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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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El presente trabajo de fin de titulación: Factors that affect the English language teaching - learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools realizado por Núñez Pesantez Milton Armando, ha sido orientado y revisado durante su ejecución, por cuanto se aprueba la presentación del mismo.

Loja, febrero de 2014

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DEDICATION

With a great-unblemished devotion and a fare pride, I dedicate this effort to my mother "Amada", who is the most worthy jewel of my soul and who always knew how to give me sweet calm and a huge source of love; to my five siblings: Victoria, Jenny, Alba, Daniel, and William, who encourage my daily eagerness and dulcify my life, and the most important to "God", the base of my happiness and the best feeling I have ever had.

This input of months of academic work of mine is retribution of what the society had given me by building myself academically. Anybody who reads this work will justify my imperfections and in silence will say that an Ecuadorian student planted his voice in every single page of this study, which must be opened and read many times as necessary in order to find some, or perhaps minimal English-language-educational solutions.

THE AUTHOR

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RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

La presente investigación tiene que ver con "Los factores que influyen en el proceso de enseñanza – aprendizaje del inglés". El objetivo principal de esta investigación es analizar profundamente estos factores.

Esta investigación se realizó con el fin de determinar la incidencia y frecuencia de cada uno de los factores que afectan el proceso de enseñanza – aprendizaje de la lengua inglesa. Este estudio también muestra y analiza las diferentes tendencias de estos factores.

Por lo tanto, como una contribución a ayudar a los profesores de inglés a hacerles frente a varios problemas que con frecuencia toman lugar al enseñar esta lengua; esta investigación hace un especial hincapié en los factores que causan dichos problemas y que por lo tanto dificultan la enseñanza del inglés.

PALABRAS CLAVES: factores, enseñanza del inglés, colegios privados.

ABSTRACT

The present research deals with "Factors that influence the English language teaching - learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools". The goal of this research is to analyze these factors thoroughly.

This research was done with the aim of determining the incidence and frequency from each of the factors that affect English language teaching – learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools. This study also shows and analyzes the different tendencies of these factors.

Thus, as a contribution for helping English teachers cope with several problems that often take place while teaching this language; this investigation does a special insistence in the factors which cause these problems and that make English teaching more difficult

KEY WORDS: Factors, teaching English, private high schools.

INTRODUCTION

Given that many students enter university without a vast knowledge of English language, which at the same time does not allow them to gain access to scientific and technological information, and neither can they apply to international programs or educational opportunities such as scholarships. This research stresses the need to investigate thoroughly the factors that cause this problem on students' knowledge of English. Hence, by means of this investigation we are going to get very important ideas to cope with this problem, and through this, we are going to improve the level of English of students in Ecuador.

Some past studies made on factors that influence English language teaching - learning process showed that the main three factors which need to be considered during all the English language teaching- learning process are: students, teacher, and environment. However, in Ecuador, not enough research has been dedicated to factors that affect the English language teaching - learning process in this country. Therefore, reaching the desired levels of English in our students is still being a field that deserves to be improved, even when many policies directed to improve this language teaching have already been created. That is why this research study is aimed to analyze the factors that influence the English language teaching – learning process in private high schools of Ecuador.

The specific objectives proposed by this study were: to identify students` English level and their needs in the classroom, to determine the classroom conditions in which English lessons take place, to identify the characteristics of in-service English teachers, and to determine institutional facilities and norms regarding quality education.

The Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja had taken into account the paramount importance that these factors have for teaching English, and under the topic "Factors that influence the English language teaching - learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools" it has promoted this research study.

Then, the results of this research study will be of paramount importance to provide information to all of the professionals and people engaged in the task of improving the quality of English teaching as a foreign language in Ecuador.

Some past studies made on factors that influence English language teaching - learning process are going to be described in the next section.

Sánchez (2010) directed a study in order to know what the factors that influence the English learning as a foreign language take place in Retalhuleu. In conclusion, the results collected from the surveys, among others, were that the little interaction in English classes, the lack of methods` application, too short English-class periods, etc. Finally, no limitations were found by the author.

Aduwa & Lyamu (2012) carried out a study whose aim was to know if English teachers often used instructional instruments and correct methods, as well as if the learning process was achieved in adequate environments. The conclusions of this research were that public Nigerian schools are too late regarding all innovating language teaching processes mentioned before, usually when these students enter university; they struggle a lot because their public feedback in language at school was poor. The researchers sustain that the best way of improving learning in public secondary schools in Nigeria, apart from conducting language classes into inductive environments, is the

implementation of new pedagogic technologies. No limitations were found in this research.

Fun (2002) conducted a research to identify the teaching- learning English process in Macau with relation to the useful way provided by the literature. In conclusion, the effectiveness of English teaching –learning process was poor; when talking about students´ achievement it was not strong in any aspect, teachers are too much engaged to texts, the class sizes are inadequate, the methods used are not varied and the curriculum they plan is too concerned with grammar translation. One of the limitations of this study was the fact that the literature review set out a too much range of factors which might contribute to a model of effective teaching, learning and achievements of English in Macau, but that need to be studied ahead.

This research study will benefit students, teachers, educational institutions, and authorities. The main goal of the English-teaching learning process is to make our students feel completely capable to cope with the needs and responsibilities of the world today, which again involves a good instruction by the part of teachers, authorities and institutions. In order to reach this goal, this investigation will show and analyze Ecuadorian reality regarding English teaching implements and techniques. Thus, this research will also contribute to improve policies, new teaching techniques, equipment, etc.

Finally, for future studies, it is better to suggest that an interview should be directed to at least 3 students per group. Only one interview to one student is not enough as to get reliable results. If only one student is interviewed, there will be no chance to realize that he/she lies or maybe misunderstands the questions.

METHOD

Setting and participants

This research was carried out in six private high schools; all of them were located in Quito – Ecuador.

For this purpose, five private high schools were selected in order to get three English teachers from each of these high schools. The process of selecting teachers was done in order to observe these teachers during their lesson teaching. However, since only four high schools had three English teachers working and while the last high school had only two teachers, it was necessary to look for a sixth private high school in order to complete the required number of English teachers within each institution. As a result, fifteen English teachers were chosen to be observed while teaching English in grades that were from 1st of basic until 6th of undergraduate. The ages of students attending to these classes ranged from 11 to 19 years old, and these students` knowledge of English reached just to an intermediate level in all of these highs schools.

Additionally, five of these high schools started classes from 7:00 am and finished at 1:00 pm, while only one high school started classes in the afternoons from 1:00 pm to 6:45 pm. And three of the high schools which had classes in the mornings had additional recuperation-English-classes for their students.

Procedures

In order to execute this research, many books, journals, magazines and other research studies were analyzed; then they were reviewed and summarized, and the information obtained from them was written in bibliographic records. In addition, other

kinds of in-place notes were taking while observing each one of the corresponding classes; these were also useful to be adapted to the literature review when necessary.

After that, two types of surveys: teachers' questionnaire and students' questionnaire, one teachers` interview, and an observation sheet were used to collect data in this research. Therefore, while observing each of the respective classes; one observation sheet was filled in according to the researcher's point of view.

Then, as the teachers 'questionnaire was applied to each of the observed teachers, another questionnaire in Spanish, was directed to one student randomly selected from each of the classes that were observed.

Next, using the quantitative method all of the information collected through the observations and surveys was tabulated and classified according the variables. Moreover, other notes which were taken by means of the perceptions of the researcher were also collected as a reference.

Following this further, all of the questions appearing in the teachers` questionnaire were classified in a chart that was divided into four columns corresponding to the four variables that were the object of this research. That is, the questions that corresponded to "the factors concerning teachers" were put into this column. The ones that corresponded to "the factors concerning students" were also put into that corresponding column, and the same was done with factors concerning "classrooms" and "institutions".

All of the information obtained from each of the questions mentioned before was tabulated and represented in statistical charts by means of percentages.

Only teachers' answers with "yes" and "no" were taken into account as indicators for analyzing, describing, and interpreting the results. Nevertheless, the notes taken by

the researcher, the answers registered in the students` questionnaires, the answers registered in the observation sheets, as well as the reasons given by the teachers for some questions, were also taken into account as arguments for the reasons of the results and their interpretations.

Finally, all of the information tabulated and represented in statistical charts, the special information taken into account by the researcher, as well as the information found in the literature review was described, interpreted, and compared in order to find results and recommendations afterwards.

DISCUSSION

Literature Review

The Ministry of education and culture of Ecuador states that "Learning and speaking English is essential in order to interact and communicate in today's globalized world for several reasons" National English curriculum guidelines (2011, p. 3).

Firstly, the Ministry of education and culture of Ecuador affirms that English must be taught in secondary level schools in order to get students well- engaged in cultures where the language is spoken and in those where it is expected to act as a communication and commercial means. Therefore, when speaking English perfectly, all students in Ecuador could manage the real possibility of being in another country where English is or is not the official language, for researching or tourism.

Consequently, interaction purposes are another matter; thus, the Ministry of education and culture of Ecuador is also promoting the English communicative competence to be reached by the students; because among other factors, the Ministry considers that it would be a system for conveying meaning and so it has to be developed.

Then, the necessity to align the actual English curriculum to standard international assessment tests like the European (CEFR) which is taken as a big reference for teaching English; Meanwhile, English is intended to be taught into the general basic education as well as in the bachillerato and higher education systems, to make the students gain access to scientific, and other technological fields of information published in English.

Finally, in Ecuador almost all people involved in access to secondary education, look for a high school in which English is best taught and accomplished (Utreras, 2010).
Teaching Approaches and Methods

Despite of the many changes and status that teaching-language methods have suffered along decades, the study of the different teaching methods continues to form a significant component of teacher preparation and teaching programs.

Given that every single language-teaching method contributes to teaching a language in a different and sometimes in an integrated way, just like the communicative language teaching, the grammar translation method, total-physical response, content-based instruction and task-based instruction do. These approaches are indispensable to know because they provide the teacher with a view of how the language teaching functions, and they can be adapted to teachers` practices based on their own needs. In order to understand the fundamental nature of methods in language teaching, it is good to conceptualize the notion of each method mentioned before, more systematically.

One method is the communicative language teaching, which is best defined as an approach rather than a method. Learners who are taught through this approach are to use language to communicate, which is very important in the linguistic context as well as in the social one; that is, communicative language teaching uses real-life situations that necessitate communication to learn the target language. Quotidian real moments that the pupils are probably going to encounter are taken to teach language through this method.

Then, its characteristics compile the use of topics which are interesting and daily to them, and because those topics vary, the meaning is thought to be gotten in contextualized forms, "Meaning is paramount….Dialogues if used center around communicative functions and are not normally memorized. Contextualization is basic premised and language learning is learning to communicate" (Richards & Rodgers, 2008, p. 156). Therefore, by remembering what Hymes, Richards & Rodgers as well as

the author of the publication of Cal Center for Applied Linguistics say; the goal of teaching a language is to reach its communicative competence through the students' performance. Another characteristic of this method is trying to reach the student´s fluency and interactions with others.

In The Grammar Translation Method, diverse techniques are used in order to get students involve into foreign literature, specifically the target one (Larsen, 2000). When students are introduced a new language by means of grammar translation, they will get almost a vast knowledge of its grammar; it means that by relating this new grammar with their native one, they are to find an easy way to write and speak the second language.

Thus, Richards & Rodgers (2008) argue that by using the grammar translation method, teachers are to help the language learners in learning other languages; as a result, they are going to slow their drawbacks down in getting that knowledge by means of translation. The most important thing in this method is that the students must be capable to translate every single piece of the written target language into their native one, given that communication in the target language is not the objective of this method.

On the other hand, total physical response attempts to internalize a great deal of the target language in the learner´s brains without any kind of translation, after that occurs, the learner will speak spontaneously the target language. "That's why this method is called like this; because of the importance it gives to listening comprehension" (Larsen, 2000, p. 107). Just as phrases guided to children, start by orders to which they answer with actions before they start to give speaking answers (McCarthy, 2001). Thus, by following these orders given by the teacher, it constitutes the least stressful way to

make the pupils learning better without any kind of translation. In this method, Larsen (2000) and McCarthy (2001) agree that the target language understanding or meaning is to be conveyed through the actions or motor movements which are asked by the instructor and done by the pupils; it means that the target language must be transferred in phrases and no word by word.

