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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 Vallejo Carvajal Sophia Lucrecia, 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

My dedication is to my whole family, especially to my two daughters and my husband who has patience, time, and motivation for me. To the teachers of the Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja who helped me to finish my studies.

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Having completed this work, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja and to the Teachers of The English area for their great contribution to my career.

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

This research investigated factors influencing the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools. The method was quantitative. This investigation was conducted in seven private high schools in Quito in 2012-2013.The sample consisted of fifteen teachers from 8th basic education to 3rd year of senior high school. The information was collected through surveys, interviews, and observations.

The field research required the researcher to observe fifteen classes to determine factors concerning teachers, students, classrooms, and educational institutions. After completed each observed lesson, one student (fifteen in total) was surveyed. The field research process also required the researcher to interview and survey fifteen EFL teachers.

Once conducted the research, it was found that factors affecting the English teaching- learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools include the lack of resources to add variety to the EFL lessons, and the lack of using different teaching methods in class that encourage the students to learn English in several ways.

Key words: methods and approaches, classroom space, seating arrangements, etc.

RESUMEN EJECUTIVO

Este trabajo investigó los factores que influyen en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje del idioma Inglés en las escuelas secundarias privadas ecuatorianas. El método usado fue cuantitativo. Esta investigación se llevó a cabo en siete establecimientos educativos en Quito en 2012- 2013. Quince profesores de 8tvo de básica a 3ro año de bachillerato participaron en el estudio

La investigación requirió observar quince clases para determinar los factores que conciernen a docentes, estudiantes, aulas e instituciones educativas. Después de cada lección observada, un estudiante (quince en total) fue encuestado. El proceso investigativo también requirió que el investigador entreviste y encueste a quince profesores de inglés.

Una vez llevada a cabo la investigación, se encontró que los factores que afectan el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje de inglés en las escuelas secundarias privadas ecuatorianas son la falta de recursos para variar las lecciones y la falta de uso de diferentes métodos de enseñanza en la clase para motivar a los estudiantes a aprender dicho idioma en varias maneras.

PALABRAS CLAVE: métodos de enseñanza, espacio de las aulas, arreglo de pupitres, etc.

INTRODUCTION

In Ecuador, a serious situation that has been widely revealed is that the students enter the university with a limited knowledge of English; that is, the students' academic performance is limited because their English language proficiency is very poor. As a consequence, they are neither able to get updated English information nor they can completely involve in getting an international scholarship to study abroad. Therefore, it is important to conduct research on identifying the factors that influence the teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools in order to find the most appropriate solution to this situation so that the students' English language proficiency can be improved.

Given the above background, one relevant point to mention is that in this study specific objectives were addressed. These objectives were to identify student's English level and their needs in the classroom, determine the classroom conditions in which English lessons take place, identify the characteristics of in-service English teachers, and determine institutional facilities and norms regarding quality education.

Another relevant point to mention is that previous studies on factors influencing the English teaching-learning process have been conducted. Chang and Goswami (2011) conducted a study to investigate factors that encourage or limit EFL teachers' implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). Chang and Goswami conclude that factors that affect implementation of CLT are related to teachers, students, the educational system, and suitability of CLT in the local context.

Furthermore, Bala and Bamba (2012) conducted a study to analyze factors influencing the teaching- learning of reading ability of English language. The researchers conclude that the low level of English reading ability in Haryana is due

to the lack of English-speaking and listening environment, the frequent change of government policy in education, the lack of language labs, and the lack of scientific approach in teaching English.

Moreover, Aduwa and Ogiegbaen (2006) investigated factors affecting the poor quality of teaching English as a second language. Aduwa and Ogiegbaen conclude that public secondary schools in Nigeria are not in the conditions of teaching and learning English as a second language since the schools are overcrowded, the furniture is not comfortable for proper sitting, and the classrooms do not have proper lighting and ventilation.

Having mentioned previous research done on factors that influence the English language teaching-learning process, it is necessary to comment that conducting a study on this issue in Ecuadorian private high schools will help teachers, educational institutions, and authorities to identify the problem to solve it in the most effective way in order to enhance the quality of teaching and learning English.

Additionally, this study offers a valuable contribution to the high schools where the research was conducted since its findings will encourage teachers and authorities to consider students' needs, teachers' instruction, institutional teaching materials, and norms that contribute to increasing the English knowledge of the students and to improving the teaching quality.

Method

Setting and Participants

This study was carried out in seven private high schools, in Quito, Ecuador in 2012-2013. The high schools were located in the north part of the city. The participants included fifteen teachers and their students. The teachers and students were drawn from 8th basic education to 3rd year of senior high school. All the teachers were Spanish native speakers.

Procedures

During the whole investigation, a literature review was conducted. The bibliographical information was useful to know the importance of teaching English as a foreign language in Ecuador, teaching approaches and methods, managing learning, lesson design, class size, classroom space, observation, learning styles, and language aptitude. It was also necessary to include five previous studies done on factors that influence the English language teaching-learning process in order to support the literature review which was conducted by researching books, and reliable sources posted on the Internet by expert language researchers.

In addition to conducting the literature review, a field research was carried out both to observe directly how the teachers instruct their students in the EFL classes and to collect information of factors influencing the teaching- learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools.

In the observed classes, observation sheets, teachers' questionnaires, students' survey, and note-taking were the techniques and instruments used for collecting data. At the end of each observed class, the teachers were asked to fill in a survey and

were also interviewed. Moreover, at the end of each observed class, one student was chosen to be surveyed.

The results obtained in the surveys, interviews, and observations were analyzed quantitatively, for which it was necessary to write 20 questions and to draw the same number of graphs. The analysis of the results was done taking into account what the teachers answered in the interview and what they mentioned in the survey. The results of the students' survey and observations were analyzed and compared to determine if they coincided with each other.

DISCUSSION

Literature Review

Importance of Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Ecuador

The Ecuadorian Ministry of Education (MinEduc, 2012) indicates that the English language has multiple purposes such as communicating, reading, writing, and as well as getting scholarships, travelling to universities abroad, and getting a high level competence. Moreover, The MinEduc outlines a Communicative Approach distinguished as the most recognized and accepted norm for teaching and learning English nowadays since it helps students to improve their communicative language skills. Furthermore, The MinEduc reveals that English language teaching and learning is widely taught and is no longer viewed as the property of English speaking countries. It means that English is the language of globalization used for international communication, commerce trade, science, media, and pop culture.

Additionally, it is necessary to comment that the TOEFL has been approved by The MinEduc (2012) to evaluate the students' language skills. As it is known, the language skills are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The MinEduc also promotes the evaluation of teachers so that they can offer students a better English teaching approach.

Teaching Approaches and Methods

Grammar-Translation Method is used in language teaching and learning. Richards and Rodgers (2001) say that this method focuses on learning the grammar rules and their application in translating. These authors believe that most of the teaching is provided in students' first language; vocabulary is presented mainly through direct translation from the native language, for which memorization is promoted by using bilingual words.

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In addition, Ediger (2010) mentions that Grammar-Translation Method is known as a classical method where grammar is explained and translated into a language pattern of the students. Also, Ediger says that students have to memorize grammar rules and translate passages from mother tongue into English and vice-versa.

Another method used in the language classroom is Cooperative Language Learning. Regarding this method, Richard and Rodgers (2001) say that it helps students to develop critical thinking skills and competition rather than corporation which help them to manage social structure interaction activities.

For Orlich and Harder (2009), Cooperative Language Learning allows students to work together to reach common goals. They also say that this method requires much time, organization, and structure, but it is an ideal way to focus group work on specific tasks.

Content Based-Instruction is other method used for teaching EFL. Richard and Rodgers (2001) suggest that this method is an approach to second language learning in which students are involved as means of acquiring information rather than as and end on itself. According to these authors, language becomes the medium of conveying information content of interest and takes its appropriate role to accomplish a set of goals.

In addition, Richards and Renandya (2002) mention that Content Based-Instruction is an approach that encourages students to think and learn through the use of the target language, which is exposed to study skills and learn a variety of language skills.

It is relevant to mention a teaching approach known as Task-Based Language Teaching. Richard and Rodgers (2001) mention that this method refers to an

approach to language teaching in which background tasks are used. It means that the basic elements of such tasks are meaningful activities that encourage communication. They are concern with the process of learning than with the specific content or skills.

Furthermore, Long and Doughty (2011) say that Task-Based Language Teaching is an approach focusing on tangible learning results which are in form of tasks that learners are able to do with the language.

To continue describing some of the teaching methods used in the language classroom, it is significant to address The Whole Language Approach. For Richard and Rodgers (2001), this approach places students and their needs and interests at the center of the curriculum planning which may have an impact on improving attitudes and motivation. These authors also suggest that language should be taught as a whole, as if the students were reading and writing in the native language which focuses on learning to read and write naturally with a focus on real communication in a pleasant way.

In addition, Aronoff and Rees (2003) mention that Whole Language is an approach based on the idea that top-down processing plays an important role in reading where learners make minimal use of the target language for communicative purposes and use it only for academic work.

EFL teachers also use a teaching method called Total Physical Response. According to Nunan (2011), the objective is to make the students learn the foreign language like their first language in which they do a lot of listening before they speak. Their listening is accompanied by physical responses voice, action and gesture, but it loses its effectiveness in advanced learners.

Additionally, Salim (2001) mentions that Total Physical Response is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action through

physical activity. The aims of Total Physical Response are to teach basic speaking skills, oral proficiency at the beginning level and grammar is taught inductively.

There is a teaching method called Communicative Language Teaching. Nunan (2011) says that the objective of this method is to achieve interpersonal communication in which learning is not through memorization, but by tasks involving real communication. Nunan also says that Communicative Language Teaching encourages activities simulating in class some kind of tasks that help learners to improve language by doing exactly what they will have to do outside the classroom.

In addition, Salim (2001) mentions that in Communicative Language Teaching the objective is to focus on completing tasks that are mediated through language. This author also suggests that through social interaction activities, the learners should offer as much as they obtain to learn in an interdependent way since only learners can be aware of their own needs.

Within the teaching methods used in the language classroom is Natural Approach. For Nunan (2011), this approach gives beginners and intermediate learners basic, communicative skills. The Natural Approach views language as essence of meaning, rather than grammar. Moreover, Nunan assumes that the activities introduce a focus on acquisition rather than learning, where the teacher gives input before output.

Indeed, Salim (2001) mentions that the Natural Approach is for beginners since language is viewed as a vehicle for communicating meanings and messages. Also, he says that specific objectives depend on learner needs, skills and level being taught, where the teacher provides comprehensible language and simple response opportunities.

An additional teaching method to be mentioned in this section is Cognitive Academic Language Learning (CALLA). Oxford (1996) says that this method is a special form of content and instruction. This author also says that the objective of CALLA was originally designed particularly for students at advanced, beginning, and intermediate levels of English language proficiency. Moreover, Oxford says that in CALLA students are provided with strategies to do individual tasks or activities. That is, in this approach, the teacher assist from initial level of student performance, monitor progress so that the goals can be obtained.

According to Cummins (2000), in CALLA the instructional design is task-based; the role of students is prior knowledge, the importance of collaborative learning and the development of metacognitive is awareness and self-reflection.

