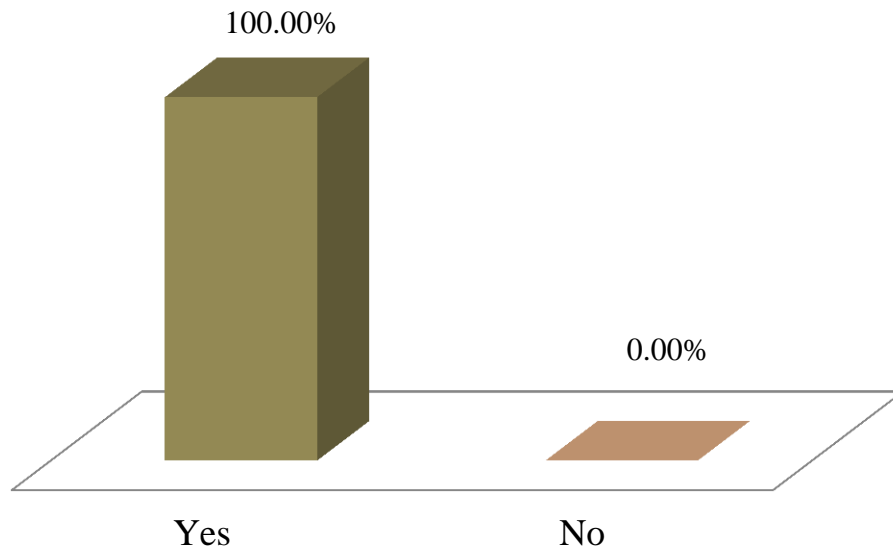
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Concerning number of students in classrooms, 100.00% of the teachers answer that they are comfortable with it.

Teachers mentioned some of the reasons why they feel comfortable with the number of students. Small groups are easier to handle. With small groups they have time to monitor all of the students. Having a manageable group of students allow teachers to work with them in groups or individually. It is a challenge to work with a large group of students. One teacher said that teachers should adapt to the number of students they have in their classes, even though they admit working with small classes is better and easier. Personalized classes are the best way to learn foreign language.

Parents generally believe that smaller classes benefit their children because students will get more attention from teachers. Nevertheless, the success of a group

does not depend only on the number of students in a classroom, but on the ability, effectiveness, creativity and responsibility of the teacher and student.

Working with small or large groups has its own advantages. In small groups the teacher can work individually with the skills of each student; it also enables the teacher to work on more activities. Large groups give the teachers the opportunity for innovation; the teacher is encouraged to learn how to manage time more effectively.

Dudley-Evans & St John (1998) suggest that the class size can vary, but success depends on the way a good teacher manages the class. A large class does not mean a negative aspect; a large class can be a problem if instructors are not creative enough to develop a plan that will deal not only with a large number of students but probably also with different levels of proficiency inside the same classroom. From a positive point of view, dealing with large class gives the teachers the opportunities for innovation; it is an opportunity to develop, in teachers, the abilities to manage groups and take advantages of the situations. In groups the role of a teacher is to manage time, materials, and activities, to monitor performance and interaction.

In contrast, Woodward (2001) describes problems associated with large classes: noise, too many people in too little space, and insufficient materials for all learners, not being able to respond to the needs of all students and the difficulty of organization and investing of time.