Another method is content – based instruction, a language approach in which the main input is the joining of language forms with additional matters that are often academic topics (Larsen, 2000). Moreover, McCarthy (2001) explains that it is a method referring to the target language learning. Indeed, instructions are arranged according the factors of information that the pupils are going to get.

In addition to the academic topics that Larsen talks about, McCarthy adds other three aspects which can possibly enter as the subject matter for content: vocational, social and recreational. While Larsen (2000) describes that the different topics or matters are used only for teaching goals and these must be constructed around learner's past experiences, that the target language is more successful to teach when it is used for transmitting topics in which students are interested in, and that students usually learn with authentic sources and activities, all are the characteristics of this method; McCarthy (2001) claims that this method is conducted into two principles: the first, is that learners acquire a language in a better and challenging way, when it is taught in order to know information and not to get the knowledge of a good structure of the language. The second, appeals the necessity of the students to learn another language.

Finally, task-based instruction is a method on which assigns are followed, this applies tasks that engage real topics for interaction and are of big importance for getting

the language (McCarthy, 2001). As well, Larsen (2000) adds that the goals of this method are to expose the students to a lifelike environment for using the target language.

According to the two authors mentioned before, the characteristics of task-based instruction are the following; it promotes the participation of learners in communicative interactions while doing their tasks, so the exposition to hear other language forms from other learners which are beyond the ones they know is great, then the internalization is produced again in a real life situation, finally, focusing on language development and not in its product is a challenge. Larsen (2000) also asserts that the tasks assigned must be upper the level the students can cope to; nonetheless, the instructor can use whatever language form he considers is going to support the students to understand the meaning.

Managing Learning

As Madeau (2003) stated the teacher could be the in and out class-lesson assembler; therefore, these two environments complement each other. In fact; it must be considered that managing learning starts by the teacher´s devoting to create an atmosphere of instructions within the classroom with the aim to produce these learned instructions outside this with native speakers afterwards. Besides; (Gower., et al 2005) think that providing pupils with the instruction as well as with its corresponding evaluation is a paramount deal, given that the instructor must know what the students´ weakness and strengths are: in this way he can give them instructions again to perform individual tasks in order to get students shown what they learnt from the lesson taught.

Therefore, instruction is the teacher´s main strategy to construct knowledge on students for sending them to apply that knowledge to outside contexts and finally to reinforce that knowledge by means of feedback. Gower, Phillips & Walters (2005) say

that when talking about languages learning, providing students with extracurricular work is valuable, since there is no much time to reach goals completely in English classes; the students can be send homework of different kinds to reinforce their abilities. Madeau (2003) argues that in actual researching we can find facts indicating that feedback makes the learning process of a language better, especially by putting emphasis in language goals, self- thinking, analysis, and language production.

Moreover, Madeau (2003, p. 149-150) also considers that "Time is an important resource for learning" and also gives an advice; "to ensure that no time is wasted, always bring an alarm clock to classes and give a time limit for working on tasks". If the teachers put this into practice they are going to have a self-conscious of what distributing time means and how to distribute this well, in other words; they are not going to fall in badly planned lessons and tasks. In the end, it is shown that an effective time management in conducted lessons is thinking in a good and well done learning atmosphere for students. That is; the main point here is to avoid wasting time and taking advantage of it for transmitting knowledge in classes.

Lesson Design

Lesson design is considered another valuable factor in English teaching-learning process, according to Woodward (2009) lesson planning helps to guarantee the topics and courses to be dealt right, these are done in order to support the teacher to mold the form, periods, and class patterns in which the teacher interacts with students.

Besides, Gower, Phillips, & Walters (2005) think that planning lessons is so important for the teacher, not only because they constitute an aid to planning; that is,

they are a support for the teacher to follow the class adequately in relation to time and activities, but also because it is considered as a working document and as a record.

Furthermore, Woodward (2009) asserts that lessons are done in order to be prepared psychologically and not to improvise in any way since it is supposed that the contents to be followed are thought and contained in the lessons too, and (Gower et al., 2005) agree with this; However, (Woodward, 2009; Gower, Phillips, & Walters 2005) all argue that these are useful for future lesson planning or when the teacher considers departing from them for forming a lessons` chain.

Similarly, In both sources it is found that lesson plannings start from goals settings; that is, the target aims to be reached from the lesson teaching, they both consider that the time, how long a lesson as well as its activities last, and what the materials and activities in each stage and the homework will be: all of this is called as the classes and people section of the lesson by Woodward, and as the procedure by Gower, Phillips, & Walters.

Thus, While Woodward (2009) shows five parts of his planning model containing language patterns: in which students learn about syntax and vocabulary, language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking, combinations: where little chunks of other lessons can be embedded inside the general one, the literature: where poems could be engaged and the culture in which something from the target one is learned, (Gower et al., 2005) display that the Materials, equipment and information about the students and the classroom circumstances are the two next parts of the lesson model respectively.

Nevertheless, Woodward´s lesson model adds another part "study skills" which fits to other of Gower, Phillips, & Walters; "approaches and activities". Both parts are

intended to make decisions in classes, conduct assessment and decide what kinds of

approaches are going to be used in activities and language learning; Furthermore, "other

subjects" and "anticipated circumstances" could be grouped as the last part of each

lesson model respectively, in these parts; working in daily situations and adapting the

lesson to unexpected facts are the main characteristics.

Class Size

Despite of the fact that the amount of students in the class is not important,

because the important thing is how the students` number is perceived by the instructor

according to his own situation (Ur, 2002), problems relating to discipline, assessment in

writing, interest, effective learning, materials, and individual participation are sometimes

produced in large classes. Yet, larger classes have their good points as well, like the spot

that in larger classes there is a great variety of human resources, here there are more

points of view or subjects to work with, and since there are often problems for the

teacher to attend everyone`s opinions or challenges, the students are to work together

more often, which raises cooperation in the class. As a result, there is a great chance for

the teacher to improve his professional abilities when working with large classes.

In contrast, at working in small classes, most teachers have claimed that good

environment learning is created and better pupil´s performance is reached as well as a

worthy professional development. Therefore, it sounds coherent to ensure that huge

success happens in smaller classes than in those with a big number of students (Flood,

Lapp, Squire, & Jensen, 2003). Such smaller classes favor the success in learning

achieved by the students, better discipline conduction within classrooms, and more

stimulation for participation from the students; Consequently, Instructors in classes with small numbers of students practice better directed feedback as other types of it.

Classroom Space and Sitting Arrangement

Classroom space and sitting arrangement are other factors to be considered in order to reach a well-teaching language process.

Undoubtedly, Dornyei & Murphey (2003) show that distance that exists among participants is a determining factor for student's sensations or feeling; too much space available in the class may be perceived as a sensation of isolation; in contrast, too little space may be assumed a classroom totally crowded and suffocating. Therefore, it is important to think about the size of the classroom and the activities assigned, to arrange the seats.

Incidentally, (Dornyei & Murphey, 2003; and McKay & Tom, 1999) argue that current communication and language transferring are well managed when different sitting arrangement is constantly done by the instructor. Consequently, the furniture location influences a lot, and it is recognized that a creative teacher, is the one who arranges different models of class in relation to furniture and space to conduct every single class. As well, they all coincide in that arranging seats in circles, semicircles, or in rows face to face, improve language interaction and communication among students; because of this, it is assumed that some teachers prefer to arrange the chairs in order to the students see each other's faces and not their backs, others like to take the chairs away. Finally, whatever arrangement the teacher takes, it creates situations in which interaction is the bolded thing.

To sum up, McKay & Tom (1999) consider that students usually like to feel that the space is their property; thus, it would be more beneficial to work in classrooms where the space is big than in those where activities are to be bored and wrongly conducted because the space is short. And Dornyei & Murphey apart that columns and rows are the classical seating arrangements where a disadvantage when not varying them, is the teacher´s super control over the students because interaction is mostly dealt just between the pupils as a group and the teacher.

Classroom and Teaching Resources

In most cases the teachers work with a syllabus in which they use supplementary materials. In the first place, Camps (2001) mentions the choice of didactic stuffs is guided through its importance for daily vivid situations; it is assumed that when using materials for teaching, there is a range of predominating content; in this content some grammar or vocabulary spots are to be the most predominating ones. Therefore, there are many resources for teaching creatively which teachers often choose according to their relevance, authenticity, etc.

First of all; Course books are used for assisting the teacher in the culmination of the course, they often use supplementary materials. Then, computers are also useful given that these are individual stuffs to be used; students enhance language at their step; besides, Ur (2002) affirms that books are the classical approach, it turns so helpful to keep some bibliography and allusion indexed books and other teachers´ guides. On the other hand, "Texts are not as good for learning a language" (Camps, 2001, p. 219).

Next, sources like overhead-projectors or video and audio equipment which are attractive, motivating, and easy to use, as well as posters, pictures and games for

younger learners, are presented by Ur (2002) as other supplementary ones. Also, Ur (2002) talks about materials made by the teacher like worksheets; he explains that these may be done because of factors like a necessity of variety.

Finally, Camps (2001) adds that the teacher can pull the use of realia like letters and newspapers to get the students produce the language according to real situations.

Classroom Observation

Different types of monitoring carried out within institutions may result sometimes as a positive aspect and sometimes as a negative one.

When supervisions are the main way in teaching monitoring, one positive point is the teachers´ training improvement; however, in most cases supervisions are focused on instructor's weak points that could result too negative in here, Mulkeen (2010).

Then, despite the fact that supervisions´ main goal is to know how instructors plan their classes, they are aimed to monitor student´s assessment and achievement too, it also could result very negative for the teacher because he would feel a big pressure when trying to get his pupils to achieve a good grade.

Next, Brown (1995) assumes that observations during the teacher´s lesson´s execution are other type of monitoring which can take the form of peer-observation or self-observation.

When peer- observation is taken all parts are benefited; That is, teachers and the observer teacher benefit themselves by the process when gaining knowledge about what to do and what not to do while teaching, and the institution will improve the academic instruction it offers after knowing about the observation; However, the negative is that

teachers feel insecure about being observed when carrying on classes which may result in territoriality problems.

In addition, self-observations can be conducted through video cameras. The videos recorded, can be watched by the teacher alone or in company of the principal to determine the strongest spots of teaching; Nonetheless, Brown (1995) says that the impressions perceived by the supervisor could result in employment termination.

Learning Styles

Richards & Lockhart (2005) think that these are singular forms of getting knowledge which are connected with kinds of personality; Furthermore, Robinson (2001) reports that these are used to classify an assortment of students´ different- interest assumptions. It is concerned with the difference that exists between field independent students (FI), those who need visual aids to understand the point, and field dependent (FD), those who see the language in a holistic way.

Moreover, Richards & Lockhart (2005) assume that some students like to work solitary, to whom Harmer (2007) call "converges", and others like to work in group; to those who like to work in group, Harmer (2007) gives the name of "concrete learners" or "communicative learners" because they enjoy learning in a social fashion.

Besides, Richards & Lockhart (2005) describe other personalities at the time of learning like students who spend little time in learning and others who spend much, or some who are capable to deal with many tasks at a time and others who develop only one, the ones who risk a lot in class, and the ones that need visual or auditory cues.

Also, Richards & Lockhart (2005) mention a theory which is based in Knowles (1982). The theory states that there are four kinds of learners that possess four different

learning styles (1) concrete learning style: interested in points of immediate valuable sort, but Harmer (2007) identifies this type of student like the "enthusiast" who watches the instructor as the starting spot for learning.

In addition, (2) analytical learning style is seen by Richards & Lockhart (2005) as the step by step presentation of the new language scheme, (3) the communicative learning style or the oracular student described by Harmer (2007), is oriented to personal aims and needs constant individualized interaction and feedback. Finally, (4) the authority -oriented learning style is the fourth style; in which the student strictly needs orientation for learning the language; However, Harmer (2007) identifies the last two styles as the participator and rebel, these are pretty different from (3) and (4) described by Richards & Lockhart (2007) because the participator is directed to group aims and rebel to his/her personal ones.