Managing Learning

The instructions given to the students are an important part of managing learning. That is why the principal aim of the teacher when introducing or presenting an activity is to give students instruction which is easy to recognize and understand so that such an activity can be developed without any problem. Maxom (2009) suggests both speaking well and using visuals as pictures, diagrams and lots of gestures to make students put their attention to the teacher. The organization of an activity and the instructions that a teacher gives becomes a very important task. In other case, they will not understand what to do or not be able to accomplish a task. In addition, the management of learning depends on the importance of instruction (Stronge, 2007).

Another vital aspect of managing learning is feedback as stated by Maxom (2009). A way of giving feedback is that at the end of any activity it could be reviewed by praising students, marking errors, and correcting them. Moreover,

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effective teachers give feedback in a manner that it is supportive and encouraging to students (Peart & Campell, 1999). To complement Maxom (2009) and Peart and Campell (1999)'s ideas about feedback, it is relevant to mention that Stronge (2007) says that feedback will increase the learning process that supports student learning.

Another important aspect of managing learning is timing. Regarding this issue, Maxom (2009) says that it is necessary both to tell the students how long they have for a particular activity and to let them know before the time is up. This author mentions that English lessons have a format for dividing time in a lesson; this format includes stages called Presentation that lasts about fifteen minutes, Practice that lasts about twenty minutes, and Production that lasts about twenty five minutes.

Moreover, Stronge (2007) says that time is one of the most challenging limitation teachers deal with in order to accomplish curricular goals and satisfy the needs of all students. This author suggests that teacher do their planning in a careful way that allows them to pace materials and to optimize the use of time in the classroom. With the aim of saving time in a lesson, Stronge also suggests using a designated place to keep materials such as attendance cards, hall passes, and extra paper; by doing so, teachers save time since they do not need to search for items. Stronge emphasizes the latter suggestion by stating that in effective classrooms a place is designated to keep everything and everything must be in such a place. This author furthermore says that teachers organize time effectively and communicate this important skill to their students. In fact, Strong (2007) says that "sharing with students how the teacher organizes time can serve as a model for students to assist in their own planning" (p. 54).

Lesson Design

It is important to design a lesson plan to get the most of it. For this reason, different authors such as Gower, Phillips, and Walter (2005) and Clark and Starr (1981) suggest different ways to do it. To better understand the parts of a lesson plan, all these authors mention different aspects that must be considered when planning.

Gower et al. (2005) mention that the information of a lesson plan must have an objective to recognize the main parts of the lesson. Clark and Starr (1981) affirm that the objective of a lesson is a precise statement of what is going to be learned in a lesson.

Another aspect of a lesson plan is the procedure to be followed. Gower et al. (2005) mention that the procedure is the part of the lesson plan which lays out the stages to ensure that the aim is achieved and indicate what will be done at each stage and why. Moreover, Clark and Starr (1981) mention that the procedure should be listed in order of occurrence in sufficient detail for the teacher to follow it.

The activities developed in a lesson and the approach followed is also part of a lesson plan. Gower et al. (2005) say that the teacher should know the activities and the approach that is going to be used in a class.

The teaching materials that are going to be used in a specific lesson are a vital aspect of a lesson plan. Gower et al. (2005) suggest that the materials, aids, and equipment should be written on the lesson plan, so as to know when you will use the materials. It is also important to include a plan of the blackboard or whiteboard at each stage of a lesson. Similarly, Clark and Starr (1981) say that the materials needed for an activity must be ready for a lesson.

In addition, Gower et al. (2005) mention that the information about the students and the classroom circumstances is very relevant to be included in a lesson

plan. These authors suggest that teachers note at the top of every plan the level of the class, the coursebook that students use, the size of the class and its composition. Gower et al. also suggest noting how a lesson fits into the students' course program and the knowledge students are expected to bring to a lesson.

Additionally, Clark and Starr (1981) recommend that teachers should write special notes or reminders of anything that may be forgotten. These notes can include special work and announcement for individuals.

Class size

Teachers have to face with small and large classes in a language classroom. Regarding the first one, Finn, Pannozzo, and Achilles (2003) say that a class of twenty students is considered small. For Flood (2003), smaller classes create a better learning environment so that students can achieve better results. It is understood that the smaller the class size is, in terms of students, the most teacher can get in increasing educational quality and reducing discipline problems.

In relation to large classes, Finn et al. (2003) say that a classroom with more than twenty students is viewed as large. In comparison with large classes, teachers working with small classes can provide students with attention and instruction in an individualized way (Nye, Hedges, & Konstantopoulos, 2001).

Classroom Space and Seating Arrangement

Mcleod, Fisher, and Hoover (2003) affirm that classroom space affects the quality of the instructional program since teachers must try to create a rich atmosphere in every inch of the room to enhance students' learning experiences. Mcleod et al. also comment that the quality of an instructional program requires proper use of space so that students can work adequately.

In addition to classroom space, classroom organization also affects how students behave and how much attention they put to a lesson (Mcleod et al., 2003). Taking into consideration this statement, it is worth saying that Konza, Grainger, and Bradshaw (2001) suggest arranging classroom in a way that helps the teaching process effectively as an uncomfortable environment may risk teacher efforts. That is, teachers must create a classroom environment that encourages direct communication, or else students will have trouble communicating with teachers when the classroom space available is not enough to develop all the activities planned for a class.

Once some information about classroom space have been provided above, it necessary to focus on seating arrangements. Cowley (2009) mentions that seating arrangement in secondary schools are done either in rows or in groups. This author affirms that the advantage of desks in rows is that students are facing in front of the class, and it is easier to check their work. Moreover, Desks placed in single or double rows are useful for teacher demonstration and independent seatwork (Konza et al., 2001).

In relation to making students work in groups, Cowley (2009) says that the advantage of desks in groups is that teachers can talk to all the students at once while doing group work. Another advantage of arranging desks in groups is that whole class discussions and debates can be carried out in an effective way. In addition, tables in groups with students facing each other will have a better student interaction (Konza et al., 2001).

Other advantage of arranging desks in groups is that it is good for making eye contact with students and for encouraging discussions in a class just as it occurs in a U shaped seating configuration (Konza et al., 2001).

Having mentioned some advantages of making students work in rows and groups, it is time to comment on some disadvantages of these kinds of seating arrangements. Cowley (2009) mentions that the disadvantage of seating students in rows is that it is hard to do group work because they have to rearrange the furniture in the classroom.

Referring to the disadvantage of arranging desks in group, Cowley affirms that students are not able to see the board easily. According to this author, another disadvantage of arranging seats in group is that the desks will be difficult to fit in a large class or in a classroom where there is not so much space.

Regarding the disadvantage of U shape seating arrangement, Konza et al. (2001) say that most of the classrooms are not large enough for a single U shape or double U shape, which results in lack of eye contact between some students.

Classroom and /or Teaching Resources

Gower et al. (2005) say that educational materials are an essential component in most teaching institutions. They say that remarkable useful materials such as the board, visuals, and cassette recorder provide the basis for the lesson, the balance of skills, and practical activities for students. Gower et al. mention about the usefulness of the board, visuals, and the cassette recorder as follows: the board is essential for permanent material, for the development of a lesson, for impromptu work and for notes and reminders. Visuals attract the students' attention and aid their concentration on a lesson, add interest and variety to a class, help make language memorable, and make the classroom an attractive place to work. The cassette recorder, one of the most useful tools, is used for doing group work activities and for accessing to a language laboratory where the students can record and listen to their voice.

In addition to using the materials described above, Woodward (2001) says that teachers can use the dictionary, the box of rods, and the picture pack. The usefulness of these teaching materials mentioned by Woodward is as follows: the dictionary is a handy tool which can be helpful in many ways such as checking vocabulary, spelling, and finding synonyms and compounds words. The box of rods can be used for representing or demonstrating prepositions. The picture pack can help to generate vocabulary, to play guessing games, to create stories, and to help students relax.

Classroom Observation

According to Wajnryb (1992), observation is focused on its ground rules and in post-observation the teacher and observer can review a lesson and their factors. This author says that classroom observation has a few key elements in which trainees need time to get adapted in a language learning classroom. Wajnryb also states that when it is peer observation, experienced teachers use pre-recorded videos in training sessions so they can be effectively carried out.

Furthermore, Shinkfield and Stufflebeam (1995) mention three important aspects of observation as follows: 1) formal observation is when the teacher who observe has to look during a lesson at a teacher who is given a goal to be accomplished; 2) pre-observation conference, where the teachers meet and discuss exactly the kind of lesson, methods, classes, etc. is used for recording information collected during the formal observation process; and 3) post- observation looks back at the taught lesson through data collected to plan future actions.

Learning Styles

Nunan (2011) says that the term learning styles refers to the learner's natural and preferred way of learning. For that reason he states that learning styles are shaped by personal, cultural, and educational factors. Nunan provides useful information of some learning styles which are briefly described below.

Cognitive learners learn better a language in context. Field independent learners learn a language step by step with sequential instruction. Analytic learners work better alone at their own pace. Global learners focus on learning by working in groups. Reflective learners have more time to think before they give an answer. Impulsive learners learn effectively by answering new information as fast as they can.

Moreover, Nunan provides information of personality learning style, which is divided into the tolerance of ambiguity and the right and left hemisphere dominance. The first one shows how tolerant students are to ambiguity and the second one presents students as right or left hemisphere learners.

Furthermore, Powell and Kusuma (2011) state modality preferences in which students have a different way of taking in information. These learners' preferences are visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactual. Powell and Kusuma say that kinaesthetic learners assimilate information better when they do tasks and move around the classroom because these learners can connect reality with given information. These authors point out that tactual learners like to work with their hands to draw devices that can be used for learning actively. Powell and Kusuma say that auditory learners like to listen to oral instructions since they have difficulty following written directions. Additionally, these authors mention that visual learners learn better

through direct perception; they prefer reading, handwriting, and visual arts such as painting and collages.

Language Aptitude

For Hall (2011), the belief or idea of language aptitude is that some people have a natural ability to learn a language. Hall also says that the natural ability to learn a language is recognized by many teachers because they are well aware that in a class there are students learning more quickly than others.

Furthermore, Nikolov (2009) states that language learning aptitude involves "an individual difference in language learning and refers to the ability to acquire language at a fast and easy rate" (p. 48). Nikolov also says that "language learning aptitude is often conceptualized as a special skill which is separate from other skills" (p. 48).

In addition, Cook (2008) suggests that teachers could use information in four possible ways depending on the learner's aptitude. The first one is to choose students learning language in an easy way. The second one is to teach students with differing levels of aptitude in a different class. The third one is to instruct students with different kind of aptitude in a way that match their learning. And the last one is to "excuse learners with low aptitude from compulsory language classes" (p. 146).

To finish the literature review, it is important to mention that research on factors influencing the teaching-learning process has been conducted. The section below focuses on five studies which have been carried out to help understand better the issue being the topic of the research study of this thesis.

Chang and Goswani (2011) conducted a study to identify factors that promote or hinder EFL teachers' implementation of Communicative Language Teaching. The method used was qualitative. To collect data, the researchers conducted face-to face,

semi-structured interviews in order to investigate the participants' perceptions and experiences regarding to the research questions. The interviews were conducted in Mandarin Chinese since it is the native language of the participants. During the interviews, the researchers asked predetermined, open-ended questions, allowing for flexibility in follow-up questions. Chang and Goswami conclude that factors affecting implementation of CLT are related to teachers, students, the educational system, and suitability of CLT in the local context.