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

Graph 14

93.33%

6.67%

Yes   No
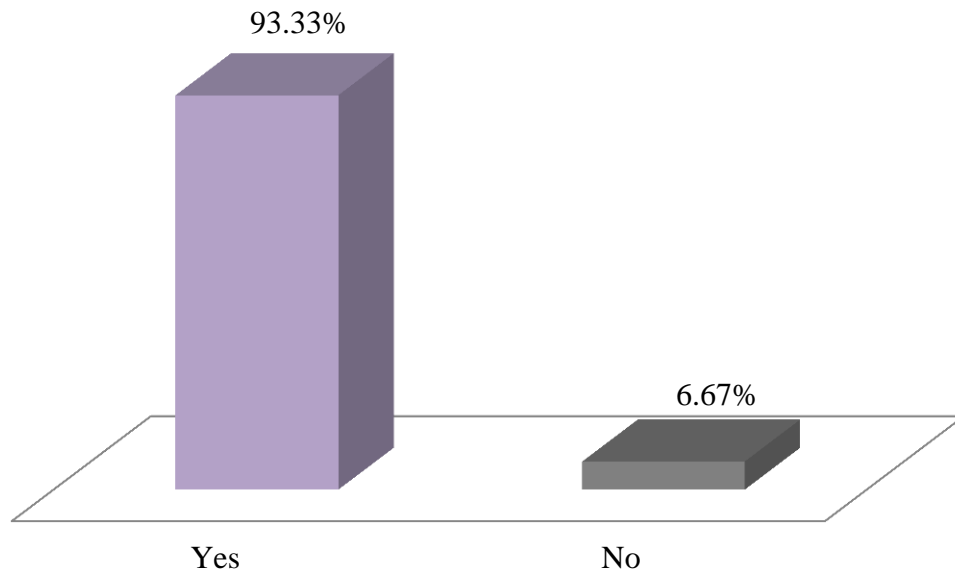
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

As observed in the graph, 93.33% of the teachers confirmed that they have adequate space in classrooms. One teacher that is the 6.67% answered negatively.

Most of students surveyed agreed with their teachers, saying that they felt comfortable with the space in their English classroom. Only one student answered negatively.

Teachers and students from the visited high schools wrote in the questionnaires that they have enough space to work. Having enough space allows teachers to diversify activities, and work in groups with games, role plays, and many different activities that help to develop student's communication skills.

One of the visited schools has a very small classroom, with a small desk for the teacher. There was not enough space for 15 students. The teacher and the

students could barely walk in that cramped space, making it difficult to plan variety of dynamic group activities.

Brown (2007) refers to the fact that students are influenced by what they see, hear, and feel in the classroom. If the environments allow, teachers should look around and notice if the classroom is neat; if the chairs are appropriately arranged; if the room has bulletin boards; and if the teacher has the autonomy to use them. If these factors can be organized, teachers should not pass the opportunity to make the classroom as comfortable as possible. It will help to create an appropriate atmosphere in which learners have space, equipment and materials where they can improve their learning skill and accomplish their tasks efficiently.

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

Graph 15
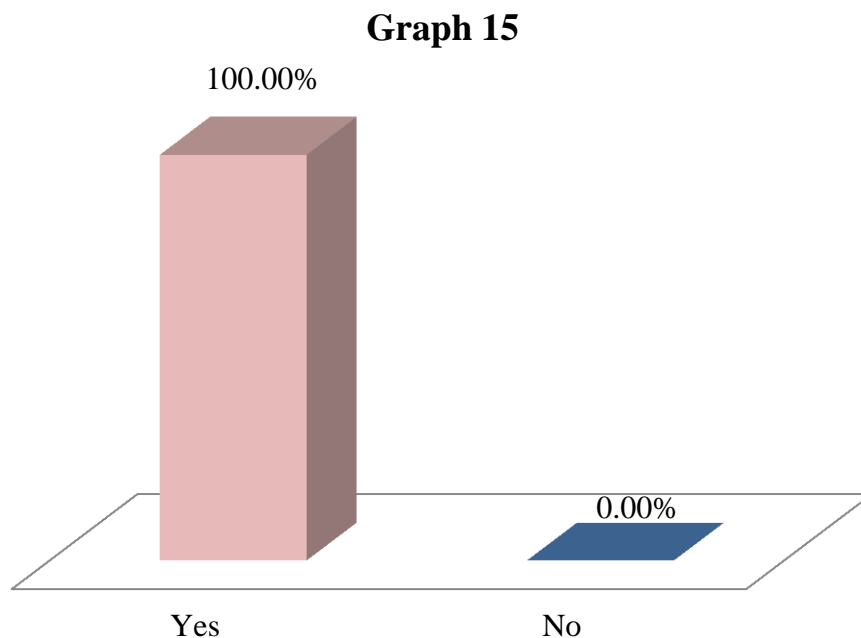
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

With respect to seating arrangement, 100.00% of the teachers answered that they arrange student's seats according to the activities they are working on in the classroom.