Students' Intelligence or Aptitude to Learn English

Intelligence and aptitude to learn English are factors explained by Amold (2005) as the different behaviors controlling the learning of English; these two are correlated in a way that is completely difficult to separate one from the other, Yet Harmer (2007) claims that some pupils are more successful than others in getting other languages.

Therefore, according to the (MI) multiple intelligences theory of Gardner, there are eight different types of intelligences. Within these intelligences are: Logical mathematical; the ability to discern numbers, linguistic; the ability to discern meanings of words, musical expressiveness, spacial; perceive the world well, body-kinesthetic; control the body appropriately, interpersonal and intrapersonal; direct the attention to other people and understand their own feelings respectively, and naturalistic; the ability

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to perceive animals and plants. Subsequently, students who have a great sort of learning capacities are to get better a new language (Woolfolk, 2010; and Harmer, 2007).

Alternatively, In order to have a more general view about the factors that influence the English teaching-learning process, five past studies about these factors have been carried out during many decades, and whose objectives, methodology and conclusions will be described in this next section.

Sánchez (2010) directed a study in order to know what the factors that influence the English learning as a foreign language in Retalhuleu were. The research was carried out by taking as a sample three institutions (high schools), from the official morning area in Retalhuleu-Guatemala, where the students from the third grade of basic, the principals of the institutions, as well as the staff laboring with those grades (teachers) were selected as participants. Only one questionnaire was applied for collecting enough information since the different points of view of all the participants in all of the chosen high schools. In conclusion, the results collected from the surveys, among others, were that the little interaction in English classes, the lack of methods` application, too short English-class periods, few didactic resources, overpopulation in classrooms, the lack of monitoring upon the instructors, and the teacher´s predomination within the classroom, these are all factors that influence especially the poor learning and instruction of English.

Aduwa & Lyamu (2012) carried out a study whose aim was to know if English teachers often used instructional instruments and correct methods, as well as if the learning process was achieved in adequate environments. The researchers used two research instruments for collecting data; 1) a questionnaire which had four sections and 27 items; it got demographic information about participants as well as information about

teaching strategies, teaching and the spatial situation where classes were given. 2)
Observation sheets; these were filled in by research assistants while observing each
conducted class in the 30 chosen schools of the six geopolitical zones of Nigeria. The
conclusions of this research were that public Nigerian schools are too late regarding all
innovating language teaching processes mentioned before, usually when these students
enter university; they struggle a lot because their public feedback in language at school
was poor. The researchers sustain that the best way of improving learning in public
secondary schools in Nigeria, apart from conducting language classes into inductive
environments, is the implementation of new pedagogic technologies such as; radios,
videos, computers and English- laboratories.

 Narayanan, Rajasekaran, & Iyyappan (2008) conducted another study which was
aimed to make an analysis about motivation, attitude and language anxiety such as
psychological factors at tertiary educational levels. The method for collecting data
selected five institutions of this level in which; class observations, direct interactions
with teachers and students, and test- material applications were sat. Questionnaires for
collecting data were used as well, the final answers of questionnaires were classified into
a scale running from 5=strongly agree to 1= strongly disagree; However, a pilot survey
was conducted before the questionnaire to get special feedback for the final one. The
final results indicate that these factors; attitude, motivation, anxiety and gender have
great effects in students learning English. It means that; for learners to reach a successful
English achievement they have to depart from a long-time exposure to the language, be
strongly motivated, to be shown a fulfilling attitude regarding the language, and anxiety
within and around pupils must be reduced the most as possible.

Rahimi, Riazi, & Saif (2004) studied the definition, taxonomy and learner´s use of LLss in four Iran universities. With 79 men and 117 women participating, information was taken along 21 days. Four- type- questioner tests were applied.

First, the TOEFL was sat to all participants in order to divide them into high, mid and low levels. Second, the SIL which contained 50 questions directed to Memory, Cognitive, Compensation, Affective, Social, and Metacognitive strategies was applied, the test takers responded according to a scale ranging from 5= never to 1= always. Third, Soloman and Felder´s learning style questionnaire consisting of 44 items aimed to recognize 4 paired learning styles (active/reflective, sensing/intuitive, visual/verbal and sequential/global) was applied. Finally, a motivation questionnaire containing 36 questions and aimed to recognize student´s motivation in general was applied. In conclusion, strategies of learners interact with many other factors, like the kind of learners and their contexts to learn a second language. When learners use strategies that are effective they are more successful in language learning. In addition, it becomes essential to adapt language syllabi to the application of the target one in real situations.

Fun (2002) conducted a research to identify the teaching- learning English process in Macau with relation to the useful way provided by the literature. For this research, 113 teachers from 88 religious, private, non-religious, and public schools were taken as reference. Firstly, a literature review was developed in order to get an overview of the factors, then, 3 interviews were applied to have essential issues, teacher´s perceptions, and to provide information respectively. After that, another questionnaire containing items derived from the literature review and interviews was sat. In the end, a survey was conducted to generate more reliable information. In conclusion, the

effectiveness of English teaching –learning process was poor; when talking about students´ achievement it was not strong in any aspect, teachers are too much engaged to texts, the class sizes are inadequate, the methods used are not varied and the curriculum they plan is too concerned with grammar translation.

To sum up, facts and past studies regarding to the English language field, demonstrate that factors like; the techniques or methods, resources, feedback and lesson plans used by the teacher, as well as the environment in which learning is developed such as the classroom, its size, its space, and its furniture arrangement, all these are of paramount importance to make the English learning successful or a flop; In addition, students` intrinsic factors such as motivation, intelligence, aptitude and learning styles are also important to take advantage from, when promoting successful English learning.

Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

The present section deals with the description, analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the six selected private high schools. For this purpose, a vast description will be shown from each of the factors concerning to English teaching in this research study.

This process will be carried out through a quantitative analysis, and in order to get it done, each of the questions in "teacher's questionnaires" will be classified into four categories corresponding to the four variables entering in this research study (factors concerning students, factors concerning teachers, factors concerning classrooms, and factors concerning educational institutions).

Finally, only yes/no answers from the teachers´ questionnaires, will be tabulated to carry out the quantitative analysis. However, in order to give an argumentative analysis about results, additional information collected from teachers, students, and observations will be used. This information is registered in the following questionnaires: "students´ questionnaire", "teachers' interview", and observation sheets. In addition, scientific information from the literature review will also be cited in this analysis when criteria shown by the results are related to previous statements claimed by other authors.

Quantitative Analysis

Factors Concerning Teachers

Which level of education do teachers have?
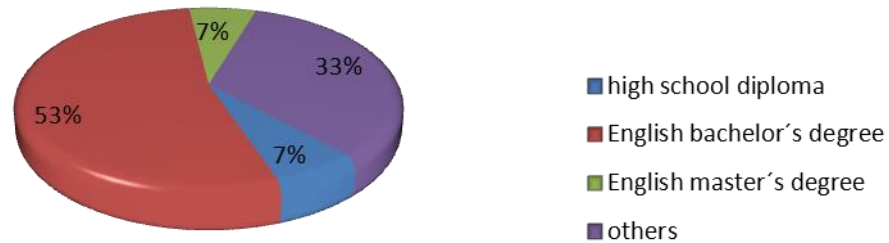
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

From the whole sample taken in six private high schools in Quito, only a 7% of the surveyed teachers has a high school diploma. It was observed that this teacher did not have the necessary knowldege to be competent in this language. This is the reason why the teacher could not always answer the questions from the students about how to form a grammar structure. Besides, the teacher could answer until question eight of the teacher´s interview, which means that she has a "B1" level of English. However, during this class vocabulary items were well performed. Thus, the observed situation affects the students in a negative way because they need a teacher with a higher level of English which helps them to solve problems in this language.

On the other hand, 53% of the population have a bachelor´s degree. During the interview with each teacher with this type of degree, four of them got a "C2" level of English because they fluently answered all questions. Three teachers got a "B2" level of English and one got level "B1" since they correctly answered questions eight and nine of

the teacher´s interview respectively. Then, all bachelors were expected to have a C2 English level, but teachers who did not get a C2 level because they did not have a constant preparation in the language, they did not practice much English in classes either. Hence, since most bachelors were observed constantly speaking and displaying good English in class, they created an environment in which students were engaged with the language, and students were also more motivated to practice English because these bachelors have a good proficiency of the language and a good way of teaching too.

Also, 7% of the sample population claims to have an English master´s degree. As this teacher answered just until question number eight from the teachers` interview, it was seen that this teacher does not constantly practice the language. Nonetheless, it was observed that during the lesson, the techniques and activities the teacher used were varied, understandable, and creative, but the students did not speak English in class. Despite the fact that having a master`s degree is a factor that helps teachers to teach with better procedures, it is not enough when language proficiency is not high because pupils need to imitate and learn good English.

Finally, 33% of the surveyed teachers have another kind of English Certificate such as; TKT certificate (teaching knowledge techniques), English proficiency, and certification of current studies in this area, as well as other major degrees such "engineer" which somehow make them able to teach English. It was observed that in the classrooms where these teachers taught, students were sometimes excited as their teachers spoke good English. However, teahers` techiniques and activities lacked of scientific criteria. Therefore, teachers` high level of English is a factor that influences

students positively because they feel more insentivated to reach that high level too, but it

rarely happens when teachers do not have a vast pedagogical knowledge.

Which method was used by teachers during the observed classes?
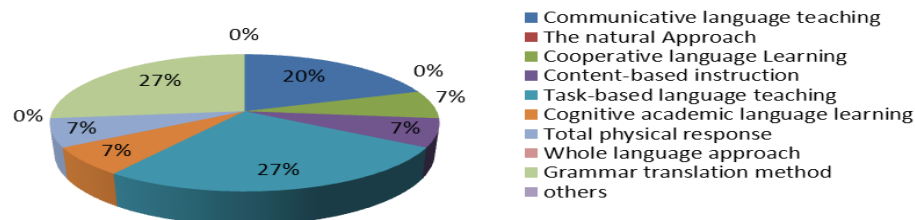
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

After each class, instructors were asked about the method or methods they had

used to teach English. As a result, they answered that English was taught through

different methods, being the most used the "task-based language teaching" and "the

grammar translation method". Besides, some teachers answered that other methos were

rarely or never used.

It can be seen in the graph that Task-based language teaching method was

answered to be used by a percentage of 27% of teachers. It involves four instructors who

said they taught English through this method. However, during the observations it was

seen that only three teachers taught English through this method. Within these three

classes students were observed to work in tasks that were more and more difficult. One

teacher taught English through some other methods; such as, grammar translation, and

communicative language learning as within this class students were focused in passage

translations and pair- dialogues. In all classes most students actively participated and tried to reach the proposed goals.

Furthermore, as teachers accompanied the classes with tasks, pre-tasks and post-tasks, group work, specific vocabulary, orders, and translations; it was then observed that these four teachers also used: cooperative language learning, content based - instruction, cognitive academic- language- learning, total physical response, and grammar translation sporadically. Therefore, teaching English through language - methods makes students learn through a more active way because they focus on specific activities.

In the case of "content Based-Instruction", as Larsen (2000, p. 135) claims "The special contribution of content-based instruction is that it integrates the learning of language with the learning of some other content, often academic subject matter." It was then observed that by having used specific vocabulary related to "army" the content-based instruction method was definitely used by the teachers mentioned above.

The other 27% of the surveyed teachers answered that they had taught their class through the grammar translation method. Again during the observations only some teachers were observed teaching through this method, the last teacher used community language- learning, and Task based-language-teaching but not the grammar translation method. All these teachers used at least one another method; such as, the cooperative language-learning after using the methods mentioned above. Most students learning in these classes expressed tiredness when working only with the grammar translation method, but they showed sureness when working in groups. Thus, teaching English by

using different methods during the same period of class makes students more confident and excited to learn.

Moreover, 20% of the population answered that they had used "communicative-language-teaching-method". Despite of the fact that teachers definitely assumed that they had taught their last class through this method, only two teachers used this method during their observed class. One teacher used another method (task-based language teaching), but CLT was never used. Again other methods; such as, the grammar translation one were also used by these teachers after CLT sporadically.

Then, 7% of the sample population answered that cooperative-language learning was used during the class, other 7% also responded that content-based instruction was the method used during the class, 7% answered that cognitive-academic-language learning had been used, and a last 7% claimed that total physical response was the method used during the class. However, three of these teachers did not actually use the methods they mentioned and most students in these classes were confused when trying to understand the tasks and teachers hesitated when giving tasks too. Therefore, confusions created by the teachers` lack of knowledge about language methods affect students because the aims which are intended to reach change of direction.