Moreover, Bala, Phil, and Bamba (2012) conducted a study to analyze the factors that influence on teaching-learning of reading ability of English language. The main instrument used for collecting data was a teachers' opinionnaire. The researchers designed the opinionnaire by generating a list of items, which solicited teachers' responses on state education system, methods of teaching used by them and socio-cultural factors that affect the teaching learning environment. The sample of the study consisted of 100 teacher who were selected at random. The collected data was tabulated in graphs to have a clear overview of the factors affecting teaching learning of English language. Bala et al. conclude that the low level of English reading ability in Haryana is due to lack of English-speaking and listening environment, frequent change of government policy in education, lack of language labs, and lack of scientific approach in teaching English.

Furthermore, Khamkhien (2010) carried out a research to determine how gender, motivation, and experience in studying English affect the choices of language learning strategies. Two groups of university students of public universities in Thailand and Vietnam were the sample of the study. The instruments used for collecting data were The 80-item Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) developed by Oxford (1990) and a background questionnaire. Khamkhien'

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conclusion is that motivation is the main factor that affects the choice of the strategies, followed by experience in studying English, and gender respectively.

Moreover, Kirkpatrick and Jianrattanapong (2012) conducted a research in Bangkok. The purpose of the study was to investigate factors contributing to English learning success of Thai students at the leading high schools in Bangkok. The instrument used for collecting data was a questionnaire. This questionnaire consisted of close-ended and open-ended questions using likert scale with 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = neutral, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree. The questionnaire included general views on: the English teachers, attitudes to English and culture, the use of learning strategies, outside class learning activities, students' background, and personality traits. The questionnaire also included respondent's information such as personal information of gender, type of school, program, practice, skills, experience abroad, effects from the entrance examination, etc. Kirkpatrick and Jianrattanapong' conclusion is that the factors leading to success in learning English include teachers, attitudes toward English and its culture, activities outside the classroom, personality traits, and students' background.

In addition, Ogiegbaen and Iyamu (2006) conducted a research to examine factors that affect quality of English language teaching and learning in secondary schools in Nigeria. The instruments used for collecting data were questionnaires and interviews. The designed questionnaires generated a list of items, which solicited students' responses on teaching strategies, instructional resources/media used by the teachers, and the teaching/learning environment. The items in the questionnaire were derived from literature and the researcher's experience in the field. The range of data collection instruments employed increased the researcher's ability to examine the nature and frequency with which certain variables occurred in the research setting.

Aduwa and Iyamu conclude that in public secondary school in Nigeria students do not learn English language effectively because the schools are overcrowded, the furniture is not comfortable for proper sitting, and the classrooms are without proper lighting and ventilation.
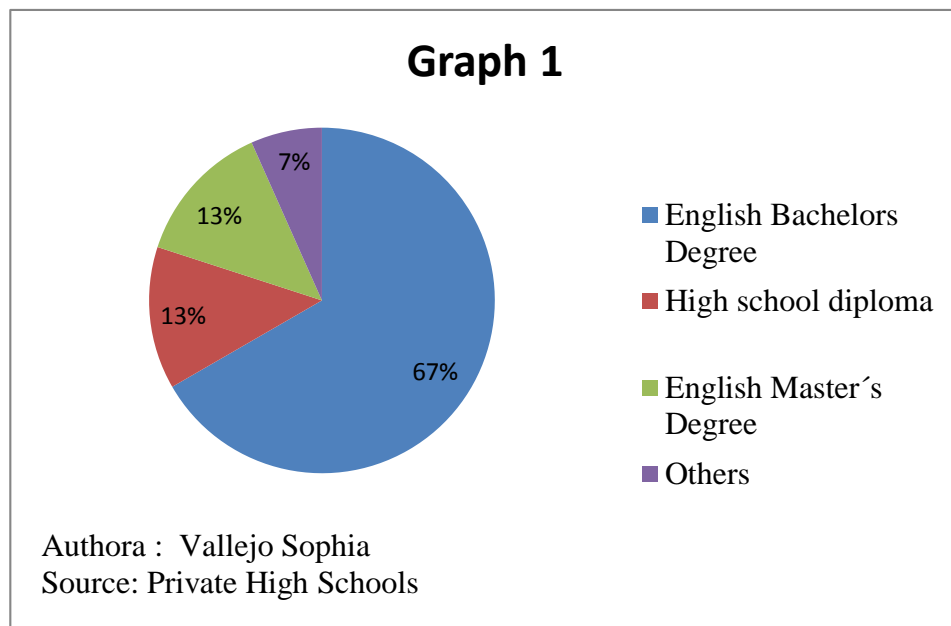
Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

In this section, the collected information will be examined using quantitative analysis. For this purpose, the results obtained during the field research will be divided into four main factors which concern teachers, students, classroom, and institution.

Quantitative Analysis

Factors Concerning Teachers

Which level of education do teachers have?

Graph 1

- English Bachelors Degree
- High school diploma
- English Master´s Degree
- Others

7%
13%
13%
67%

Authora : Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High Schools

Graph 1 shows that the level of education of the observed teachers is as follows: 67% of the observed teachers have an English Bachelor's Degree; 13% of them have a Master's Degree; 13% of the educators have a High School Diploma; and one teacher (7%) has another degree. By using The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), fourteen teachers were placed in higher advanced level (C2), and one teacher was placed in lower advanced level (C1).

It is important to mention that nine teachers placed in C2 have an English Bachelor's Degree; likewise, the teacher placed in C1 has an English Bachelor's Degree; two teachers placed in C2 have an English Master's Degree; two teachers placed in C2 have a High School Diploma, and one of the teachers placed in C2 has an undergraduate degree in Philosophy. As it can be seen, most of the observed teachers have studied to get some type of Degree in teaching English.

The results above were obtained by applying an interview to all the teachers who participated in the research. Furthermore, it is necessary to remark that the interview was used as a means of knowing the language proficiency level of the teachers, for which The CEFR was used so that the educators were placed in their corresponding level indicated above.

Moreover, during the interview, 70% of the fifteen interviewed teachers spoke English clearly and naturally whereas 30% of them did it nervously. In spite of this fact, all the teachers kept their conversation going fluently.

Furthermore, an important point to mention is that the teachers were administered a written questionnaire which included fourteen questions. All the questions were answered according to the English level of the surveyed teachers.

Additionally, it is important to mention that both the teachers who have an English Bachelor's Degree and those who have an English Master's Degree demonstrated a competent level of knowledge and skill to teach the foreign language. However, one of the two teachers having a High school Diploma did not demonstrate creativity and ability to teach English effectively, and it affected the teaching-learning process in a negative way.

At this point, the researcher would like to comment that it is important and necessary for teachers to have either a Bachelor's Degree or Master's degree in

teaching EFL since they must be well-instructed to teach the foreign language effectively and successfully.

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

Graph 2

- CLT
- 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

Authora : Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High Schools
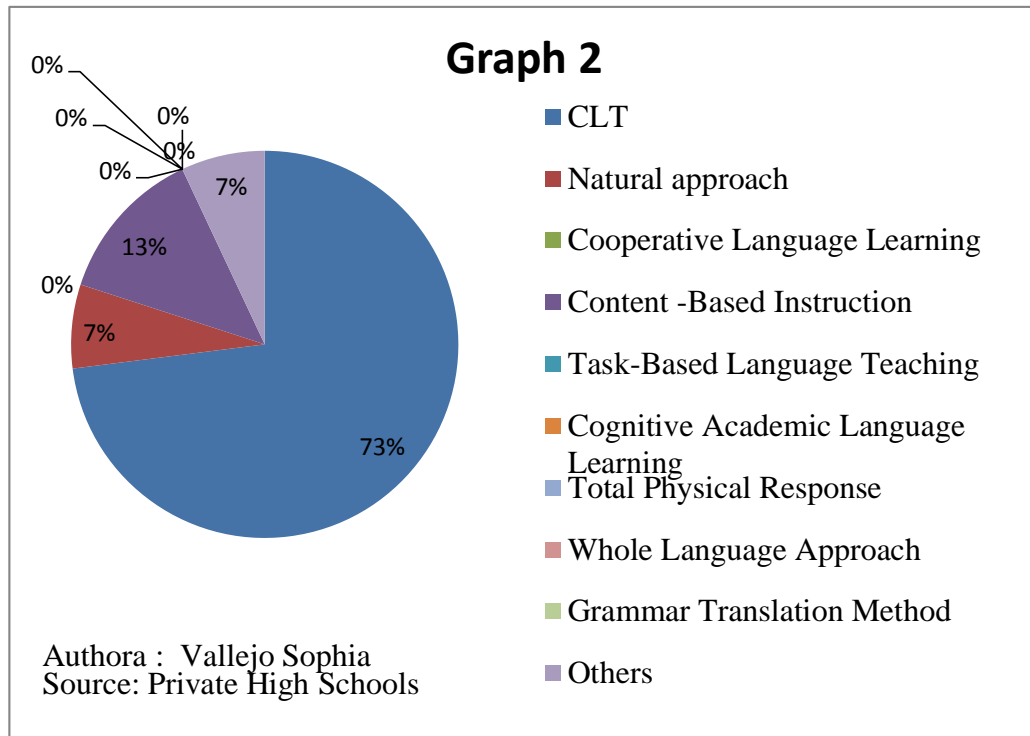
Graph 2 shows that eleven (73%) of the fifteen teachers said that they use Communicative Language Teaching, two teachers (13%) mentioned that they use Content-Based Instruction, one teacher (7%) stated that she uses the Natural Approach, and one teacher (7%) said that she uses others and all the teaching methods displayed on graph 2 above.

During the observed classes, Communicative Language Teaching was the most common teaching method used since in 80% of the lessons, the students learned English with the help of this method. Moreover, the Natural Approach was used in 20% of the lessons. It can be seen clearly that the results gathered through the teachers' interview do not coincide with those obtained in the observations because only two of the four methods mentioned by the teachers were used in their English

lessons. Besides, Communicative Language Teaching and the Natural Approach were used in different percentage than the one mentioned in the interview. That is, the percentage of use of these methods was higher than the percentage showed in graph 2 above.

Regarding the students' survey, 87% of them mentioned that they like to learn English in the way the teacher teach their lessons. However, 13% of the students mentioned that they do not like the way English is taught. To complement what the students said in the survey, it is relevant to say that in the fifteen observed classes, the teachers made the students do grammar activities, read books, and perform interactive games. When doing these types of tasks, in thirteen of the fifteen observed classes the students were motivated and enthusiastic to participate in all the activities assigned by the teachers.

An important point to mention about teaching approaches is that Salandanan (2008) say that "methods play a vital role in teaching (…) Therefore, every teacher must be equipped with knowledge of various teaching approaches with the ability to employ each of them with proficiency" (p.5). What this author mentions was not considered by the teachers because they only used two teaching approaches in the observed lessons.

Do teachers use whole group activities to teach their lessons?