Among the reasons mentioned to arrange seats differently, as in circles or U shape, teachers expressed that they do it when the activities imply having students focus on a specific task. It is also necessary to change seats arrangement to break up the routine, and also to control and manage groups in a better way. Working with groups that are seated in varied arrangements is always a resource teachers can use to have students with certain language strengths to help weak students. Teachers think that sometimes discipline can be a problem when the seat arrangement is changed from class to class.

With respect to the students' opinions, most of them agreed on feeling comfortable when seating in arrangements that teacher plan for different activities in class, except for one student who disagreed.

Despite the answers given to this question, where teachers and students mentioned that they have worked seating in groups; during observation there was not any kind of group work where the students had to move from their usual space. The teachers' desk was placed aside from the students, generally in the front, and the students were seated in rows and columns.

It is commonly known that teachers prefer having students seated in the traditional column arrangement because they have a panoramic view of the class and can have control on discipline. The students see the teacher and the teacher sees the students. Students and teacher are arranged face to face.

Nevertheless, different room arrangements can help teachers cope with the complex demands of teaching. According to Burden & Byrd (2007) room

arrangement has to be consistent with the instructional goals and activities of the class; keeping high-traffic areas free of congestion is necessary; students should be easily seen by the teacher; teaching materials and student supplies should be readily accessible; students should easily see instructional presentations and displays.

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

Graph 16

60.00%

40.00%

0%   0%

10 - 15   16 - 25   26 - 30   31 - more
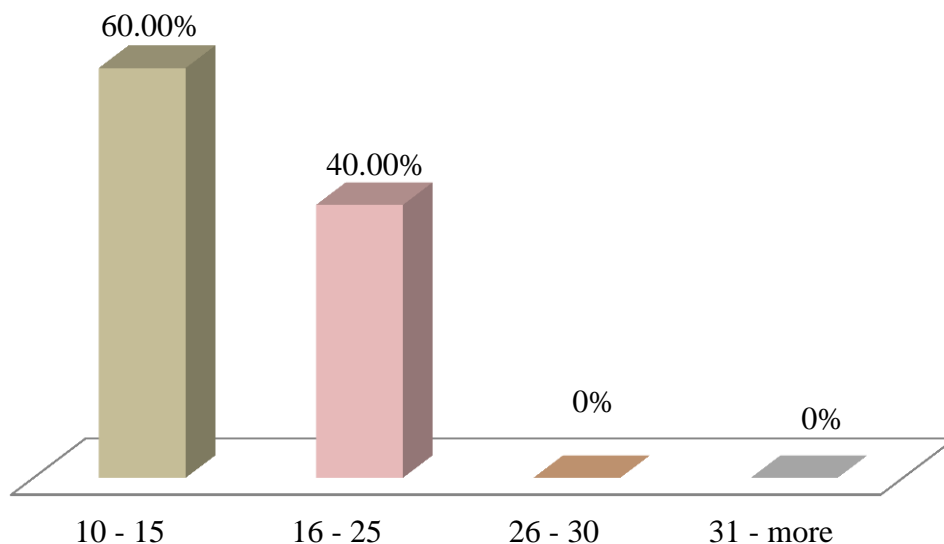
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Regarding the appropriate number of students in classroom, 60% of teachers think the range between 10 and 15 students in a classroom is the best number, because students can achieve better result; teachers can give personal attention, appropriate and opportune feedback, and monitor all students in an effective way. Foreign languages need more attention to details; therefore, with this number of students teachers can keep track of each of the student's progress.

The result that shows 40.00% of the teachers said that the range between 16 and 25 students in a classroom is more appropriate, because with this numbers of students, teachers can plan and develop group work activities. Also, teachers have the opportunity to improve class management skills.

Having an appropriate number of students stimulates group work. Some benefits of working in group are: Group work is collaborative, there's peer learning; students feel less isolated, they can share work load.

None of the teachers like to work with large classes. Handling large classes can be a challenge for experienced teachers, and even more for those teachers who do not have enough management skills to control discipline, to avoid problems by changing seat arrangements, or having private conversations with the students or their parents can be helpful. Assessment and feedback are also issues teachers have to deal with when having large classes. At the same time having large classes could represent advantages such as having more ideas and insights to learn from, having a better experience at speaking in front of large groups, better social opportunities, greater efficiency in use of educational resources.