Finally, none of the teachers assumed that "the natural approach", "whole language approach", or other kinds of methods were used during their classes. However, during the observations it was seen that six teachers taught their classes completely in English. Thus, they used the natural approach in addition to the activities they often used. Other three teachers used the whole language approach, and one teacher was observed using "audio-lingual" method.

In addition, when some selected students where asked if they liked the way their teachers taught English and why, they gave answers such as; yes, because the class is dynamic, or no, because that is boring.

Students who answered "yes" expressed in their questionnaires that many different activities made the class dynamic. Furthermore, these students were pleasant when speaking in English classes. This all was shown especially when the teacher changed the way of interactions; that is, when interactions changed from group interaction to individual interaction, or pair interaction. Dynamism was also evident when teachers brought in new activities with new materials that made classes more interesting. Thus, as different kinds of interactions and activities are engaged with language methods, the observed facts tell us that the use of language methods is a factor that improves communication among students.

On the contrary, students who answered "no" were not constantly taken into account by their teacher at the time of interacting or participating in English; for instance, when the teacher selected a pair of students to display an English-conversation in front of the class, those students who answered "no" were never selected.

Do teachers use whole-group activities to teach their lessons?
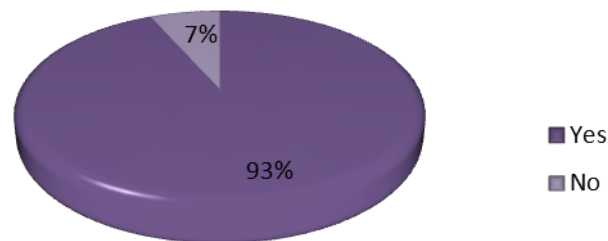
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

It can be seen above that 93% of the population taken as sample indicated that they used whole-group activities when teaching their lessons. Besides, during the observations it was seen that most teachers used this technique.

When asking all teachers why they used these whole-group activities in their lessons, most of them mentioned some coherent concepts related to the scientific use of this technique such as: "sometimes students have to follow the same activities", "it is important to encourage whole-group work" or "the same is sometimes taught in the same way". Thus, it is assumed that these teachers know what the real concepts and necessities for using whole-group activities in classes are.

On the other hand, some other teachers who used whole-group activities said that they used this technique because students listened and then learnt pronunciation, because they needed to work with others, and because that was necessary. These teachers used whole-group activities while teaching, but they have a lack of theoretical or pedagogical concepts and aims to apply this process. However, in all the observed classes listening, speaking and interaction happened just among small groups of students. All students were pleasant to interact with others and they showed themselves secure about working into smaller groups. Therefore, it is clear evidence that by using whole- group activities when teaching English, students are not encouraged to develop confidence in language learning just because they fear to express themselves with the whole group.

Some teachers that answered "yes" to the question were observed that they really did not use this process while teaching their lessons. Only two of them said why they

used this technique but they also mentioned concepts not acceptable to the teaching process, and one teacher did not give a reason. It is asserted that these teachers often use this technique in some part of their lessons or sometimes they do not know what it deals about.

In contrast, only 7% of the surveyed population responded that "whole-group activities" were not used during the lesson. Yet, during the observation this technique was definitely used. However, the teacher showed that this technique was not used in this class because that is "only sometimes" necessary to divide the class into smaller groups. Thus, the teacher already mentioned does not take into account improvisations when preparing classes.

In addition, most students answered that their teachers used a variation of activities that permitted them to interact with their classmates. In most classes, whole group activities were definitely performed; for example, one student was asked to read a passage for the whole group, and another student wrote an example of sentence on the board. However, in most of cases these students were very anxious and nervous. In consequence, whole group activities when teaching English affect in a negative way when students learn English especially by means of interaction with the whole class.

Do teachers use individual activities to teach their lessons?
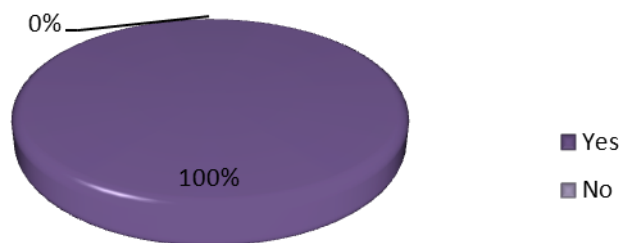
Author: Núñez Milton

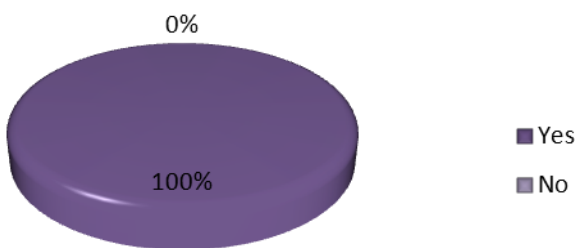Source: Private high schools in Quito

According to the graph above we can see that 100% of the surveyed teachers answered that they used individual activities during their observed classes. Most of the teachers participating in the surveyed mentioned that they focused their teaching on each student´s ability, knowledge, and responsibility.

Furthermore, this 100% of the population stated that by practicing individual activities in classes, each student is going to know what his/her strong and weak points about learning English are. Thus, students are going to follow at their own pace in learning the language after that. Therefore, individual activities make the students learn English positively because teachers need to know the individual development of each pupil, what the students have learned after each lesson, and what their students` levels of English are.

Then, it was observed that in fourteen classes individual activities were used constantly. Yet, fourteen surveyed students said that their teachers also used different activities which permitted them to interact with one another, which in fact was completely observed in most of these classes although in small periods of time. However, most of the time, students in these classes were constantly evolved and tested in individual activities like "essay writing" and "descriptions". Most of the students felt confident when performing their tasks alone, and they asked for indications to the teacher. There is clear evidence that by knowing students` knowledge and levels, teachers often think how to improve lessons and activities for the next class.

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

0%

100%

■ Yes
■ No

Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

From the surveyed population, all teachers responded that they used group-work activities within their lessons. Again it was stated by fourteen students that their teachers often used varied activities which permitted them to interact with their classmates. However, during the lessons it was observed that only six teachers used group-work activities. While working in smaller groups in these classes, most of the students were very active and felt free when expressing an opinion. Therefore, group work activities during English classes cause learners feel more confident, active, and free when expressing their ideas and opinions.

Then, as all teachers claimed that they often used group-work activities during their classes, it was shown that they do this to promote interaction, leadership and cooperation; in fact, that was what most of the teachers expressed. Therefore, since it is impossible to practice the same teaching techniques in every single lesson, teachers who often use this activity as well as the ones who do not, they practice this by applying what Larsen (2000, p. 147) states "The teacher needs to seek ways of knowing how involved the students are in the process."

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

27%

73%

■Yes
■No
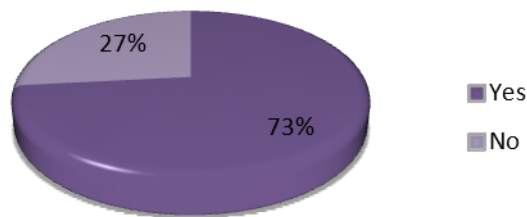
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

A 73% of the surveyed population answered that they used English most of the time, and 27% of the population answered that they did not use English very often while teaching their lessons.

Pursuing this further, during the observations carried out during class, it was easy to see that from the eleven teachers that answered they used English most of the time, only nine of them used 100% of English when teaching while one teacher used 75% of English. In these classes, it was observed that students were very attentive to their teacher's pronunciation of words and then they repeated those words silently for themselves. Therefore, the teachers` usage of English in these percentages is a positive matter since they [the students] are to receive a guide for imitating sounds of pronunciation and they are to develop the language through a good way.

Then, one teacher used 25% of English in classes because English was used just in less than a half of the situations while the other situations were conducted in Spanish; for example, only the first time instructions were given in English; then, three more times they were given in Spanish. Therefore, using more Spanish than English in classes brings a great negative effect on students because students are supposed to learn how to

translate every single word from English to their native tongue, which is often the worst enemy for understanding a language.

On the other hand, it was observed that from the four teachers that said they did not use English most of the time in their lessons, three of them used 25% of the language while teaching, and only one teacher used English a half of the time and Spanish the other half of the lesson, which means that this last teacher often uses a 50% of English to teach classes. The students in these classes, where English was not the pervasive language, did not show interest for learning the language. In consequence, a poor use of English from the teachers affects students because it causes them to get uninterested in learning to speak this language.

In addition, from the answers given by students that were selected for a questionnaire it was known that: ten students answered that their teachers used English most of the time, and five students said that their teachers did not use English most of the time. Thus, teachers usually use English in classes but they also consider that there are situations in which English is not necessary to be used, like in explanations about abstract meanings or words which are not related to the subject or academic ambit. Hence, this affects students when internalizing the language because they need to be exposed to this language even when English is not taught as a subject.

Do teachers plan their lessons?

0%

100%

Yes

No
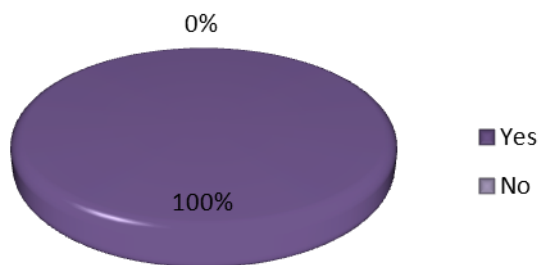
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

It can be observed in the graph above that all teachers manifested that they planned their lessons. Also, these teachers indicated that they did this process since the institution had demanded it in order to know how teachers are executing their English-lesson chains.

In the light of the observed classes, it was clear that most of the parts that a good lesson plan contains were applied. Teachers usually applied in classes: warm-up activities, topic, introduction, guided or individual practices, materials and resources, time, and objectives.

Firstly, warm-up activities were carried out in five observed classes, and the introduction of the new topic was observed in five classes too. Despite of the fact that the number of classes with application of warm-up activities as well as new-topic introductions is relatively low, it was seen that these two lesson-parts are constantly applied by the teachers because the "lesson topic" sometimes needs the help of warm-up activities or the help of the new-topic introduction. All this was shown since the beginning of the lessons that teachers taught since each of these lessons started with dynamics such "hangman", and explanations of the topics such a description of the

present progressive which made the students get an idea of the lesson. According to the observed, starting a class with introductions and warm-up activities encourage students to learn the new class because they are previously prepared to understand the lesson.

Guided and individual practices were also conducted by all teachers. Even when it was not allowed to see any teachers` lesson plans, all teachers really know how and why to plan their lessons. Different materials and resources were constantly used in eleven observed classes, and these also were interchangeable by the time of executing each proposed task and activity. Students in all these classes demonstrated an understanding of the language when resources like flash cards or realia were used in combination with guided or individual practice. Therefore, using different resources with guided and individual practices helps learners to understand and produce the language in a concrete form.

Following this further, time was adequately used in almost all the cases: exactly thirteen teachers completed each of their proposed tasks and activities after a certain period of time which was previously mentioned by them. As these teachers mentioned during the interview that "planning lessons" is completely necessary since they need to manage the time, tasks and activities, and because most of them directed their eyes to their clocks or watches constantly, we can restate that the following advice : to get completely sure that nothing related to the time of the lesson is wasted, the teacher must bring a clock and set certain minutes for completing an activity (B.M., 2003, p. 150) was almost always taken into account within these classes.

Then, Review, assessment, and feedback were often followed correctly in classes. Therefore, the meaning of lesson planning that private-English teachers give itself in

Ecuador is completely well understood in the light of a sequence that they [the teachers] plan to know, and to be supported from when teaching a lesson.

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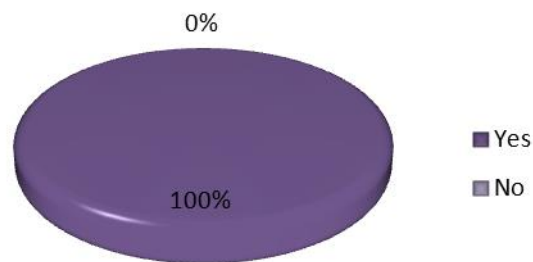
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

It can be seen above that 100% of the surveyed population answered that they considered aspects such as discipline, timing, feedback, and instruction to teach their lessons.