Graph 3

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
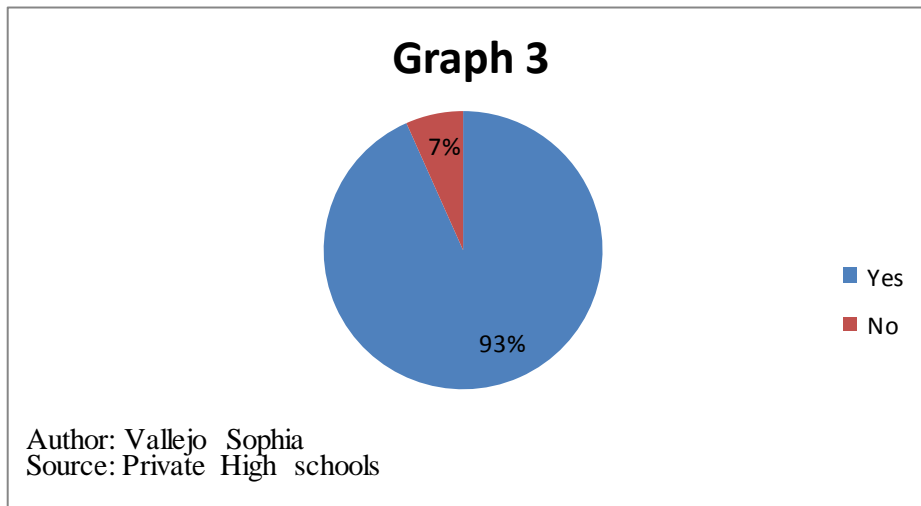
This graph shows that in the survey 93% of the teachers said that they use whole-group activities. These teachers mentioned that through whole-group activities, the students interact with their classmates and cooperate among them. This 93% of the teachers also commented that whole-group activities encourage a dynamic participation of the students in the classes. On the other hand, one teacher (7%) said that she does not use whole-group activities because of the time. This teacher meant that the time taking to develop a lesson is not enough to make the students work in groups.

It is important to mention that the results obtained through the teachers' survey coincide with those gathered by observing classes since in 93% of the EFL lessons, the teachers made the students do activities in group.

Regarding the survey applied to the students, 89% of them mentioned that they are encouraged to learn English when developing whole-group activities. During the observations, in 14 lessons where the teachers used whole-group activities, most of the students did their tasks in a motivating and enthusiastic way. However, there were a very a few students who were not willing to participate in class because they

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looked as though they were shy. All of this means that the results obtained by observing classes coincide with those collected through the students' survey.

It is worth mentioning that Vale and Feunteun (1995) say that EFL lessons must include activities that encourage the support and enjoyment of the learners in a group. Taking into consideration Vale and Feunteun's comment, it was observed that when the students involved in whole-group activities, most of them enjoyed learning English and helping their classmates when needed.

Do teachers use individual activities to teach their lessons?

Graph 4

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
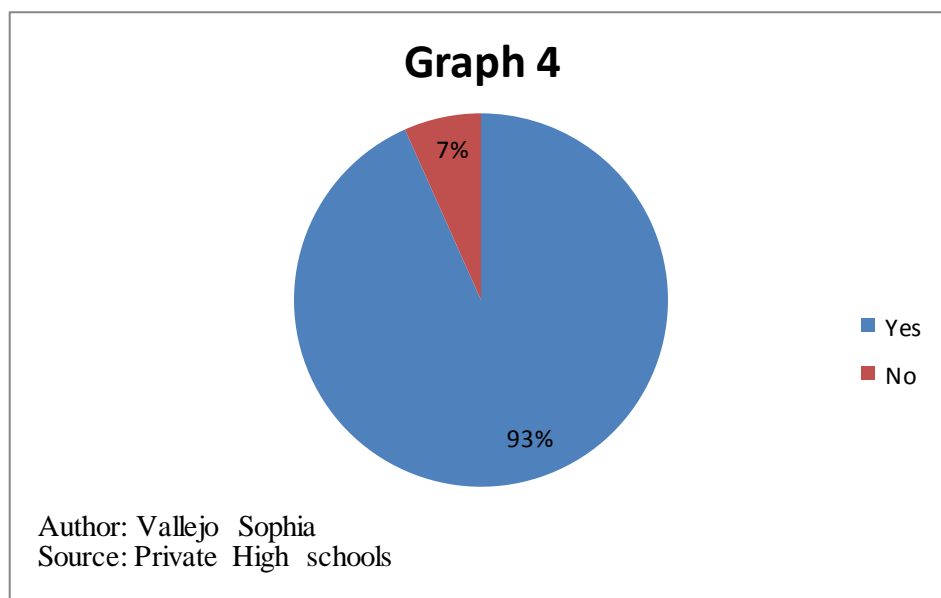
This graph shows that 93% of the teachers in the survey said that they use individual activities. Three reasons given by the teachers about using individual activities in their EFL classes are as follows: 1) the English knowledge of the students differs from each other; 2) individual activities enable to evaluate the students individually; and 3) all the students do not learn in the same way because of their preferred learning styles.

On the other hand, one reason given by a teacher (7%) for not including individual activities in the EFL lessons was that these kinds of tasks take so much time to be done in a class.

In the observed lessons, only 47% (seven teachers) used individual activities in their classes whereas 53% (eight teachers) did not make the students learn English with the help of individual activities. This means that the results collected by surveying the teachers are not the same as those gathered by observing classes. In spite of this fact, it is important to comment that in 47% of the classes where the students did individual activities, it was observed that the teachers could check the progress of the whole class and assisted the students when necessary.

Regarding the survey applied to the students, 80% of them mentioned that they are motivated to learn English through activities done individually. In the observed classes, all the students were motivated to participate in individual activities. In fact, some of students were so motivated by doing such tasks that they wanted to keep on learning English.

One important point to comment is that Richards and Farrell (2011) say that individual tasks enable students to work at their own pace and to do activities suited to their interests. These authors also say that individual activities help teachers to provide students with individual help. Based on the information provided by Richards and Farrell about individual work, it is worth mentioning that in the observed classes, the teachers made the students work on individual activities which were suited to their interest, and they learned English at their own pace by working individually. Moreover, the students got the individual assistance of the teacher when it was necessary.

Do teachers use group work activities to teach their lessons?

Graph 5

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
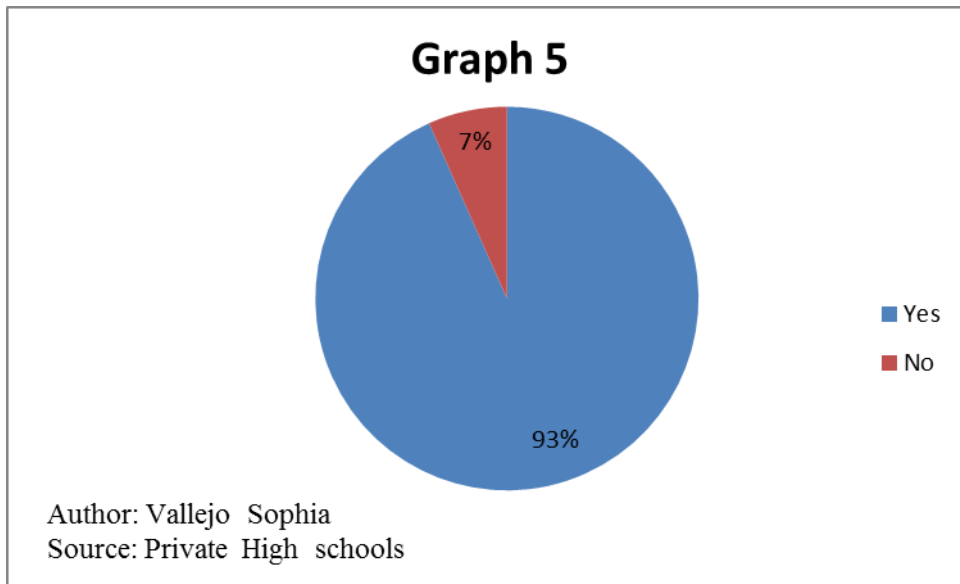
Graph 5 shows that 93% of the teachers mentioned that they do group work activities in their classes whereas 7% (one teacher) said that she does not use group work activities. The reasons given by the teachers to use group work activities are as follows: a) these tasks provide dynamism to the class; b) group work activities allows the students to interchange ideas; c) when the students work in group, they cooperate among them; and c) by doing activities in group, the students have the opportunity to increase their knowledge of vocabulary since one student can learn from another one whose level of English is higher than the other.

Although 93% of the observed teachers mentioned using group work activities in their classes, only 7% made the students learn English with the help of group work activities. This teacher asked the class to form groups of five students, and he gave them colored-cards of prepositions (in, for, of, and with) so that each student said a word to construct simple sentences of what was being learned. It was observed that most of the students liked to do this activity in group because they were thrilled, motivated, and had fun.

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One important point to comment about group work activities is that Stein (2007) says that these types of tasks involve the students in leading to more independence of constructing an exercise on their own while they have fun by working in group. As it is mentioned in the paragraph above, by doing group work activities, the students construct their own sentences and had fun.

Another relevant point to comment is that 80% of the students in the survey answered that they like to learn English through group work activities. It was already mentioned that most of the students liked to learn English by working in group; therefore, the results obtained in the students' survey are similar to those collected by observing EFL classes.

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

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
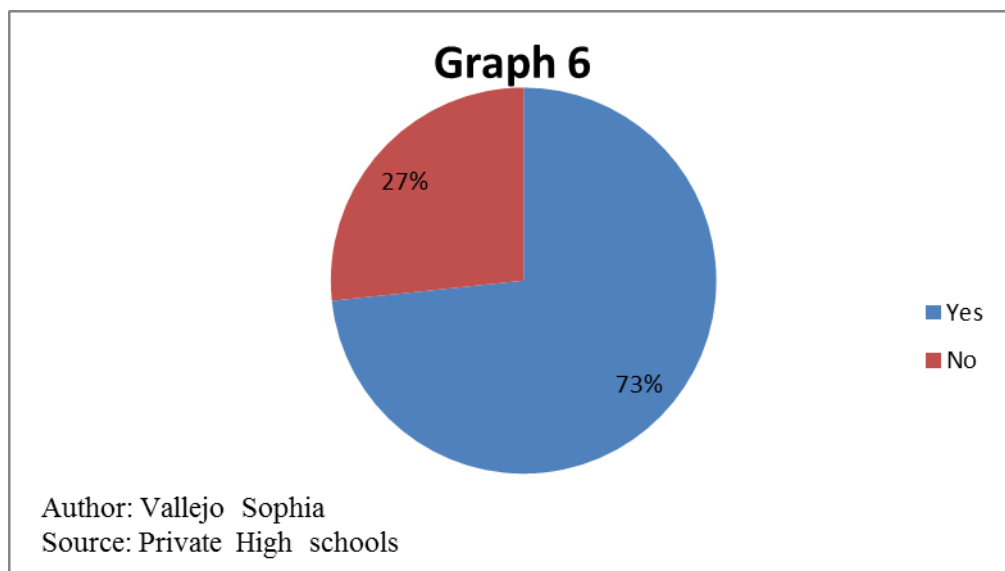
Graph 6 shows that 73% of the teachers said that they usually use English in their classes, but 27% of them mentioned that they do not use English most of the time in their classes. According to the students' survey, 93% of them affirmed that their teachers use English most of the time in the classes while 7% (one student) did not agree with their classmates. In the observed classes, the percentages in which the teachers use English in their classes were as follows: nine teachers spoke 100% of

English which is equivalent to 60% of the all observed educators; four teachers spoke 75% of English which corresponds to 27% of the observed teachers; and 2 teachers spoke 50% of English which is equivalent to 13% of the educators who were observed.