The number of students is very important in planning and developing a lesson, there are some problems associated with a large class: the noise, too many people in too little space, difficulty to manage student's conduct, insufficient material for all learners, needs of all students cannot be satisfied, difficulty in organization and investment of time (Woodward, 2001).

Do teachers use teaching resources (TV, tape-recorder, CD-player, computers,

projector(s), smart board, and supplementary materials)?

Graph 17
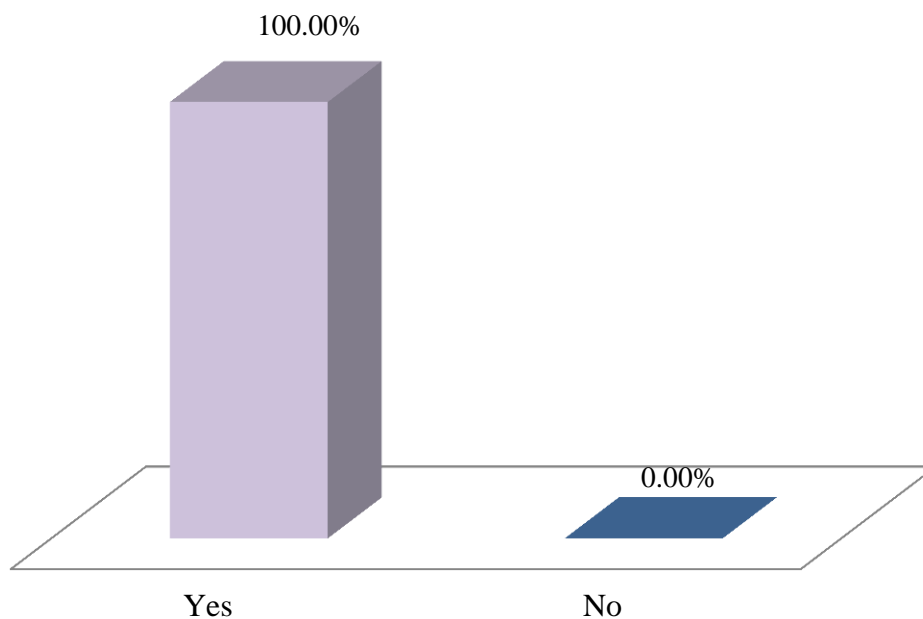
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Regarding the use of teaching resources in class room 100.00% teachers

reported that they use TV, tape-recorder, CD-player, computers, projector(s), smart

board, and supplementary materials (flash card, books), internet, online resources,

blogs.

During class room observation it was noticed that some schools have English

labs with computers using special programs and applications for students to practice

and develop the language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Other schools have their own computers and projectors in each classroom

where teachers can show their presentations and use any other teaching aids in class.

Additionally, a pair of teachers alleged that they have their own blogs where they publish activities, tasks, homework, tips for learning English, etc.

It was also observed that even though classrooms have projector and computers, some teachers did not use them, because they prefer to work with their books. They think good teachers do not need any of those resources if they are creative.

Regarding educational technology and learning resources, Harmer (2007) mentions different resources used in different approaches, some of them are: Videos, CDs and CD-rooms enhance a course by providing extra topics for the course. They make available authentic material designed for language teaching. They help learners with oral production and listening.

The Web is a technological tool that has become an important tool for teachers and students. Internet is an enormous source of information and knowledge that can be very useful. Internet helps students to see the topics from a wider and deeper angle and permit the students to connect with people across the globe through chat rooms.

The use of technology extends the learner centered methodology that predominates in ELT (English Language Teaching) and ESP (English for Specific Purposes) teaching. Technology can bring into a class room a realistic aspect of what students are learning. Sources in class room not only give students the support also offer motivation to learners.

Do teachers consider they have appropriate resources in class?