Moreover, during the observations it was seen that almost all teachers controlled discipline when teaching their lessons because as teachers they must know that discipline is part of an integral education. Most of the teachers expressed that no matter what kind of subject is being departed; discipline must be controlled by all teachers. However, the only teacher who was observed not to consider discipline, he was upset about not being able to control the class. Thus, certain techniques to control discipline are not constantly applied in a good fashion within this last classroom.

Yet, most of the classes were under control and most of the teachers were able to teach the language as their students caught the knowledge without stress. Thus, according to the observed situation, managing discipline within classes is a factor that helps learners to reduce stress and to catch the language easier.

Despite the fact that all teachers said that they considered feedback when teaching their lessons, only eleven teachers were observed to apply this factor within classes. On the contrary, in four classes feedback was not really applied at the end or during the class because it was observed that time was not plenty enough to finish the lesson, and individual feedback often created a discipline disruption. Students who did not understand the class were not individually helped by the teacher. Thus, when feedback is not applied while teaching English or after the lesson, it becomes a contribution for students to have many gaps in their language knowledge.

After asking the same fifteen students weather their teachers explained them what their mistakes are and what they should do for getting better, only seven answered yes, and eight answered no. Nonetheless, according to the students` answers to this question, in almost 50% of the cases feedback is overlooked by teachers and students also expressed that because of this, the next lessons seem to be more and more difficult. However, students who received feedback showed themselves more secure about their learning. Thus, constant feedback is a factor that is positive for the teacher to ensure that lessons are well-understood before advancing with another class as well as for keeping track of the lessons already taught.

Consequently, all teachers managed the subject activities perfectly. Of course, they showed that they previously thought about those activities when planning their

lessons. Then, students were also asked if their English -teacher gave them enough time to finish the proposed activities and thirteen students said yes while two students said no. As a result, English-teachers of private high schools often manage all their activities in a good way,

Finally, it was observed that time was perfectly managed by fourteen teachers, and the teacher who did not manage this well, he does not distribute well the time for the activities. Also, the objectives in this last case were not engaged with the time either. In addition, from the surveyed students, twelve said that their English-teachers managed the time well while only three said that their English-teachers did not perfectly manage the time.

<p style="text-align:center">Factors Concerning Students</p>

Do teachers consider students` needs to teach English successfully?

Students` needs (age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation, and learning styles).
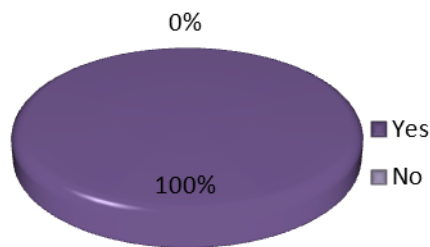
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

We can observe above that 100% of the surveyed teachers answered that they considered students' needs such as; age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation and learning styles when teaching their lessons.

All teachers argued that they considered all the factors mentioned above when teaching their lessons. Teachers expressed that their students would learn more if they focus their attention to age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation, and learning styles. In fact, English is taught better to the students by applying all these factors. Thus, when considering these features, the teacher will apply the correct strategy and activities to develop a class and students will catch all of the contents satisfactorily.

During the observations most of teachers really considered their students' needs when teaching, that was observed because different activities were centered in the application of different visual, audio, audio visual, realia (especially environment sources and media) and computers. Most of the students within each classroom were so attentive and active to the lesson and to the interaction; in other words, they did not often get bored. Then, the fact that teachers constantly focus their attention to their students` needs, especially in terms of different sources which are appropriate for pupils to learn the language is a positive matter that gets students more motivated to learn.

However, it was possible to observe that in only one class the students get bored because the teacher did not pay attention to students with a low level of English. The teacher just concentrated on students that spoke English better. Therefore, that teacher did not consider the students´ interests, needs, and levels.

Following this further, the surveyed teachers expressed that everything related to the students, especially those factors like age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation, and learning styles are very important when teaching English.

When some students were asked if they liked English, most of them answered "yes" and few answered "no". Students often got interested in learning through different

ways; for instance, some students were more interested when learning with games, and other students were more interested when learning with videos and tapes. Thus, students have a different perception when they are taught English. Therefore, considering students` needs is a factor that influences students` English learning since all students have a very different way of learning. By considering these needs, the teacher intervenes to raise student´s motivation, attitudes, etc.

Alternatively, the same students were also asked if those activities such as: games, group and individual-works, which are performed in the classroom motivated them to learn English; in the end, eleven of these students responded "yes" and five responded "no".

Furthermore, it was observed that the students' attitudes and motivations were often taken into account by the teachers. Hence, when some students thought that the work was very difficult, teachers used new material, they also changed the techniques, and applied a kind of psychological motivation "intrinsic motivation" like telling jokes in English. It means that those teachers constantly think in teaching their students according their needs and interests, they also think in being creative at the time of teaching English, and they often create a positive feeling on students about learning.

After that, it was also known that all the students whose responses to the question about the use of games, individual and group-work for motivation to learn English were yes because they consider that those activities are fun, and because they learn better. They also expressed that with those activities they learned new things since they believed they learned more. It was observed that those activities made students to understand some difficult topics since they could interact while playing and working in

groups. Thus, in order to raise students' motivation and attitudes it is again very important for the teachers to consider their students' needs and interests. Therefore, teaching according different activities which are adjusted to students` interest and needs will motivate students to learn English, even when some of them do not really like English at all.

On the other hand, those students whose answers to the question mentioned above were "no" showed that they did not usually vary the activities within the classroom. As a result, the teachers who identify their students 'learning styles , of course, are in advantage to get their students be comfortable while learning English.

Next, age and personality were observed to be taken into account by almost all teachers. As students do not like to get bored because they like to be happy and relaxed while learning, most of the teachers applied activities containing an specific aim to learn English; for example, the instances when the teacher made the students comprehend that English is necessary to travel or when the teacher made them realize that this language is necessary to get a good job.

Most students were also satisfied when doing activities according to their ages; for example, while younger students were observed reordering letters to form words, older students were observed preparing speeches. Therefore, according to the observed situations, considering students` personalities as well as their ages is a factor that makes pupils learn English in a way that is positive and adequate because through this, the instructor will know how to teach English, according to difficult or easy tasks related to older or younger students respectively.

Despite the fact that all teachers claimed that they considered their students`
aptitude to learn English, there were also some students who expressed that the activities
are boring and difficult. They also showed that the teacher always spoke in English, and
that they could not understand what he/she said. All of this tells us that it really matters
how the teacher thinks about students´ aptitude. And despite the fact that most of the
teachers constantly consider their students` attitudes to learn English, some pupils do not
try their best in order to direct their aptitude for learning in a better way.

Do teachers consider students` level to teach English successfully?

Students' level (basic, intermediate, high intermediate, advanced).
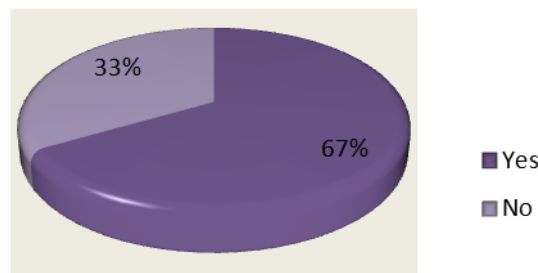
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

A 67% of the surveyed population answered that they considered their student´s
level in order to teach them successfully.

Then, all students in these classes were observed to be considered in terms of their
English-levels. Students expressed that their teacher considers their English levels at the
time of deciding what percentage of English is going to be used in every single lesson.

On the contrary, 33% of the surveyed population, answered that they did not
consider their students` level of English to teach them in the same successfully way,

because the lesson was the same for all. Teachers also stated that at high-school they worked just by paying attention to the students` ages, and because the most important thing was how the teacher taught the lessons.

Consequently, many problems related to the students` level of English were observed in specific classes; for example, the "past-perfect" which is more adequate for an intermediate level, was taught to students who have a basic level in some courses. Also, "conditional if/would" was taught in other classes which caused misunderstandings in most students. These all were found in five classrooms whose English-teachers said that they did not consider their students` level to teach English successfully.

In the light of the above, it was also seen that the teachers who taught classes within the courses where grammar drawbacks happened, they did not know what their students´ levels of English were. Thus, those teachers did not consider students` levels when teaching English. Therefore, the disadvantage of teaching English is great when students` levels of English are not taken into account, or when they are not considered by the respective English instructors because some students with a high level learn and understand better than the students who have a lower level.

Furthermore, these observations showed us that some teachers consider their students` level to teach English successfully but others do not. It is of paramount importance to know the English-levels of students for teachers to know how much and what type of vocabulary and grammar they are going to use in their lessons.

Finally, because teachers are not constantly considering their students` levels of English, they are not often applying the following matter when teaching English

"…information considered by the teacher regarding to pupils and to the whole-class, must be among other factors: the level of the class and the knowledge each pupil has …." (Gower, R., Phillips, D., & Walters, 2005, p. 177).

In addition, even when most students manifested that their English lessons were very easy because they do not cause them to have problems or misunderstandings; it was observed that teachers of the classes where these students attended directed certain activities according to their students` level. Some students expressed that their English lessons were difficult because they were very confusing and non-understandable, and few students also said that their English lessons were very difficult. These unbalanced facts of student` opinions about their English lessons show us that a poor consideration of students` level of English by teachers, affects students in the progress of the language since the same English items and grammar topics must be taught to all students who have the same level of English in a class.

Which is the level of studnets?
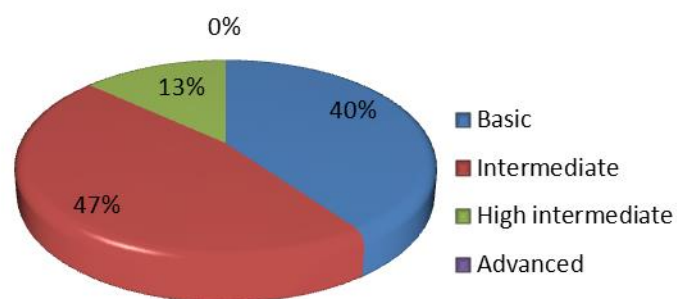
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

It can be seen above that 40% of the surveyed population manifested that students have a "basic" lavel of English, 47% of the teachers stated that their students have an "intermediate" level of English, and a 13% of the population answered that their students have a "high intermediate" level of English, yet neither of the surveyed teachers manifested that their students have an "advanced" level of this language.

Clearly, during the observations, it was seen that with an exception to the "advanced level", almost all English levels "basic", "intermediate" and "high intermediate", were found in the students who attended to classes.

In the light of the above, the Basic level was observed in six different classes. This was pervasive among the students of 8th, 9th, and 1st undergraduate courses. In addition, all teachers who teach in these classes, taught according to the basic level too. Students in these classes were comfortable with words and grammar structures because they continued in the basic level and they did not learn more difficult structures like phrasal verbs and conditionals. Therefore, teaching according to the same level of English for a long time affects students negatively because they habituate themselves to learn the same forms of language and progress is not evident.

Even though it is thought to find a more advanced English- level in courses like 1st, 2nd and 3rd of undergraduate (bachillerato), it was observed that within these courses an advance level was not found. Instead, intermediate level was observed to be used and spoken by students in these classes. However, students were active and productive; for example, when teachers asked who wanted to read the orders for tasks, most of students raised their hands and showed secureness to pronounce the words. Thus, reaching an

intermediate level, even in bachillerato, it makes students feel confident about speaking English.

High-intermediate level was observed especially among students from 10th grade. Despite of the fact that during the 10th grade just intermediate level is often reached, it was observed in this grade that students used structures with conditionals in present and past, but speaking was difficult for them when using these structures. Nevertheless, students tried their best many times to achieve pronunciation and speaking by using conditionals. Therefore, reaching a more advanced level of English like the "high intermediate-level" is a factor that causes students to overcome drawbacks in the language, which makes them go ahead to the next level.