As it can be seen in graph 6 above, the results obtained through the teachers' survey are different from the ones collected by observing classes. Besides, the teachers who spoke 50% of English also spoke in Spanish in order to translate some of the content that the students did not understand during the lessons.

It is worth commenting that Davies and Pearse (2000) mention that an important objective in an English language course, even with beginners, is to establish English as the main language of the classroom. Taking into consideration the statement of these authors, it is relevant to say that nine observed teachers used English as the main classroom language to help their students develop their listening, speaking, writing, and reading skills in an effective way.

Do teachers plan their lessons?

Graph 7

0%

100%

■ Yes
■ No

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
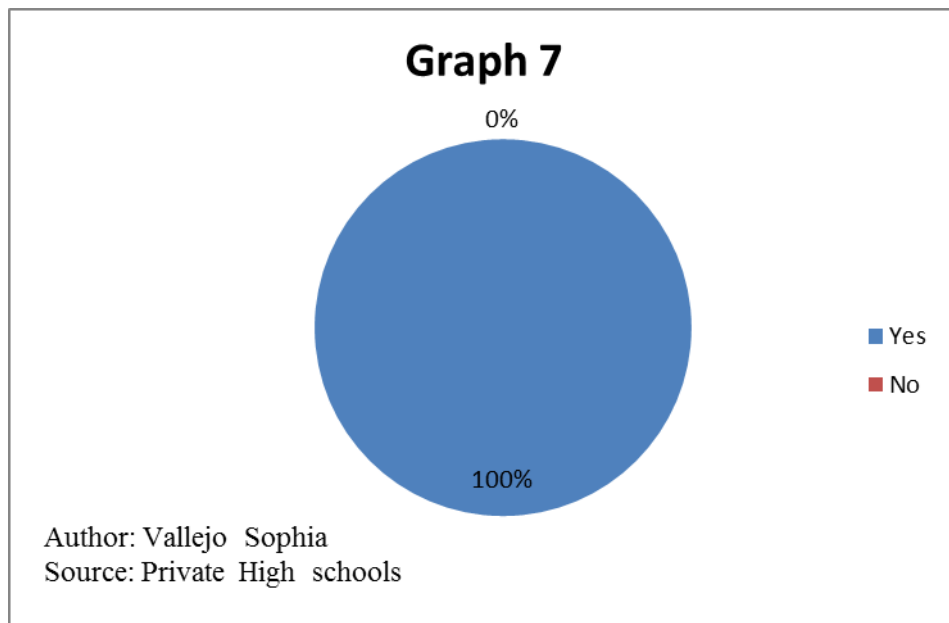
This graph shows that 100% of the teachers said that they plan their lessons. It was somehow confirmed during the observed classes because the teachers had prepared a lesson plan which included aims, warm up, main activities, stages and procedures to be followed in their classes. Moreover, the teachers also used and followed a coursebook in a very organized way. Hence, it can be said that all the teachers had planned their lessons.

It is necessary to say that Gower et al. (2005) mention that a lesson plan must have an objective to recognize the main parts of the lesson. Furthermore, Clark and Starr (1981) affirm that the objective of a lesson is a precise statement of what is going to be learned in a lesson. What Gower et al. (2005) and Clark and Starr (1981) mention about this point is true because in the observed classes, the lesson plans that the teacher used had clear objectives of what was going to be learned and contained the stages or main parts to be followed during the lessons.

In addition, it is necessary to mention that planning lessons is very useful to teach an English class in an organized and effective way. In fact, a well-planned

lesson contributes to facilitating the teaching and learning process and helps to create an environment where students do their tasks actively and participatively.

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

Graph 8

Yes 100%
No 0%

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
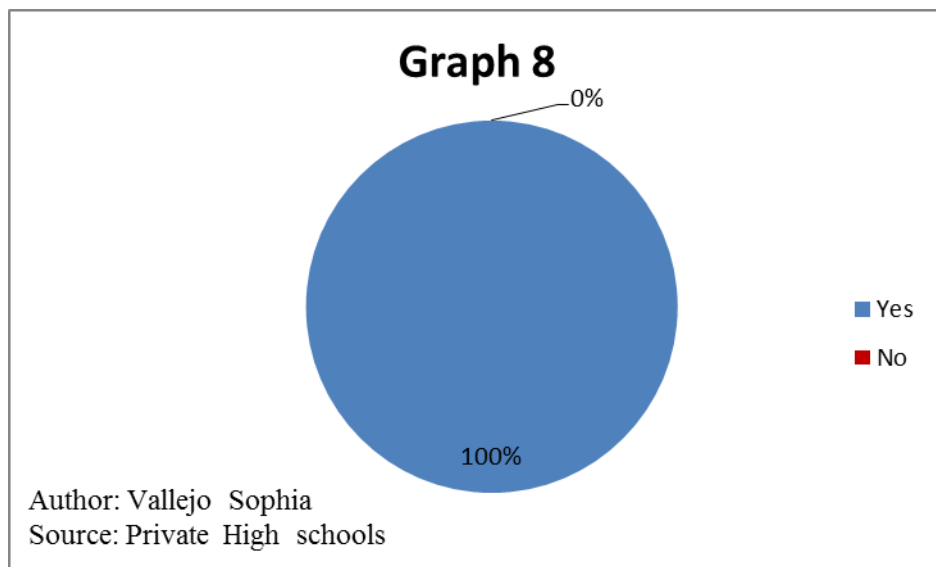
This graph shows that 100% of the surveyed teachers said that they consider discipline, timing, feedback, and instruction to teach their lessons. According to the students' survey, 87% of them said that discipline is controlled by the teachers; 100% said that timing is taken into account by the teachers; and 87% of the students said that feedback and instruction are considered in the English classes. During the observed classes, 33% of the teachers gave the students clear instructions to develop their tasks; these teachers also explained and repeated the instructions to make sure that the whole class understands the task that was going to be done. Moreover, the students were asked to see if they had understood the instruction given to them.

Regarding discipline, 26% of teachers had a little trouble with a few students who started to disturb and interrupt the classes; however, the teachers could handle very well the situation to make these students focus on the English lessons. That is,

the teachers handled this trouble by being quiet and then by raising a little bit their voice until they got the attention of their students to continue with the EFL lessons.

In relation to timing, 22% of the teachers considered the time for each activity in the class because they let the students know the time they had to complete a task. It means that in the observed classes, timing was determined by the activities done because the teachers let the students know how long a task was going to take.

An important point to note about timing is that Maxom (2009) mentions that it is necessary both to tell the students how long they have for a particular activity and to let them know before the time is up. What this author mentions about this point was considered in the observed classes because the teachers told the students the time allotted for an activity and let them know when the time was going to be up.

With regard to feedback, 19% of the teachers gave feedback to their students. Feedback was given as follows: 1) the students went to the front of the class to ask for clarification when they did not understand something; and 2) the teachers went to the students' desks to help them with something they were having difficulty; and 3) the teachers clarified and corrected what was necessary. By giving feedback, the teachers made students grateful and happy to learn English.

It is worth commenting that Peart and Campell (1999) say that effective teachers give students feedback in a supportive and encouraging way. During the observed classes, the teachers gave feedback in a manner that it was supportive and encouraging to students. That is, the observed teachers took into consideration what Peart and Campell state about the way to give feedback.

*Do teachers consider Students' needs to teach English successfully?*
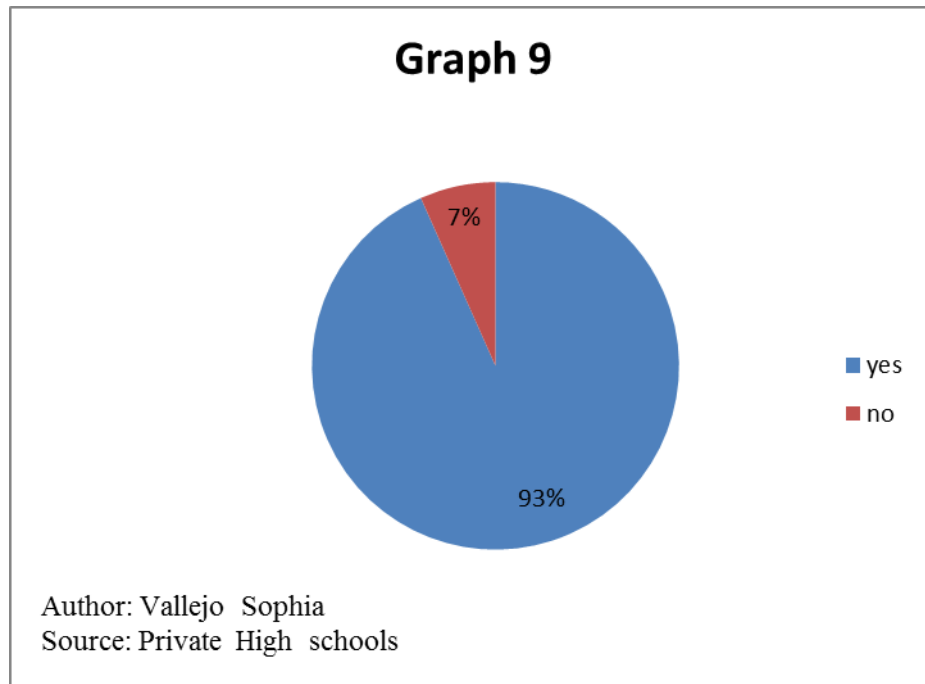
This graph shows that 93 % of the teachers in the survey mentioned that they consider students' needs to teach English whereas one teacher (7%) mentioned that she does not consider students' needs to teach English because the students are grouped by age. Of course, this reason is not considered by the researcher as a strong argument for such a statement because the age of the students is also necessary to be considered in the EFL classes.

Regarding the observed classes, 100% of the teachers considered some of the students' needs to teach English. That is, the teachers took into consideration three types of learning styles such as auditory, visual, and analytic. These three learning styles were taken into consideration by making students work with the help of visual and audio material. Moreover, the teachers provided the students with a diversity of activities appropriate for their age, and through these activities, the students' aptitude and motivation to learn English was stimulated.

It is important to comment that Richards and Bohlke (2011) mentions that in language classes there are students whose needs are different from those of their peers. Richards and Bohlke' statement is true because in the observed classes some learners had similar needs and goals, whereas others had many different needs. In spite of this fact, most of the teachers made a great effort to meet at least some of the students' needs such as learning styles, age, motivation, and aptitude to learn English.

Do teachers consider Students'level to teach English successfully?