Graph 18

80.00%

20.00%

Yes   No
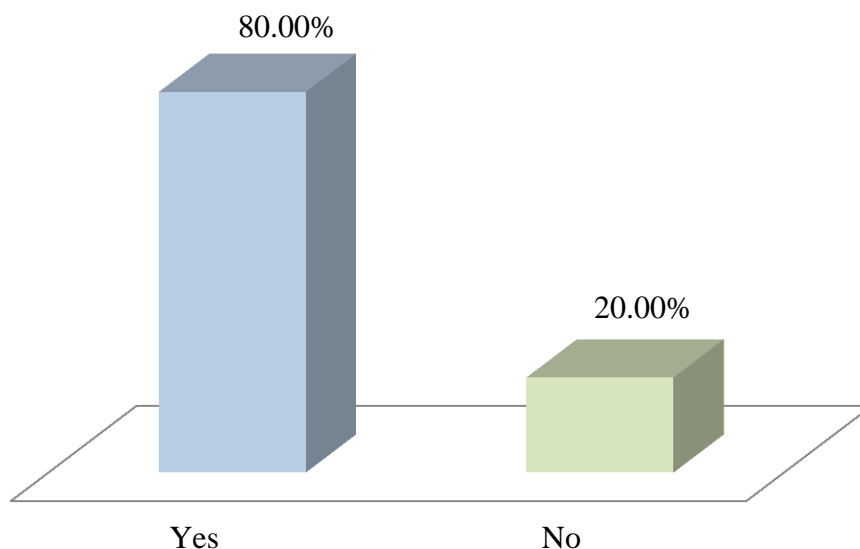
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Regarding resources available in classrooms, researched teachers replied in an 80.00% that the resources are proper and useful to help students meet the goals of the lessons. Whereas a 20.00% thinks that the institution should invest more in new technology.

Two schools out of the five were equipped with technology. Five out of the six teachers of these two schools, that did have technology, used it in their classrooms while they were being observed. The resources they had and used were computers, and projectors. The other three schools have special English laboratories outside the classroom where students go when their teachers take them for a specific activity to be developed.

It is surprising that 80.00% of the teachers answered that they have appropriate resources in class when the reality, according to the observation sheet,

says a different thing. This may be due to two circumstances. One is that teachers may not be aware of the principles of language teaching and their application in the classroom; where for language teaching and learning to be communicative, it has to reflect real life contexts.

How can our students be provided with real life contexts if technology is not brought into their classroom? What are the chances of our students to listen to real conversations, with different accents from people whose first language is English, if it is not through listening activities? This activity is not something that needs to be done once or twice a week in a language lab; it is something it is supposed to be done every day in the classroom. How do we encourage our students with varied activities to practice their language skills, if it is not through bringing videos, movies, music to the classroom? Saying that the teacher is the paramount resource of the class and that nothing else is necessary; it is turning back to a communicative approach, where the teacher is a facilitator, a prompter, a director, but not the main resource.

Woodward (2001) dedicates a whole chapter around materials and equipment available that stand out among others:

Different kinds of dictionaries, these tools are used to look for the meaning of a word or phrase, check spelling, check alternate uses and meanings, check etymology, synonyms, etc.

The board is another standard piece of equipment, in almost all classrooms you can find a board; they come in different forms, material and sizes. It can be used to do many things such as: to write instructions, rules; to add visual impact to a lesson; to provide a model for writing; to explain a word; to compile brainstorms, to write the homework, and as many uses as you can imagine.

The picture pack is a collection of pictures cut from magazines that a teacher selects in order to generate vocabulary, play games, generate dialogues, bring the outside world in the class.

The CD player can be used to reinforce the Listening skills. Students enjoy this moments because they like music a lot.

A paramount tool is the text book in which teachers have to do an analysis of its content and plan, based on the book, what activities and readings are suitable for their students. Teachers need to achieve a connection between book and learners.

Regarding useful sources, Harmer (2007) refers about the overhead projector (OHP) as a very versatile source in teaching; teacher can show everything that he/she wants, it is very useful for teachers who have an unclear handwriting, OHP offers the possibility to present an attractive well-printed script.

Does the institution review teacher's lesson plans?