Additionally, this language is considered to be important for occupations, professions, jobs, science, and technology as well as for personal interests like going to another institution where English is better taught and a good level is required. Students usually think they must reach a higher level that the one they got before and this affects students positively because students often get a better level by ending each cycle (basic or bachillerato) of education.

Finally, none of the students was considered by their English teachers to have an "advanced- level" of the language, and neither of them was observed to be within this level either. Thus, given that none of the classes have reached an advanced level of English, the results go against what is warned in the National English curriculum guidelines:

> … It is expected that Ecuadorian students in the educational system reach an advanced level of English in order to be completely able to achieve meaningful

objectives such as accessing information published in English in different fields

(i.e. science, commerce, technology) and accessing more labor and professional

development opportunities… ("Ministerio de Educación," 2011 p. 4).

Factors Concerning Classrooms

How many students do teachers have in their observed classes?
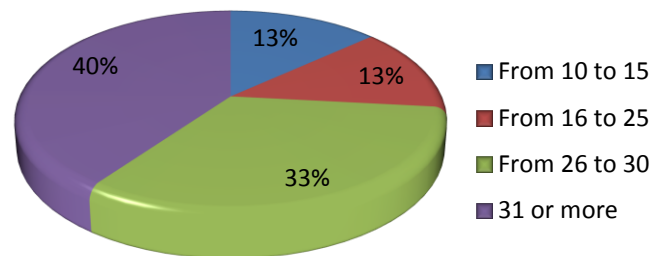
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

According to the graph 13% of the surveyed population have from ten to fifteen

students in their classrooms. According to what was observed in those classrooms, it was

seen to be truth.

Moreover, when some students were asked if they considered that the number of

students favored them to learn English in a better way, all of them answered "yes". That

was observed that these students answered in this way because they were few in the

classroom. Then, teachers were observed to completely control the class, there were

almost no problems, and students were able to get their teacher`s help when necessary.

All students participated in these classes; for instance, for checking tasks each student

went to the board to correct one part of the task. Then, students jump to the next lesson rapidly. Besides, these classrooms were estimated to embrace many students, but they contained just from ten to fifteen. These classrooms were observed to be the best to let all students have a vast space for activities and interactions.

Then, a 13% of the surveyed population answered that they had from sixteen to twenty-five students within their classrooms. However, when it was asked the students in these classrooms if they considered that the number of pupils favored them to learn English in a better way, the responses were totally different. Thus, while some students said "no "because many students make them to get into trouble and confusions, other students said "yes" because they considered that with that number of students, from sixteen to twenty-five, it is pleasant to work differently every day.

Finally, it was seen during the observations that these classes really contained from sixteen to twenty-five students in each one, and space was according the number of students in order to enable them to work with different furniture organizations. However, disruption often took place and teachers did not hear all suggestions that students gave. Thus, working with numbers of students that go from sixteen to twenty-five do not permit all pupils to be well evolved in teacher-student interaction.

On the other hand, 33% of the surveyed population responded that they have from twenty-six to thirty students within their classrooms. During the observations it was seen that those classrooms really contained that number of students. Besides, it was observed that students have spacial problems that rose because of overpopulation in the classroom. Problems were related to "discipline" and "difficulty to see the words on the board from the bottom of the classroom". Some students also indicated that furniture

structures were not constantly changed. Hence, too many students within a small classroom affects learning when students are not in conditions of organizing furniture, because the classrooms are too small for numbers of pupils that go from twenty-six to thirty.

Finally, 40% of the surveyed teachers answered that within their classrooms, thirty- one or more than thirty- one students were found; in fact, it was assumed to be truth through the observations taken in them.

In these classes, all students considered that the number of students favored them to learn English in a better way. Nevertheless, it was observed that most of teachers in theses classrooms complained about the number of students they have because they could not apply individual feedback and sometimes there was too much noise. Despite of some problems because of the number of students in theses classrooms, teachers took advantage when organizing many groups of students to complete some tasks, and essays written by students ended up as many examples for indicating what things should be done and what things should not for writing essays.

Next, given that this is a high number, especially for academic expectations from the teachers and from the students at the same time, it arises a series of advantages and disadvantages which were already stated "…That large classes are seen mostly as problematical referring to discipline, correcting individual assignment, and controlling individual awareness, but they have their advantages as well… some of these advantages are: that they produce a richer pool of human resources to work in groups…" (Ur, 2002, p. 302).

Do teachers feel comfortable working with that number of students?
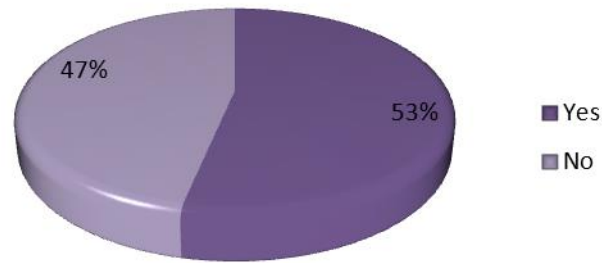
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

A 53% of the surveyed population answered that they felt comfortable working with the number of students that each classroom where they teach contains.

It was observed that the teachers who responded "yes", answered in this way because the number of students in most of their classrooms went from ten to fifteen, or from sixteen to twenty-five. The teachers whose classes had from ten to fifteen students felt completely comfortable by the way they taught English because they found it easy to motivate those students. Given that with this number of students, which is relatively short, all students were well-engaged in classes; that is, students often participated in English, they often expressed their ideas, and they all received feedback and directions from the teacher as well.

Following this further, it was observed that in two classes with sixteen to twenty-five students, professional techniques and activities from the part of the teachers were constant and varied because teachers were not overwhelmed by the number of students; That is, by working with this number of students, teachers formed groups, and they

organized activities rapidly in order to get some students helped by other ones. In the end, this is a number not too high, neither too low for teaching English successfully.

Therefore, according to the observed situations these are evidence that when teachers feel comfortable with the number of students in their classes, there is a better disposition from teachers to make every single pupil to learn English well because they prepare activities which are more creative.

Next, other 2 teachers who taught in classes with a number of students that went from twenty-six to thirty felt totally comfortable. These teachers expressed that they often take advantage of high numbers of human sources and challenges. These teachers also were observed applying pedagogical strategies which resulted in teaching and learning English successfully; for example, they constantly got their students work in groups in order to raise the sense of cooperation and to promote leadership. In addition, it was observed that another teacher was glad and comfortable by working in a class that had thirty-one students. When disruption sometimes took place because some students asked for feedback and other students constantly shouted, this teacher was able to apply procedures in order to satisfy all students` demands.

Thus, when teachers feel comfortable with a number of students they are working, they think in applying all necessary techniques in order to make their students learn successfully. This happens even when numbers of students are high.

After that, some students expressed that the size of the classroom permitted them to work in a comfortable way, because they think that their classroom is big and appropriate for studying, and no matter how many students are in those classrooms, the classroom is big enough to the number of students who study in each of them. On the

contrary, some other students expressed that the size of the classroom did not permitted them to work in a comfortable way because their classrooms are too big. It was observed that some of these students felt completely independent from their teachers at the time of learning the language, and they hardly ever interacted because they were practically isolated from one another.
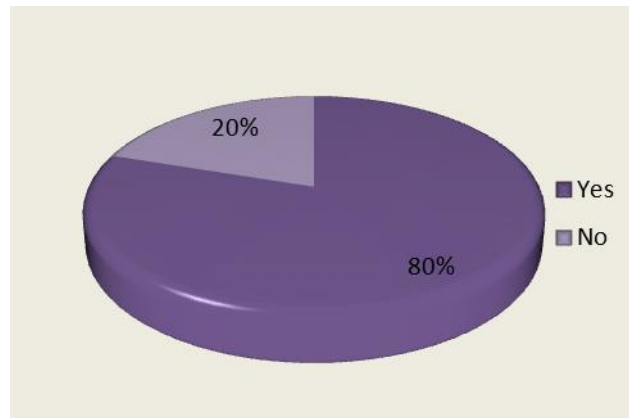
On the other hand, 47% of the surveyed population answered that they did not feel comfortable working with the number of students in each of their classes.

In the light of the mentioned above, most of teachers had classes with more than thirty-one pupils, this is the reason these teachers placed themselves in that decision. Furthermore, it was observed that within these classes teachers were angry, and not all students received individual attention from the teacher. In the same way, not all students received individual feedback, and they constantly struggled for getting a chance to express themselves and their ideas.

Moreover, another teacher did not feel comfortable by working with this number of students even when a number that goes from twenty-six to thirty pupils was expressed by other teachers to be a good number. The main reason for this teacher was that "discipline" was very difficult to control. During the observations discipline was definitely difficult for this teacher to control because he did not use dynamic activities, and because he did not apply psychological techniques to control the class. Also, it was observed that this teacher felt upset when grading every single test the students did at the end of the lesson.

Therefore, when teachers do not feel comfortable with the number of students they are working, learning is not satisfactorily carried out because teachers transmit their bad mood and students get upset when they cannot solve their doubts.

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

Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

The results in the graph above show that 80% of the surveyed population answered that they have enough space to work with that group of students, and only 20% answered that they do not have enough space to work with that group of students.

Most of teachers who answered that they have enough space were observed to have a vast space in their classrooms, and students could move and participate in dynamic activities. In three classes teachers had from twenty-six to thirty students within their classrooms. Consequently, two teachers in these classrooms indicated that it was comfortable to work with that number of students while one teacher was uncomfortable by working with that number.

When some students of these three classes were asked if they considered that the size of the classroom permitted them to work in a comfortable way, most students

answered "yes". It was observed in other two classes with a number of students from ten to fifteen that teachers usually felt even more comfortable by teaching the lessons; in fact, most teachers indicated that this number is the correct number that a classroom should contain. That is why these students as well as their teachers were glad about interacting, learning and teaching.

Next, in two classes it was seen that there were more than thirty-one pupils. None of teachers teaching in these classes felt comfortable by working with this number, yet some students of these classes expressed that the size of the classroom permitted them to work in a comfortable fashion. In addition, in all classes there was enough space to work even with higher numbers of students than the ones which were in there, and most students could move around without feeling suffocated by a lack of space. According the observed situations, there is clear evidence that the bigger the spaces in classrooms are, more comfortable students and teachers feel in their classrooms.

Other four teachers who responded that they have enough space to work in classes were observed not to have that space since it was too small. Most teachers in these classes had from twenty-six to more than thirty students, and only one teacher was seen to be comfortable working with that number. In addition, some students from these classes claimed that the size of the classroom permitted them to work comfortably, but other students claimed that the size of their classroom is too short. It was also observed that students, who felt comfortable in their classroom, often talk with their partners and they did not attend their teacher. In contrast, students who were not comfortable wanted to move around the class to ask their partners questions about how to solve a problem in English, but they could not do it because they were cramped in chairs.

Therefore, classrooms which have not enough space to work affect students who are very interested in learning English. In order to find solutions for solving problems, students are constantly moving around the class when asking questions to other students.

Then, the 20% of the surveyed teachers who answered that they did not have enough space to work with that number of students were observed to be in the reason. However, two teachers answered that they felt conformable working with that number of students, but all their students manifested that the size of their classrooms did not favor them to work in a comfortable fashion. Then, it was observed that teachers organized the activities in relation to the classroom`s space and conditions. Because the space was too short, activities resulted in asking each student a question to be solved and students ended up bored and tired. However, teachers did all these with their own criteria and accommodation for conducting the class successfully.

Therefore, classroom spaces which are too small do not permit teachers to foster their classrooms in order to organize dynamic activities. When organizing dynamic activities in class, students often get comfortable and active to the lesson.

Do teachers arrange their students` seats in relation to the activities planned for classes?
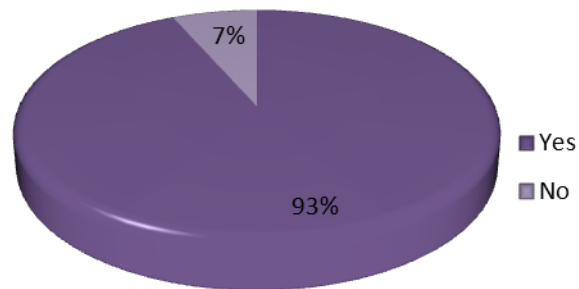
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

The results in the graph above show that 93% of the surveyed population answered that they arranged their students` seats in relation to the activities planned for their classes while a 7% of the population answered they did not arrange their students` seats in relation to the activities.