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
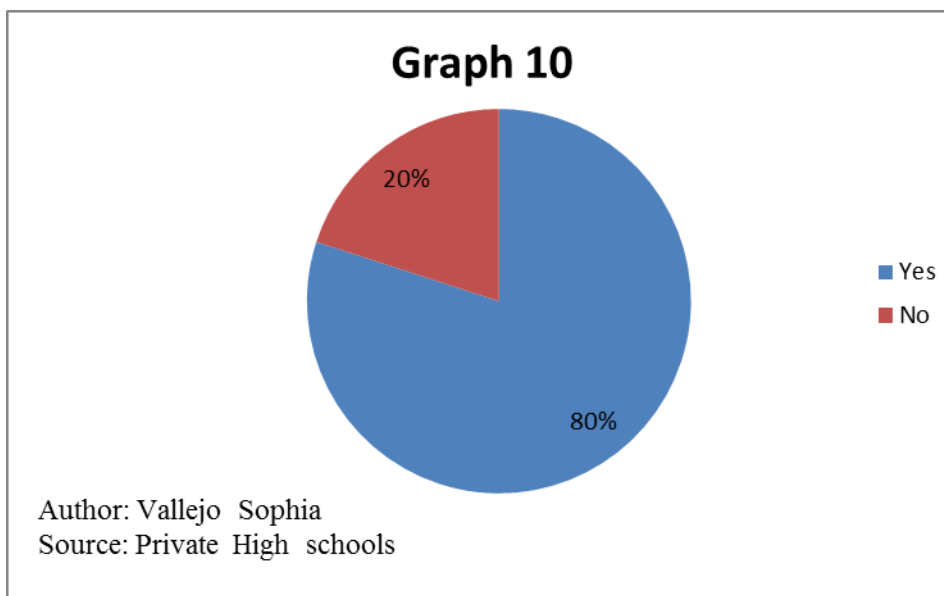
Graph 10 shows that 80% of the teachers mentioned that they consider the students' level to teach English successfully, to motivate them every day in the lesson, and to get better results in the EFL classes. On the other hand, two teachers mentioned that they do not consider the students' level to teach English. A reason given for one of these teachers is that the students are not divided by their English level. It is necessary to say that one teacher did not answer whether she considers the level of the class to teach English.

In the student' survey, 53% of them mentioned that the activities done in class are easy for them to do, 33% of the students mentioned that the activities are very easy to be developed; however, 13% of the students mentioned that the activities done in class are difficult to be done.

During the observed classes, the English level of the students was considered since the activities assigned by the teachers were done by the students without any problem. That is, in the observed classes, the students did activities targeted at their English level. Some of this activities included doing simple exercises in 'simple present', 'present continuous', 'simple past', 'active and passive voice', 'gradable words', and 'non-gradable adjectives'.

It is important to say that Harmer (2011) suggests adjusting the classroom language to the level of the students. The same author also recommends that the language materials should be used by educators in accordance with the level of their students and taking into consideration length, genre, and complexity.

Which is the level of the students?

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
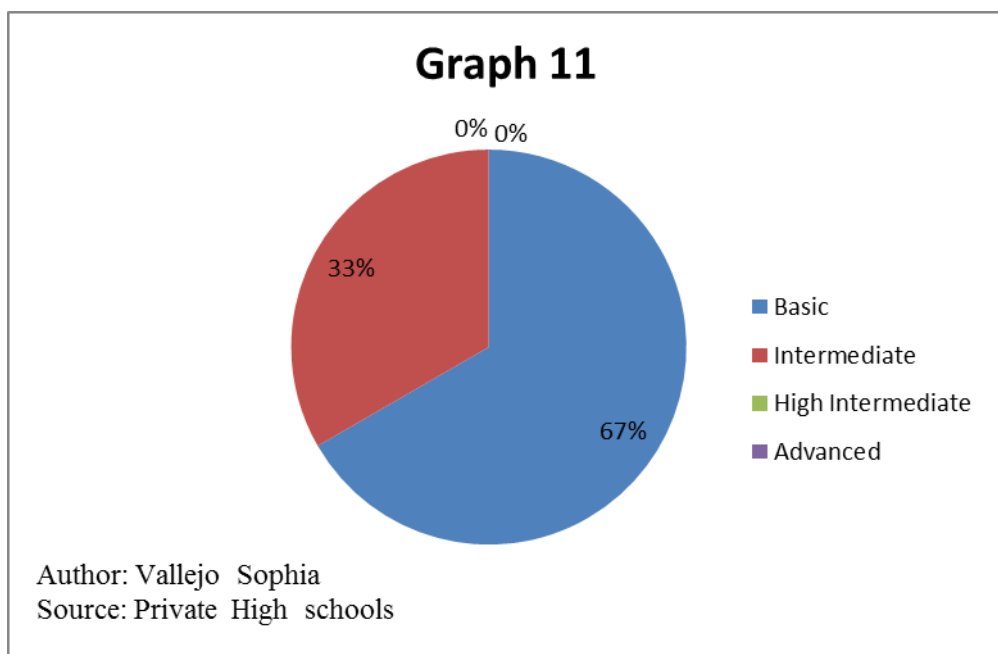
This graph shows that 67% of the teachers mentioned that the level of their students is basic, while 33% of the teachers mentioned that the students have an intermediate English level. Nevertheless, it was observed that all the students (100%) had a Basic English level because the activities done by them in class were targeted at their level and were quite simple and easy to be done. This was already mentioned in graph 10 above.

It is important to mention that Durán (2006) says that, "Knowing the levels of student's English language proficiency is very important when trying to determine how to assist the students with instruction in the classroom" (p. 405). What this author states is true since EFL teachers have to help their students and teach them according to their level.

Referring to the observed classes, the teachers could assist the students and provided them with tasks suited to their English language proficiency. However, it is necessary to comment that not all the educators knew the level of the students because what they mentioned in the survey did not agree with what was observed; that is, some teachers in the survey said that the level of the students is intermediate, but they taught their lessons by using teaching materials suited to basic level; indeed, these materials were very simple and easy for the learners' understanding and language proficiency.

How many students are there in the observed classrooms?

Graph 12

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
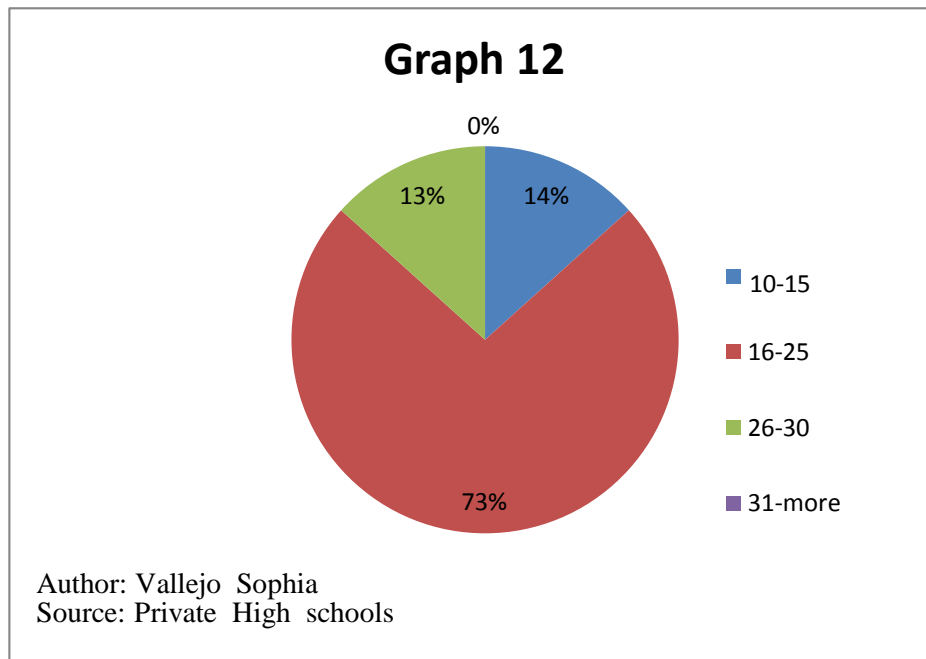
Graph 12 shows that 73% of the teachers worked with 16-25 students in their classes, 14% of the teachers worked with 10-15 students, and 13% of the teachers worked with 26-30 students. It was observed that the teachers who worked with 10-15 students were more able to make the class get better results.

It is worth commenting here that Flood (2003) states that smaller classes create a good learning environment so that students can achieve better results. In the observed classes, the teachers working with 10-15 students created an English learning environment appropriate for the achievement of effective results.

In accordance with the students' survey, 80% of them mentioned that they learn English better because the number of classmates is small. The students also said that in small classes they have an opportunity to learn in a personalized way. During the observed classes, most of the students learned English in the way they mentioned in the survey.

Do teachers feel comfortable working with this number of students?

Graph 13

20%

80%

- Yes
- No

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
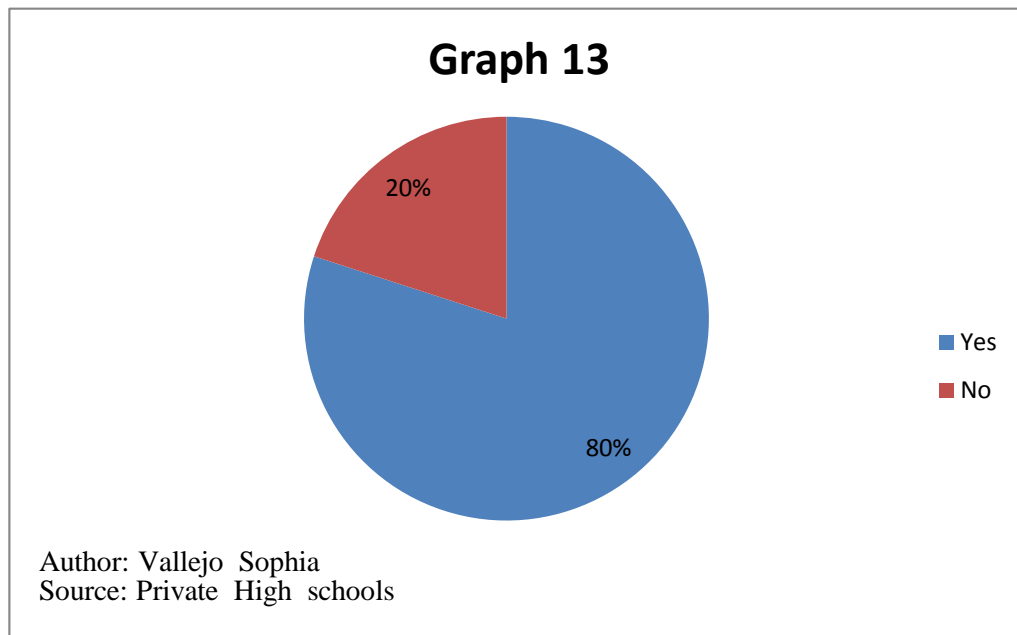
Graph 13 shows that 80% of the teachers mentioned that they feel comfortable working with the number of students they have in their classes. Nevertheless, 3 teachers (20%) mentioned that they do not feel comfortable working with the number of students who attend their classes. Two of these teachers argued that they prefer to teach to a smaller group of 15-16 students, and the other teacher said that she does not feel comfortable working with the number of students in her class because there are too many learners in a small classroom.

Regarding the students' survey, 87% of them said that they feel comfortable working with the number of students in the class while 13% of the students mentioned negatively. These students argued that the class is too small for the amount of students; they also said that more space in needed to develop different activities in their classes.

In the observed classes, all the teachers, in spite of the number of students, could manage to make the students learn English without any problem. Moreover,

it was observed that all the students felt comfortable when working with the number of classmates attending the lessons.