Graph 19
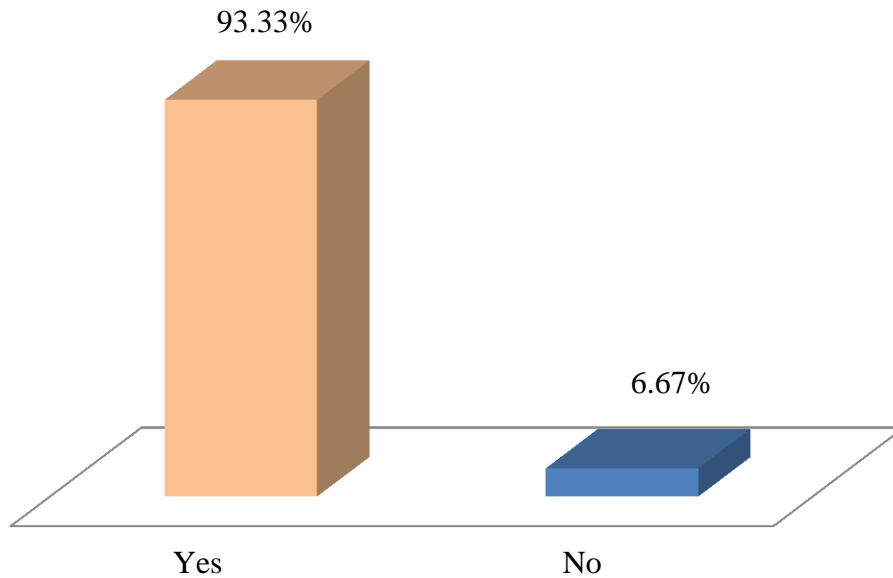
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Responses to the actual question show that a 93.33% of the observed teachers answered affirmatively to this question and a 6.67% answered negatively.

Interviewed teachers gave different answers regarding the frequency at which the institutions review their lesson plans. 9 teachers answered that their plans are checked once a week, 4 teachers said that their plans are checked once a month and 2 teachers said that their plans are monitored daily.

It was observed that every school has an organized English department which is coordinated generally by a teacher who is in charge of reviewing lesson plans of each tutor. The coordinator organizes meetings in which teachers' plans are received, and feedback is offered in a collaborative way among them. They check plans, discuss problems and together find or suggest solutions.

Brown (2007) states that collaborative curriculum development and revision warrants a collaborative effort to program development. Teachers and coordinators should be involved in the process of putting the programs together. Supervisors should be in daily communication with teachers who need to consult with them on lesson design, textbook adaptation, and pedagogical innovations.

Comparing the statistics with Brown´s opinion, it is evident that our private educational institutions are not paying much attention to reviewing teachers' lesson plans as frequent as it should be done. Teachers' lesson plans should be reviewed daily because lesson plans are a step by step process where it is decided what to do, what materials to use, and what aids to include. Nevertheless, it is also necessary always be prepared for times when it is necessary to step out of the original plan.

Does the institution monitor the teachers teaching?

Graph 20

100.00%

0.00%

Yes   No
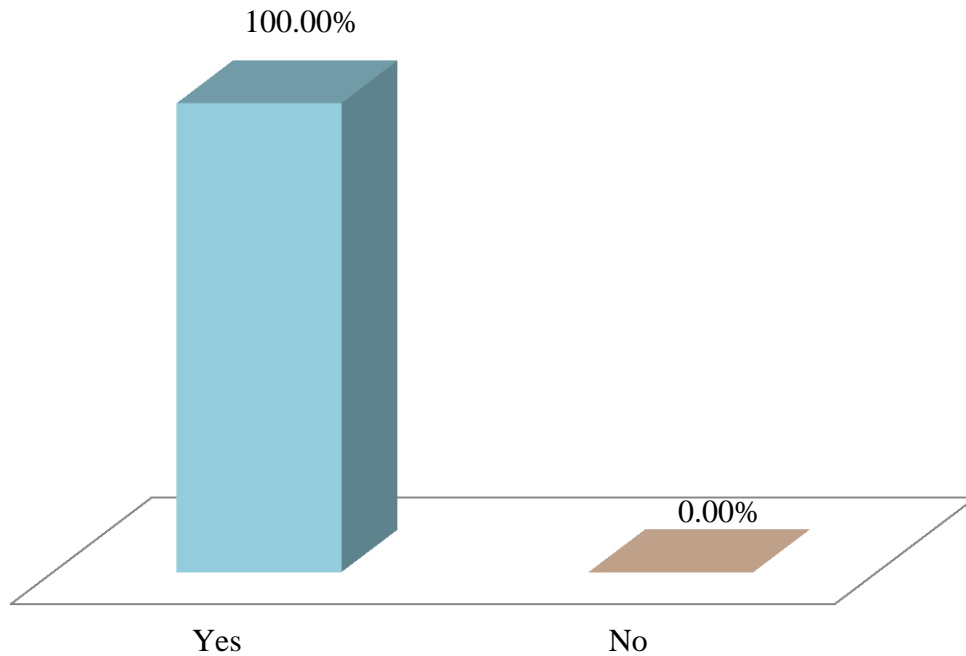
Author: Martha González Granda
Source: Teacher's questionnaire