During the observations, it was seen that eleven teachers arranged their students` seats for executing their activities; for example, in most cases chairs were organized in small cycles in which students had to plan speeches or other group- tasks while the teacher walked around them to check activities, and in other classes, chairs formed a square for conducting a debate. However, it happened during certain periods of the class because it was observed that most of time seating arrangement was based in rows and lines. Then, some teachers showed that arranging seats is a good strategy for developing those activities and for reducing stress.

Besides, when some students, were asked if they liked the way that his/her teacher moved the seats in order to work in different activities, most of them were comfortable and showed that interacting with others, dynamism, and easiness were the main

advantages of getting the seats arranged in different forms. These students were also observed to cooperate and speak more English when they were induced to change their seats in different forms. They also felt more confident, comfortable, and lively.

On the other hand, three teachers, who also answered that they arranged their students` seats in relation to the activities planned for the classes were observed not doing any seating arrangement while teaching their classes. Two of these teachers had more than thirty-one pupils in their classes and only one was observed to have enough space within the classroom for developing the corresponding activities. Then, students did not get interested in the lesson because the class was conducted with the same seating arrangement which made that bored and not dynamic. Moreover, students who were sat at the bottom of the lines talked and bothered a lot.

According to this observed situation, not arranging seats because of the lack of space for students to be evolved in group activities, etc. causes that the lesson is carried out just through teacher-centered activities. Then, boring activities, and students' lack of interaction with other students are the consequences of not arranging seats.

Lastly, the teacher who responded that she did not arrange the seats in relation to the activities for the class; she did not have enough space within the classroom. Despite the fact that she did not felt comfortable working with the number of students which was more than thirty-one pupils, this teacher was observed arranging their students' seats. This teacher accommodated the seats in larger tables or circles during certain periods of the lesson.

Following this further, most teachers think in arranging their students` seats in relation to their classes; in fact, many teachers usually run into themselves with some

spacial constraints or with other problems which are difficult to cope when teaching English; for example, the large number of students within a very small classroom which makes furniture movements difficult to carry out. Despite this fact most teachers adapt their students` chairs according to the activities in the lesson because teachers want to conduct their class creatively. Therefore, when teachers do different seating arrangements, it happens what had been shown before:

"… Current communication and language transferring are well managed when different sitting arrangement is constantly done by the instructor. Consequently, the furniture location influences a lot, and it is recognized that a creative teacher, is the one who arranges different models of class in relation to furniture and space to conduct every single class…" (Dornyei & Murphey, 2003; and McKay & Tom, 1999, p. 24).

How many students do teachers think is the appropriate number to teach English?
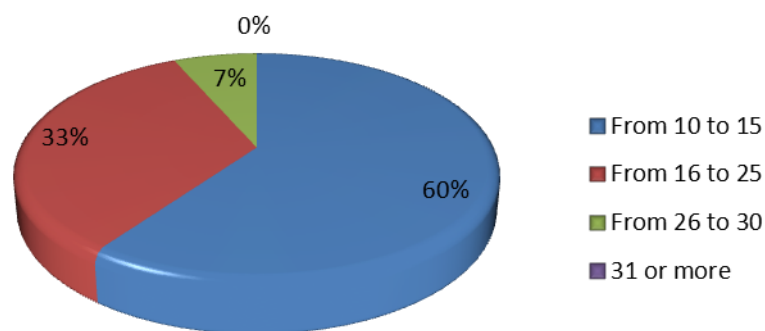
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

A 60% of the surveyed population answered that the correct number to teach English is from ten to fifteen students in each classroom. From these teachers, five had enough space into their classrooms, and their seating arrangements were observed to be appropriate. It was observed that these teachers were worried about interaction because they spoke a lot with each of their students. Because of the high number of students in class, much time was spent for interaction. Then, most of teachers agreed that the lower the number of students is, the more the students learn.

Following this further, even when these teachers were observed to have enough space into their classrooms, and their students´ seats were well arranged for the activities, these teachers ensured that the correct number of students for teaching English successfully was from ten to fifteen. Then, it was observed that English was better taught in classrooms that had "from ten to fifteen" students. Hence, teachers of classrooms that had from ten to fifteen students could apply a great variation of exercises in order to get all their pupils involved in them. Teachers in these classes often made their students work in groups, they asked individual questions, and they made their students do written exercises on the board.

Therefore, some teachers do not pay much attention to the size of the classroom or to the seating arrangement because the matter that causes more problems to them when teaching is a high number of students.

Then, some had more than 25 students in their classrooms but neither of them had enough space to work in the classrooms because the classrooms were too small. Nevertheless, too many students in a small classroom was not a reason for interfering in an adequate seating arrangement since in these classes seats were well arranged for the

proposed activities, even when the space was small. Despite this fact, these teachers expressed that the correct number of students to teach English is from ten to fifteen.

Next, one teacher was observed not to have enough space in the classroom. For this reason seats were not arranged correctly, and because the number of students within this class was higher than 31, students were not engaged in group activities. This lack of group-work activities was not precisely due to the number of students, but because it was completely difficult to move the seats since the classroom space was too short. The teacher of this class also expressed that the correct number of students to teach English is from ten to fifteen.

Thus, teachers often want small numbers of students to work in class because they want all their pupils to have more chances to speak, interact, and participate. Teachers also want to check each student`s progress more often.

After that, it was found that 33% of the surveyed population answered that the appropriate number for teaching English successfully is from sixteen to twenty-five. Moreover, even when most of these teachers had enough space to work in the classroom and they also had their students` seats well arranged; only one of them felt comfortable working with the number of students in his classroom because he had from sixteen to twenty-five students while the rest of classes had more than twenty-six students. It was observed that teachers of these classes could not give feedback to all students; in fact, a short number of students received an individual English-support or feedback from the teacher. Hence, when teachers have a number of students that they think is not the correct to teach English, they find activities more difficult to plan and most of time they find that these activities are difficult to apply successfully.

On the contrary, only a 7% of the surveyed population answered that an appropriate number of students for teaching English successfully is from twenty-six to thirty. However, since this teacher had twenty-four pupils in the classroom, it was seen that few teachers like to work with a higher number of students than the number of students they have. Yet, this teacher did not consider the problems that often arise when seating arrangement is not well organized because spatial structure is not enough for higher numbers of students.

Finally, given that none of the surveyed teachers answered that more than thirty-one students is an appropriate number for teaching English successfully because they feel that too much students over populate the classroom. It was observed that since the point of view of private-Ecuadorian teachers, it is better to work with smaller groups within large classrooms as it had been stated by McKay & Tom (1999, p. 25) that it would be more beneficial to work in classrooms where the space is big than in those where activities are to be bored and wrongly conducted because the space is short.

Do teachers use teaching resources (TV, Tape/Cd recorder, Computer (s), projector (s), smart board, supplementary materials)?
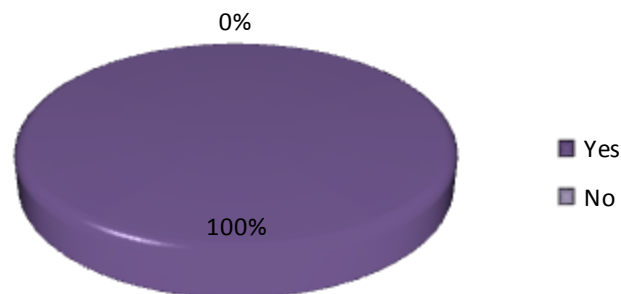
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

The results in the graph above show that all the surveyed teachers use teaching resources such as: TV, tape/Cd recorder, computers, projectors, smart board, and supplementary materials.

However, during the observations it was seen that tapes and Cd/recorders were used only in eight classes for tasks that concerned to listening and speaking comprehension. Then, computers were used only by three teachers and a projector was used only by one teacher. Furthermore, three teachers used TVs, and none of the classrooms had a smart board within theme. Yet, in most classes teachers used supplementary materials for teaching their lessons.

Then, it was observed that in all classes work books were used for doing grammar and writing exercises and students were familiarized with the way activities were carried out in those books. Then, computers were used by two teachers, but these teachers used their "laptops" in order to look up the meaning of the words they did not understand; that is, computers were used just by the teachers. However, only one teacher used his laptop to show pictures to students in order to teach them adjectives. Only in this class were students glad and active by telling sentences according the picture that the teacher showed. On the other hand, in few classes only books were used. In these classes students copied their partner's tasks a lot, and they felt worried about not understanding every single word of the book.

Finally, when a projector was used in one class for explaining "routines" students felt so happy and they attended the whole explanation.

TVs were also used in three classes in order to watch a movie in English, but in these three classes students did not understand much because they do not often watch movies in English. However, students got very excited when trying to understand what the movie was about and students constantly asked their teacher for meanings of words and phrases appearing in the movies` English- subtitles.

Despite the fact that almost none of teachers manifested that they used other teaching resources, it was observed that most of them used other materials such as realia, and flashcards. Most of teachers also used materials designed by them; for example, in a pair of classes teachers designed a shoebox with a ball for teaching prepositions of place.

Besides, most students expressed that teaching resources such as TVs, Cd/recorders, computers, smart boards, etc. were often used during their English classes.

As a result, the observed situations are evidence that most private-English teachers of Ecuador often use any kind of teaching resources when teaching their lessons. Teachers use only few resources during each lesson. Furthermore, because it is impossible to use all kinds of teaching resources in one lesson, teachers choose what resources are going to be used in each lesson. However, smart boards are never used in English classrooms. Thus, although most private high schools are considered to have the possibilities to cope with that expense; that is, the purchase of smart boards, the lack of these resources within private high schools is the result of the lack of budget.

Do teachers consider appropriate the resources they have in class?
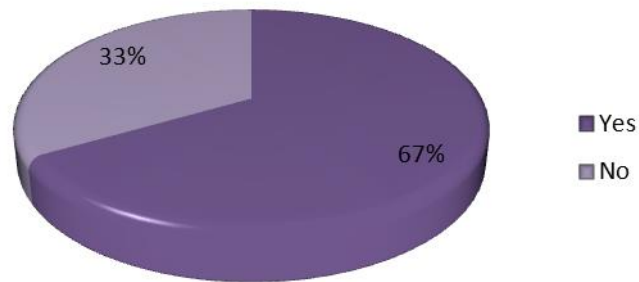
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

The chart above shows that 67% of the surveyed population answered that they consider appropriate the materials they have in classes.

In the first place, a group of teachers considered that the materials they use are often used by all English teachers in Ecuador. These teachers only used books, cd/tape recorder, and a few supplementary materials within the classroom while the observations took place. Students in these classes often listened to a tape and wrote the answers to some questions in their books. Big posters were also shown on the board for teaching vocabulary; the posters had pictures and words which were repeated as a chorus by the class. Students in these classes reacted well to the poster exhibitions. However, as exhibitions took just a few minutes, students were upset by returning to write in their books. The observed situation affects students` learning because they need a more variation of resources to learn English differently and not getting exhausted in class.

Some teachers answered that the materials they used in class were appropriate because these are useful, helpful, and good for students to learn English. In other words, the materials these teachers used such as: computers and supplementary materials are

considered appropriate for teaching English. However, while supplementary materials were based on exhibitions for the whole class such posters containing vocabulary, computers were used only by the teacher to look up for meanings on internet. All this affected students` learning since students could not gain access to computers in order to look up meanings of words rapidly, they had to look up them in the dictionary instead.

Then, two more teachers stated that they used teaching resources according their students´ ages. It was observed that these teachers had selected appropriate teaching resources for the lesson such; flashcards for teaching in 8th of basic, or medicine articles with many pictures for teaching in 2nd undergraduate. Students got more motivated and eager to repeat each single word after the teacher when flash cards and pictures were showed. Although these materials were used in less than ten minutes, students asked the teacher to show again the pictures in order to remember the words easier. Therefore, it is clear evidence that the more teachers use resources such supplementary materials in classes, the more eager students are to learn vocabulary.

After that, there was a group of teachers who indicated that the materials they had in their classrooms are appropriate since whatever kind of materials designed for teaching English are useful. These teachers said that the materials they used were a mix of classical and modern resources to teach English. However, during the lesson all these teachers only used books and notebooks which caused students not to learn English in a new and creative way, students also got bored and tired. None of the classes were observed to have advanced technological equipment within them such as smart boards. All this makes students learn English with classical resources such books and notebooks,

and innovation does not take place because students are out of technological processes for learning English.

In addition, students from these classrooms were asked if certain resources such as TVs, cd/tape recorder, computers, and smart boards were used in their English classes, most of them said "yes" while only two said "no". Therefore, students who indicated that these resources were not used in their English classes focused their answers on new educational resources such smart boards, which called their attention when the surveyed was asked.

On the other hand, 33% of the surveyed population considered inappropriate the materials they had in classes. Thus, they expressed that the materials they often use are not enough because these are few such books, notebooks, and some supplementary materials. Teachers also said that their materials are not appropriate because they often need projectors and English laboratories for teaching English. Then, some students, from these classes indicated that resources like TVs, Cd/tape recorder, computers, etc. were often used during their English classes and they were glad about the resources their teachers often use for teaching them. Thus, it was observed that students agreed with that way of learning English. Therefore, it affects students` sense of learning a language through innovative ways because they agree with classical ways of learning English.

Factors Concerning Educational Institutions

Do institutions review their teachers` lesson plans?

0%

100%

■ Yes
■ No
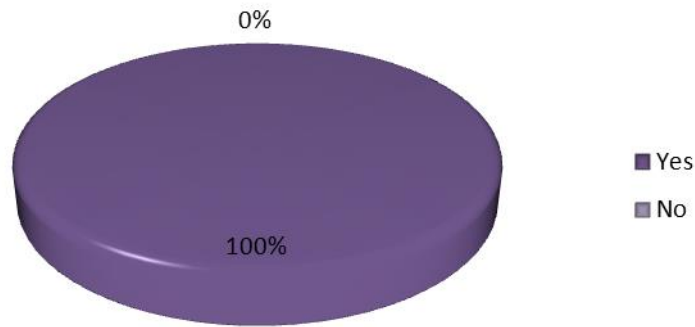
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

It can be seen in the graph above that all surveyed teachers answered that the institution where they work review their English lesson plans. It was found that only a pair of institutions reviewed their English teachers´ lesson plans in weekly periods. The rest of institutions reviewed their teachers´ lesson plans once a month, once o week, or at different periods to their different teachers.

Institutions which reviewed their teachers´ lesson plans once a week were observed to have a chronogram of activities, the same that recorded dates for reviewing teachers` lesson plans. However, since these institutions control the objectives reached by English teachers weekly, authorities reduce the possible problems that often arise regarding to improvisations made by teachers; for instance, one teacher expressed that sometimes students had to prepare activities for some social events which are not into the schools` calendar, and that makes the teacher change or lengthen some parts of the lesson. According to the observed situation, institutions which do not have a flexible chronogram for reviewing their teachers` lesson plans cause teachers to have drawbacks

relating to time. As a result, teachers advance too fast in their lessons, and students do not get knowledge through a calm way because the goals must be reached weekly.

On the contrary, institutions which reviewed their English-teachers´ lesson plans once a month had less unexpected problems since these lesson plans were controlled in a period that is longer than once a week. Moreover, teachers expressed that problems are less thought to arise since the time is plenty enough for rewriting lessons when necessary and for achieving objectives correctly. These teachers were sometimes observed changing some parts of their lesson plans because some activities were not well-structured. Therefore, institutions which review their teachers` lesson plans after long enough periods make teachers to plan lessons adequately, and allow them to achieve their lesson objectives successfully.

Besides, a group of institutions reviewed their English teachers´ lesson plans once a month or once a week. Thus, these institutions reviewed all teachers` lesson plans once a week during a period, and once a month the following period. Only teachers whose lesson plans were reviewed once a week had constraints with timing.

Yet, Teachers of one institution expressed that the institution reviewed their English teachers´ lesson plans differently; that is, this institution reviewed some teacher`s lesson plans each six weeks, some teacher`s lesson plans once a month, and other teachers` lesson plans once a week. All teachers in this institution were observed to be upset because the revision of their lesson plans was irregular. As a result, some teachers planned their lessons with very good activities because their time for planning was more than a week while other teachers planned their lessons with not good activities because their time was shorter. This affects students` learning because they do not learn

English through a regular way which must be only through good activities. Instead, students learn some times with good activities and sometimes with not good activities.

In addition, it was found that one institution reviewed their teachers` lesson plans through the following way: once a week to one teacher and once a year to other teacher. Despite the fact that none of these teachers were observed planning lessons and these were not reviewed by any authority either, the teacher who responded that the institution reviewed their teachers` lesson plans once a year was confused about the question because it is impossible for institutions to review their teachers´ lesson plans only once a year.

Therefore, in the light that all teachers from all institutions had their lesson plans in their teachers´ work- books signed by their respective English coordinators as well as by their principals, it was also observed that all English teachers´ lesson plans are being reviewed in order to know how English is being taught. Also, through these revisions institutions think of how to improve their English teaching in the future. According to the mentioned above, it is been carried out what Brown (1995, p. 194) says that,"... The institution will improve the academic instruction it offers after knowing about observations and each monitoring [lesson revisions] of its teachers …"

Do institutions monitor their English-teachers´ teaching?
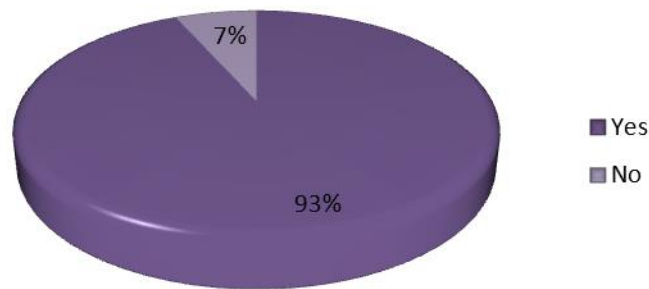
Author: Núñez Milton

Source: Private high schools in Quito

The graph above shows that 93% of the surveyed teachers answered that the institutions where they work monitored their teaching while a 7% answered that the institutions did not monitor them.

From the mentioned above, a group of teachers answered that their institutions monitored the way they teach English in a period other than once a week and once a month. Thus, some of these teachers stated that monitoring was made by their respective headmaster during each term, and other teachers stated that they were monitored unexpectedly. However, it was never observed any kind of monitoring from the respective authorities because that moment was not designated for that. Thus, because in that moment teachers were not being monitored, they jumped some parts of their lessons such as giving examples which affected students' comprehension.

Next, other group of teachers indicated that they were monitored once a month. During the observations these English teachers were monitored by their authorities because their inspectors took approximately five minutes to check the grades these teachers had in their rolls. It was also observed that inspectors checked out, students`

qualifications and quantifications, as well as their evaluations. As a result, all teachers demonstrated that they had everything in order. Therefore, processes of knowing how teachers are teaching English make teachers to strive the more for getting their objectives. This is done by means of students` constant evaluations and better explanations for teaching the language.

Then, in one high school some teachers said that they were monitored once a month and other teachers answered that they were monitored once a week. Teachers also added that those teachers who are monitored once a week are supposed to be monitored only once during the next month and vice versa. Again, teachers often felt worried about next time they would be observed, and they constantly suggested their students to study because they were going to be observed by authorities, which made students ramble and lose the topic. Finally, these teachers stated that they were monitored by means of observations from other teachers who tick a check list during the class. Nevertheless, any type of monitoring was not seen during the observations in these classes. Therefore, teachers who are not monitored in a regular fashion cause their pupils to get anxious because they fear about next observations.

Finally, there was only one teacher who said that the authorities where she works never monitored English teachers. This teacher was observed to be angry, and she manifested that great part of being an English teacher is to receive good or bad critics about how their teaching is going on.

Conclusions

- None of the teachers had "C2" language proficiency which affected students` learning regarding English quality because students need to be exposed to perfect English spoken and taught by the teacher in order to imitate, produce, and learn perfect English too.

- There were almost no teachers with a "masters" degree who are updated with teaching procedures. Most of the observed teachers did not apply innovative techniques for teaching English since they only had a bachelor's degree. Therefore, students got often bored and tired since they learned English through the same conventional techniques and activities.

- Most of the observed teachers used the grammar translation method for teaching their lessons. The overuse of this method, caused students to translate every single word from English to the native tongue. Thus, students did not think in English and they did not know how to understand and synthetize general ideas.

- There were many teachers who always used whole group-activities which often got students anxious and stressful when English lessons took place. That affects the teaching-learning process because most of students feel shy and insecure when expressing their ideas in English for the whole class.

- Students` levels are not always considered by English teachers. Teachers teach lessons that contain the same grammar structures and vocabulary to all of the students in a class which affects negatively to pupils with a lower level of English. Besides, teaching lessons with the same content for all students habituate pupils to stay in the same level.

- The lack of teaching resources in all private high schools is evident since teachers teach the lessons by using classic materials such books and they do not often use supplementary materials. Moreover, none of the observed high schools had a smart board in any classroom which makes students learn without technological knowledge and creativity.

- Most of the classrooms in private high schools were observed to have more than 31 pupils. This factor affected the teaching-learning process because the space in most of the cases was too small and did not allow a different furniture arrangement, which resulted in most lessons taught through teacher centered.

Recommendations

- In general, the levels of English of all students should be taken into account by all English teachers in private high schools before planning a lesson, while teaching the lesson, and after teaching it. By doing that, they would promote a good level of English to be gotten from the part of the students because they would be constantly thinking how to get their students go ahead in the language, also they (the teachers) would set their objectives in a better fashion for teaching the language, and at the same time the English teachers would notice how their students` levels of English are improving or at least how these are changing from stage (level). Besides, by the time the instructors are following this process, they would also set as their main goal to get all their students graduated from high school with an advanced level of English.

- There should be more teacher-engagement on students` learning styles. Because it is certain that most of English instructors put their attention more on other factors that influence the English-teaching-learning process such as students` motivation and attitude, they should also pay attention to their students 'leaning styles too in order to know what exactly is the way that each one of their students like to learn, or how they are better evolved when learning this language [English]. Through a vast knowledge of students` learning styles of English, teachers will also know how to foster the materials, lessons, and of course, the activities to those styles. Finally, these students` learning styles must also be considered at the time of choosing the topics for the different chains of lessons to be taught.

- Authorities of institutions must be constantly thinking in improving the way their English teachers are teaching their students. Authorities must create new alternatives for monitoring others than observations. In order to get their students learn English through the best way, authorities must give their English teachers a better set of facilities to know when exactly they have to show what they are doing regarding teaching techniques.

    Besides, the respective authorities of each private high school in Ecuador must program a more specific schedule for monitoring and teacher`s revisions, and adapt them to schedules of other educational activities they already have. This should be done in order to give English teachers better opportunities of being attentive about when to present the information required and to be punctual for improving the English-teaching-learning process.

- All teachers working in private high schools should have a "bachelor`s degree" or an "English master`s degree". None of them should be hired without having this kind of degrees, or at last without compromising themselves to get one of those degrees. Because it is not enough to have an English proficiency, but it is also necessary to have a vast pedagogical knowledge about how to teach English, all educational institutions should promote a specialization in English teaching to all English teachers working in them.

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ANNEXES

Annex N° 1

OBSERVATION SHEET

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:	
DATE: _____	
YEAR:_____	

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

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

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

Annex Nº 2

<div align="center">**TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE**</div>

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), Smart board, 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 Nº 3

<div align="center">**STUDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE**</div>

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
YEAR:	

21. ¿Te gusta aprender inglés?

SI ( )	NO ( )

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

SI ( )	NO ( )
¿Por qué? _____	

23. Consideras que las actividades realizadas en clase son:

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

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

SI ( )	NO ( )
¿Por qué? _____	

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

SI ( )	NO ( )

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

SI ( )	NO ( )

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

SI ( )	NO ( )

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

SI ( )	NO ( )

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

| SI ( ) | NO ( ) |

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

| SI ( ) | NO ( ) |

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

SI ( )	NO ( )
¿Por qué? _____	

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

SI ( )	NO ( )
¿Por qué? _____	

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

SI ( )	NO ( )
¿Por qué? _____	

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

SI ( )	NO ( )

GRACIAS!!!!!