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

Graph 14

27%

73%

■ Yes

■ No

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
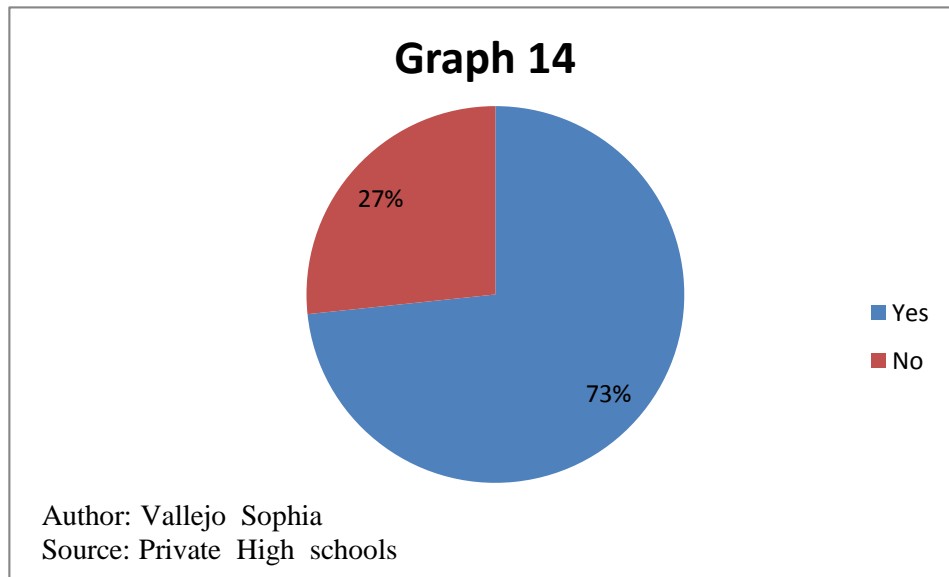
Graph 14 shows that 73% of the teachers answered in the survey that they have enough space to work with their students, whereas 27% of educators said that the space where they work is not big enough to teach their lessons. In relation to the students' survey, 80% of them mentioned that the classrooms space is enough to do different activities.

During the observation, in 80% of the classes there was enough space to make students do the activities planned by their teachers. However, in 20% of the observed classes, the teachers did not have plenty of space to make the students learn English in a comfortable way although the space of the classroom did no limit the teaching-learning process.

It is necessary to say that Mcleod, Fisher, and Hoover (2003) affirm that classroom space affects the quality of the instructional program since teachers must try to create a rich atmosphere in every inch of the room to enhance students'

learning experiences. What these authors mention about classroom space is closely related to the observed classes because most of the teachers created, in those classrooms with enough space, an environment conducive to teaching, which enabled the students to increase their learning experiences by working on their tasks in a comfortable and motivating way.

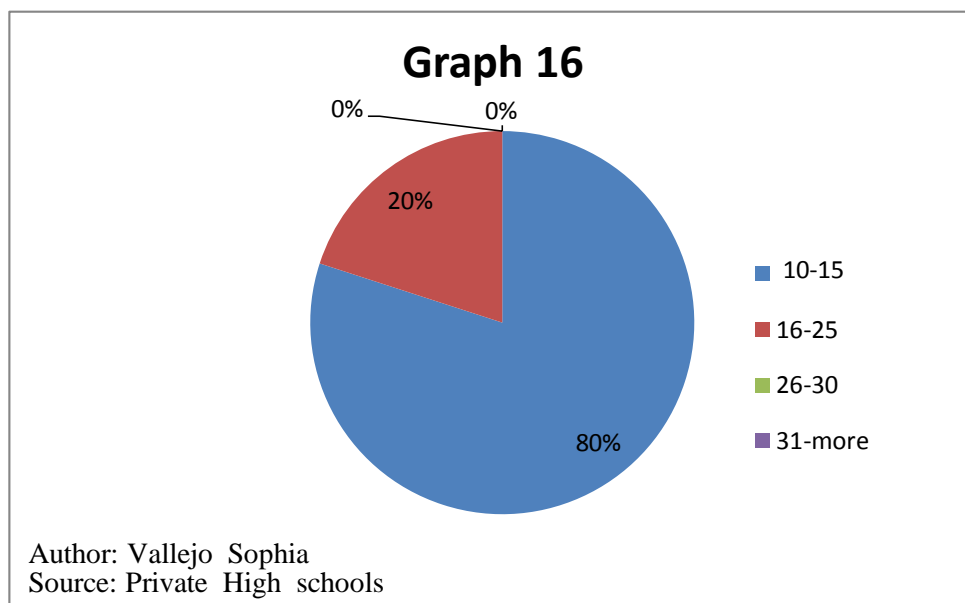*Do teachers arrange students' seats in relation to the activities planned for their classes?*

Graph 15

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
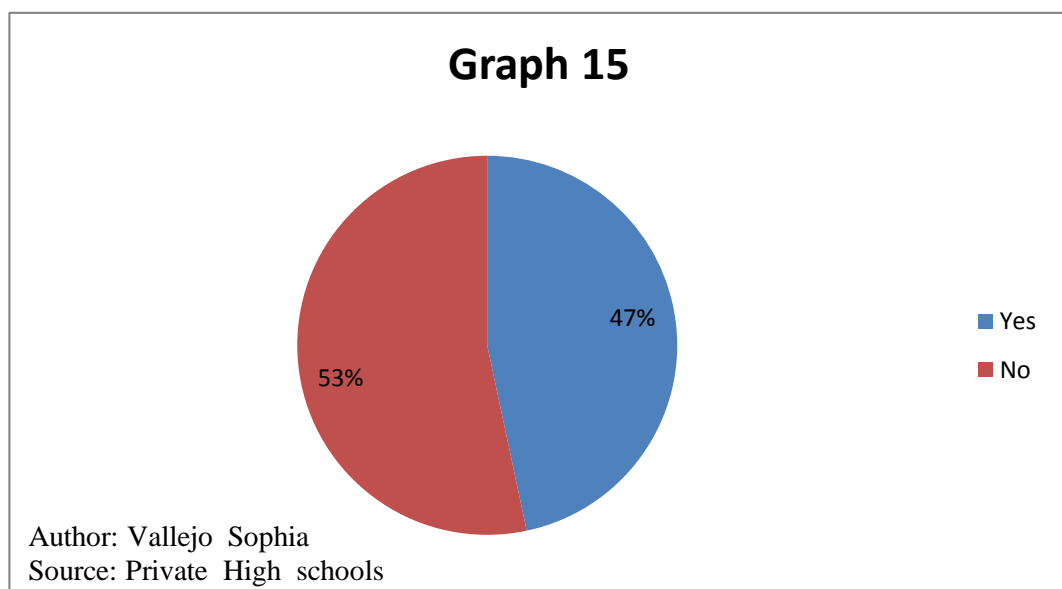
This graph shows that 47% of the teachers mentioned that they arrange the students' desks in order to have a total control of the group and to make the students work in a confortable way. However, 53% of the teachers mentioned that they do not change the seating arrangement of their classes. The arguments of these teachers are as follows: 1) the students work individually unless it is a group activity in which the they have assigned seats; 2) the students have to work comfortably without moving their seats; 3) when the students are asked to work in groups, most of the time they want to play; and 4) the students seats are assigned with their names on their desks.

Regarding the students' survey, 87% of them answered that they like the way the teacher arrange the desks in their classes. In contrast, 13% of the students mentioned that they do not like the way that the teachers arrange the desks in their classes.

During the observed classes, the fifteen teachers made the students work in rows; that is, the teachers did not ask the students to arrange their seats in a different way that the one mentioned here. The results obtained by surveying the students and teachers are not the same as those gathered by observing classes.

It is important to comment that Cowley (2009) mentions that seating arrangement in secondary schools are done either in rows or in groups. This author affirms that the advantage of arranging desks in rows is that it is easier to check the students' work because they are facing in the front of the class. What this author mentions about this point is true because it was observed that teachers could check the work of the students whose desks were in rows facing in the front of the class.

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

Graph 16

0%   0%

20%

80%

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

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools

This graph shows that 80% of the teachers prefer to work with 10-15 students. These teachers mentioned the this number of students enables them to teach more English, to make teaching more interactive, to give personalized attention, and to have students to do all kind of activities. The teachers also mentioned that teaching a small group, helps the students to get a better education.

On the other hand, 20% of the teachers mentioned that they prefer to work with 16-25 students. The teachers mentioned that if they worked with 26-30 and more than 31 students, it would be impossible to check the tasks of the learners. Considering that 80% of the observed teacher prefer to work with 10-15 students, it is necessary to say that "the small number of learners promotes engagement between learners, the instructor, and the content (Jeffries & Huggett, 2010, pp.27). Jeffries and Huggett's statement is true because during the observed lessons, the teachers who worked with a small number of students encouraged the whole class to involve in the content that was being taught.

Furthermore, it is necessary to mention that some students stated that they feel comfortable learning English with the number of classmates because they have the opportunity to be given individual attention of their teacher. In fact, the students affirmed that 10-15 students is an ideal and appropriate number to learn the target language in a personalized way.

Do teachers use teaching resources (TV, Tape/Cd record, Computer(s), Projector(s),

Smartboard, and supplementary materials)?

Graph 17

Yes 86%

No 7%

sometimes 7%

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
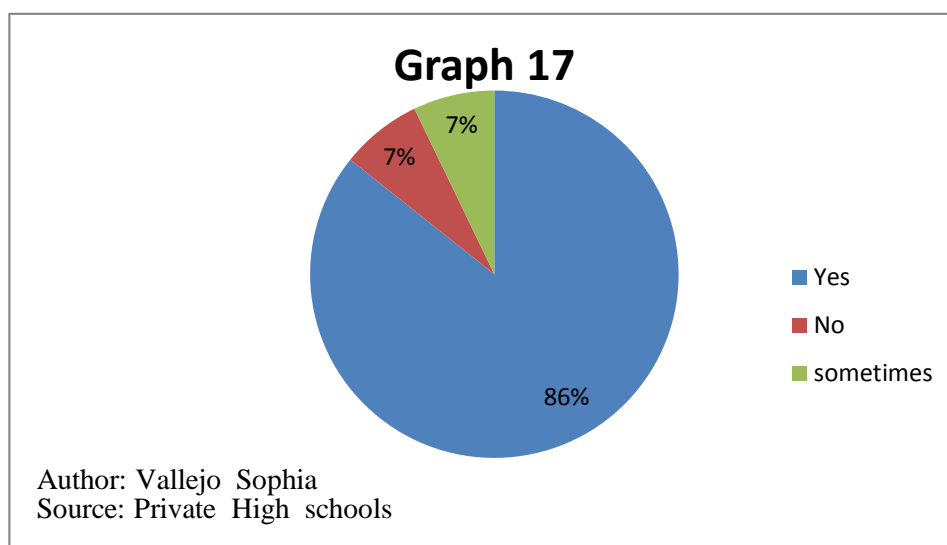
Graph 17 shows that 86% of the teachers mentioned that they use TV, Tape/Cd recorder, Computer (s), Projector (s), Smartboard, and supplementary materials; one teacher (7%) stated that she uses these teaching material sometimes, not always; and another teacher (7%) answered that she does not use TV, Tape/Cd record, Computer (s), Projector (s), Smartboard, and supplementary materials.

In relation to the survey applied to the students, 73% of them affirmed that the teachers use TV, Tape/Cd record, Computer (s), Projector (s), Smartboard, and supplementary materials to teach their lessons. On the other hand, 27% of the students said that their teachers do not use TV, Computer(s) and Projector (s) to teach English.

In one observed class, a teacher used his computer for projecting visual material onto the board in order to make the students both answer 10 multiple-choice questions and match 10 sentences with their correct meaning. In another observed class, a the teacher used her iPod for presenting the topic of the lesson. In

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this case, this teacher with the help of her iPod showed the students places to go on vacations. Aditionally, it is necessary to mention that most of the observed teachers used the whiteboard and coursebook to teach English.