Regarding institution monitoring 100.00% of the teachers responded that they
are observed by institution authorities.

Brown (2007) mentions that peer coaching is a process of collaboration
where peers give formative rather than summative feedback. Information is given
with the purpose of "…enhancement of one's future teaching, not as data for
summing up one's competencies as a teacher." (p. 503).

Even though classroom observations are necessary to be held in teaching
institutions, it is also necessary to consider that students and teachers have different
behavior when they are in front of an observer.

Mackay & Gass (2005) mention that instructors observe classes for
professional development and for research purposes. They talk about obtrusive
observers whose presence in a classroom may result in influencing the results of the

class performance. Teaching instructions may be influenced, "…preventing instructors from delivering the lesson to the best of their ability, and consequently, preventing the students from learning." (Mackay & Gass, 2005, p. 187).

They also advise to consider the Hawthorne effect. "… when observers are present, the productivity of workers increase regardless of whether or not there are positive changes in working conditions.   In observational research, it may be difficult to be sure that the observed classes are the same as they would be without the observation." (Mackay & Gass, 2005, p. 187)

Institutions should develop effective evaluation instruments for authorities and coordinators to monitor the effectiveness of their teachers' methodology and techniques used in class. Besides that, the coordinator should be the person who organizes and provides support and gives constant training to teachers and ensure an effective use of the communicative approach. Schools need to keep their teachers updated on new technologies, methods and techniques to have them immersed on innovative creative motivational ways of teaching English. A real change is necessary. Class observations are positive ways to monitor teaching but effectiveness will be accomplished with adequate support and training.

Conclusions

- Even though most of the observed teachers have lots of years of experience, they have just acquired a bachelor's degree which clearly shows that they have not looked forward to improving their professional curriculum. This lack of professional development does not permit them to satisfy the student current and changing needs.

- The observed teachers stated that they used the communicative approach; but the observation sheet showed that they did not use it at all. Classes were focused only on questions and answers based on textbook information between teachers and students; this situation does not allow students the use of the language in a communicative way as it is expected.

- Teachers consider students' needs: age, proficiency level, learning styles are necessary to have a successful class; nonetheless, most of the time, teachers do not have the chance to satisfy all of their students' needs because they are forced to work based on the material provided by the institutions and accomplish a curriculum.

- Research shows that private high schools have appropriate educational resources and technology to teach English. Even though institutions made efforts to provide these resources in each class, teachers did not use them. Therefore, teachers are not taking advantages of the wide dynamic and interactive benefits that technology offers in the educational field.

- Researched schools classified their students in levels of proficiency as beginners, intermediate and upper intermediate for English classes, but differences and inequality were clearly observed in student's level of proficiency from one school to another. Private schools do not follow a standard framework in order

to determine the student's proficiency level. It was observed that a student placed in an intermediate level in a school could be placed in a basic level in other school.

Recommendations

- School-authorities need to hire experts to train their staff, and also encourage teachers to be involved in their professional development looking for the achievement of international standards in proficiency of the English Language.

- Educational authorities ought to consider their teacher's curriculum in order to calculate their wages according to their level of education; as a result, educators will feel motivated to be updated, so they will constantly look for professional development.

- School authorities have to develop effective evaluating instruments for monitoring their teachers' performance. These instruments must be developed in a way that they could help to ensure that teachers are adapting their teaching techniques using a communicative approach.