It is important to point out that by working with the teaching materials mentioned in the paragraph above, the students enjoyed, had fun, showed interest and motivation, and put attention to the English lessons.

Furthermore, it is necessary to say that Gower et al. (2005) mention that the board is essential for the development of a lesson and for notes and reminders. Considering what these authors sate about the use of the whiteboard, it is worth commenting that in the classes where this teaching material was used, it was observed that the teachers used the whiteboard for developing a lesson and for putting notes and reminders.

Do teachers consider appropriate the resources they have in class?

Graph 18

40%

60%

■ Yes

■ No

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
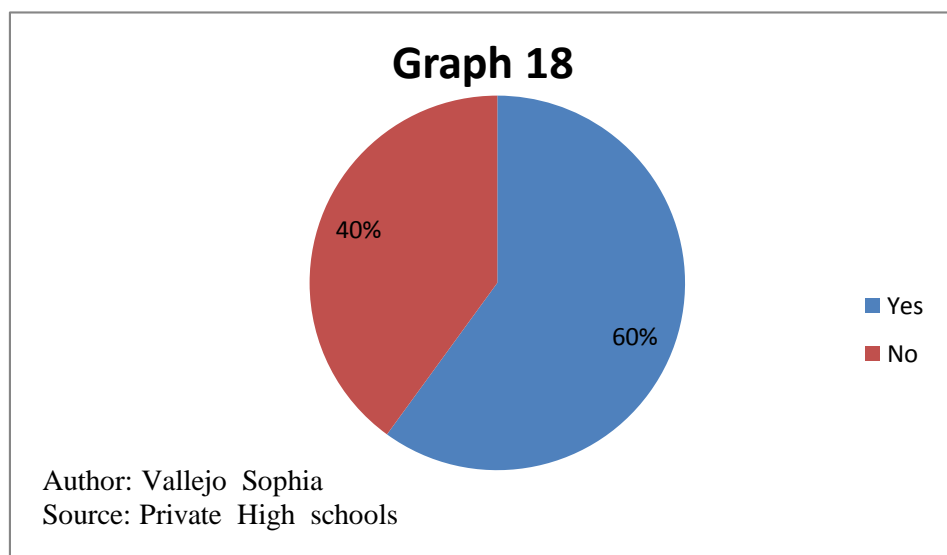
Graph 18 shows that 60% of the teachers considers the resources they have in class to be appropiate to teach their lessons. On the other hand, 40% of the teachers do not consider the resources they have in their class to be appropriate to teach their

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lessons. The reasons given by these teachers are as follows:1) a lab of English is needed; 2) there should be all the teaching resources in one classroom; 3) Internet and more laptops are needed; and 4) there should be a projector in the classroom. For these reasons six of the fifteen observed teachers do not consider the teaching resources they have in class to be appropriate to teach their lessons.

It is necessary to comment that Gower et al. (2005) state that "teaching institutios vary enormously in the number and type of resources available to teachers (…) However, even in a relatively poorly-resourced school there are ways that simple and ' home-made' resources can be used to good effect in lessons" (65). What Gower et al. (2005) say is worth considering, especially when the teaching resources available in a institution are not appropiate to teach a lesson as it is the case of the institutions where the observed teachers work.

Factors Concerning Educational Institution

Do the institutions review teachers lesson plans?

Graph 19

7%

93%

■ Yes
■ No

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High schools
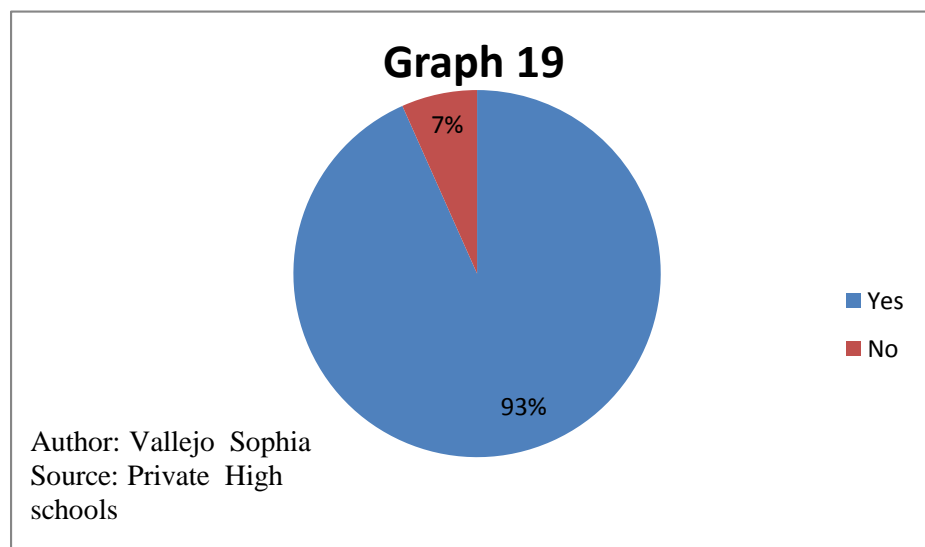
Graph 19 shows that 93% of the teachers mentioned that the institutions reviews their lesson plans. These teachers mentioned that their lessons plans are reviewed in the percentage as follows: 47% once a month, 13% once a week, and

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33% others. On the other hand, 7% of the teachers affirmed that their lesson plans are not reviewed by the instituion they work for.

During the observations, no authorithy reviewed the lesson plans of the teachers despite the fact that some teachers mentioned in the survey that their lesson plans are reviewed once a week and a once a month.

It is worth commenting that Richards and Bolke (2011) states that teachers have to plan their lesson to choose and systemize the strategies and procedures of their classes so that they can teach successfully. Moreover, it is necessary to mention that authorites and educational institutions have to review the teacher' lesson plans to contribute to the quality of English language teaching.

Does the institution monitor teaching?

Graph 20

Author: Vallejo Sophia
Source: Private High
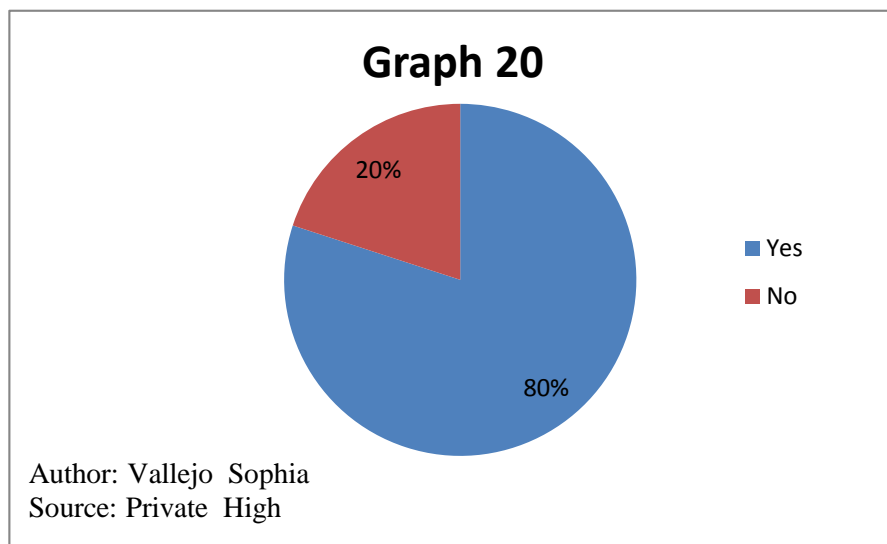
This graphs shows that 80% of the teachers mentioned in the survey that their teaching is monitored by the institution they work for. From these teachers, 53% of them mentioned that the institution monitor their work once a month; 20% of the teachers mentioned that the institution monitor their work once a week; and 7% (one

teacher) mentioned others. On the other hand, 20% of the teachers affirmed that the institution does not monitor their classes.

In the observed classes, there were no authorities that monitor the teachers during their teaching process. This, therefore, confirm the answer of the teachers (20%) who stated that their teaching is not monitored by the institution they work for.

To provide important information of teaching monitoring, it is necessary to mention that Richards and Farrell (2005) state that in educational instituions a performance appraisal by a supervisor frequntly offers a way of considering the current level of educators' teaching, based on classrrom observation. With this useful information, it is worth remembering that monitoring teaching is very useful to know the current level of performance of EFL teachers. However, in the institutions where the research was conducted, no manager or language supervisor gave a performance appraisal on the teaching quality because any of the observed teachers was monitored.

Conclusions

- The English level of all the students is basic because the activities developed by them in the observed classes are suited to this level. Therefore, the teachers are not able to teach their lessons by presenting teaching materials targeted at intermediate or advanced level.

- The teachers only consider auditory and visual learning styles since they do not make students do activities related to other types of learners such as kinaesthetic and analytic. Therefore, they do not have the opportunity to learn English by doing hands-on-, physical activities and by analyzing grammar rules.

- The teachers are very careful in considering the students' age since every single activity done in class is suited to their interest, curiosity, and motivation, which in turn influences in a positive way the teaching-learning process.

- Most of the classrooms where the lessons take place are big enough to make students learn English through activities, i.e. role plays, group work, involving any type of movement; this means that the teaching and learning environment is appropriate to learn EFL.

- The teachers teach English without any difficulty both in the classes attending 26-30 students and in those where 16-25 learners attend because this number is appropriate and due to the fact that classroom space is big enough to make the whole class do activities comfortably.

- The English language knowledge of most of the teachers is excellent since they teach the native language in an effective, proficiency, and fluent way, which is very positive for the students' learning.

- The institutions where the research took place did not monitor the teaching-learning process since none of the authorities observed how the teachers teach English during the research study. As a result, they were not able to identify their strengths and weaknesses of their instruction.

- It was not evidenced any type of support and help provided by the authorities to help teachers improve their teaching quality; hence, it was negative for the teachers' professional growth and the students' learning.

Recommendations

- The institutions should monitor the teaching-learning process to make sure that the quality of education is high.

- The authorities should provide teachers with all the academic support they need in order to keep an excellent teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian private high schools.

- Teachers should consider not only auditory and visual learners, but also they should consider analytic and kinaesthetic learning styles to teach their lessons so that the whole class is stimulated and encouraged to learn English in different ways.

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ANNEXES

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja
MODALIDA ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA
CARRERA DE INGLES
OBSERVATION SHEET

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
YEAR(desde 8vo básica a 3ro bachillerato)**:**	

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

Students' Needs*(age, personality, attitude, aptitude, motivation, and learning styles)*

YES ( )	NO ( )	

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

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

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

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

3. Which of the following methods are used?

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)	( )
Smartboard	( )
Supplementary materials	( )
Others	( )

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

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

TEACHER'S INTERVIEW

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

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

MODALIDA ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA
CARRERA DE INGLES
STUDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:	
DATE:	
YEAR:	

1. **¿Te gusta aprender Inglés?**

YES ( )	NO ( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

3. **Consideras que las actividades realizadas en clase son:**

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

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

¿Por   qué?
_____
_____
_____

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

GRACIAS!!!!!

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 ( )

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

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

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 ( )

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

YES ( )	NO ( )

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 ( )

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 ( )

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

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

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

YES ( ) NO ( )
Which ones? _____

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

YES ( ) NO ( )
Why? _____ ___

19. Does the institution review your lesson plans?

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

20. Does the institution monitor your teaching?

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

Thanks for your cooperation