- Teachers should make emphasis on a methodology that is student-centered, where instructors recognize the learners' needs and interests; it would help students to move toward their learning goals.

- Teachers and institutions have to be aware that new generations live in a technological age, and that they are stimulated by technological sources. Therefore, teachers' needs to update themselves, and use technology to teach their classes. It will contribute to promote the development of the language skills in their students.

- Educational institutions may consider the possibility to include, in their curriculum and plans, a preparation of excellence which might include training for international tests that could allow students to have access to Colleges abroad.

- Teachers should have the freedom to plan their lessons according to the real needs of students, not just following the books; they should apply different approaches to language-teaching without forgetting that the main tendency should be to use the communicative Approach to language teaching.

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Annex 1

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja
MODALIDA ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA
CARRERA DE INGLES
TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
YEAR:	

1. Which level of education do you have?

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

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

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

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

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

4. Which is the level of your students?

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

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

Communicative Language Teaching	( )
The Natural Approach	( )
Cooperative Language Learning	( )
Content-Based Instruction	( )
Task-Based Language Teaching	( )

Cognitive Academic Language Learning	( )
Total Physical Response	( )
Whole Language Approach	( )
Grammar Translation Method	( )
Others _____	( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )	
Why? _____		

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

YES ( )	NO ( )	
Why? _____		

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

YES ( )	NO ( )	
Why? _____		

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

10. Do you plan your lessons?

YES ( )	NO ( )
Why? _____	

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

YES ( )	NO ( )
Why? _____	

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

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

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

YES ( )	NO ( )
Why? _____	

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )
Why? _____	

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

10 - 15 ( )	16 - 25 ( )	26 - 30 ( )	31 - more ( )
Why? _____			

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

YES ( )	NO ( )
Which ones?_____	

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

YES ( )	NO ( )
Why?_____	

19. Does the institution review your lesson plans?

YES ( )	NO ( )	
If yes, how frequently?		
Once a week	Once a month	Other_____

20. Does the institution monitor your teaching?

YES ( )	NO ( )	
If yes, how frequently?		
Once a week	Once a month	Other_____

Thanks for your cooperation!!!!!!

Annex 2

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja
MODALIDA ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA
CARRERA DE INGLES
STUDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
YEAR:	

1. ¿Te gusta aprender Inglés?

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:

Muyfáciles ( )	Fáciles ( )	Difíciles ( )	Muydifíciles ( )

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 ( )
¿Porqué? _____	

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

SI ( )	NO ( )
¿Porqué? _____	

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

SI ( )	NO ( )
¿Porqué? _____	

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

SI ( )	NO ( )

GRACIAS!!!!!

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 3ro bachillerato)**:**	

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

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

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

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

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

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

3. Which of the following methods are used?

Communicative Language Teaching	( )
The Natural Approach	( )
Cooperative Language Learning	( )
Content-Based Instruction	( )
Task-Based Language Teaching	( )
Cognitive Academic Language Learning	( )
Total Physical Response	( )
Whole Language Approach	( )
Grammar Translation Method	( )
Others _____	( )

4. Which of the following activities are used?

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

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

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

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

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

7. How many students are there in the classroom?

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

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)	( )
Smart-board	( )
Supplementary materials	( )
Others	( )

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

25 %	( )	50 %	( )	75 %	( )	100 %	( )

TEACHER'S INTERVIEW

Name:_____

Mail:_____

Phone/cell phone :_____

School_____

A1   Where are you from?_____

Where do you live?_____

Where did you learn English?_____

A2   How long have you studied English? _____

Which subject was the most difficult during your major? _____

How long have you been teaching English?_____

B1   Which skill is easier for you to teach?_____

Would you like to continue studying? Why?_____

What are the advantages or disadvantages of teaching English in a

"non-English speaking country"?_____

B2   What are the main problems a teacher faces when teaching English in

Ecuador?_____

What social benefits are derived from learning English?

C1   What is the most important reward of teaching English as a profession?

What are the benefits that come from teachers staying more time in

the educational institutions? _____.

C2   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 ( )

Table 1.*Common Reference Levels: global scale*

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summaries information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and Independent disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment