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CON ÉNFASIS EN INGLÉS COMO LENGUA EXTRANJERA PARA ALUMNADO ADULTO

**HOW THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN EFL CLASSES CAN IMPROVE THE  
LEARNING PROCESS BY ENHANCING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT OF ELEVENTH  
GRADERS AT COLEGIO SANTA MARÍA DE GUADALUPE AND COLEGIO  
HUMANÍSTICO COSTARRICENSE: A QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE STUDY**

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*Natalia S. Murillo Pereira*

## Resumen

Es un hecho que la motivación y la participación promueve el aprendizaje significativo. Es decir, si los profesores son capaces de promover la motivación y la participación en clase; los nuevos conocimientos que van a adquirir los estudiante se darán con mayor facilidad y serán más útiles. Sin embargo, en Costa Rica, el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del Inglés ha sido criticado por varios investigadores y educadores (Barboza y Saborío) quienes han analizado los resultados que han obtenido los estudiantes a lo largo de los años. De hecho, en 2013, el 53 % de las escuelas secundarias públicas tuvieron un nota promedio por debajo de 70 en la prueba de Inglés; es decir, cuatro de cada diez estudiantes en Costa Rica están en el nivel dos, lo que es A2, de los seis niveles de rendimiento en la lengua descritos en el Marco Común Europeo de Referencia (MCERL) (Barrantes 8A). Por esta razón, este estudio describe y analiza las condiciones de aprendizaje de los estudiantes de undécimo grado en dos instituciones académicas con el fin de identificar cómo las características de ese ambiente contribuyen a promover la motivación y participación de los estudiantes, y así mejorar el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje del Inglés en estos contextos. El estudio se realizó con una población de 75 estudiantes de undécimo, en el Colegio Santa María de la Guadalupe (SAMAGU) y el Colegio Humanístico Costarricense (CHC); SAMAGU es una institución secundaria católica semi-privada situada en Santo Domingo de Heredia, mientras que el CHC es un proyecto del área de Estudios Generales de la Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica (UNA). De este modo, esta investigación analiza tres variables (el currículo, las cualidades del profesor y la mediación pedagógica) que constituyen el ambiente de aprendizaje e influyen en la participación y la motivación de los estudiantes. Los datos se analizaron mediante el uso de un paradigma mixto: estadística descriptiva y datos cualitativos los cuales fueron triangulados. Los resultados demuestran que las tres variables afectan de manera importante la motivación y participación en el aula. Por último, los resultados y las conclusiones encontradas en este análisis permitieron a las investigadoras ofrecer una propuesta constructivista y humanista para los profesores que se pueden aplicar en las centros educativos de secundarias en las que trabajan con el fin de crear un proceso de aprendizaje en Inglés más significativo para los estudiantes de hoy.

**Palabras claves:** Aprendizaje de lengua extranjera, motivación, ambiente de aprendizaje, cualidades del profesor, currículo, mediación pedagógica

Trabajo presentado para optar al grado de Maestría Profesional en Segundas Lenguas y Culturas con Énfasis en Inglés como Lengua Extranjera para Alumnado Adulto, según lo establece el Sistema de Estudios de Posgrado de la Universidad Nacional, Heredia, Costa Rica.

## Abstract

It is a fact that engagement promotes meaningful learning. That is, if teachers are able to promote engagement in class, new knowledge is going to be acquired more easily and be more useful to students. However, in Costa Rica, the English teaching-learning process has been criticized by researchers and educators (Barboza and Saborío) who have focused on the outcomes it has had throughout the years. In fact, in 2013, 53% of public high schools had a grade on average below 70 in the English test; that is, four out of ten students in Costa Rica are under level two, which is A2, from the six levels of performance in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (Barrantes 8A). For this reason, this study describes and analyzes in detail the learning conditions that students at eleventh grade at two academic high schools experience in order to identify how the characteristics of that environment contribute to promote engagement, thus to improve the teaching and learning process of English in the contexts studied. The study was conducted with a population of 75 students of 11th grade at Colegio Santa María de Guadalupe (SAMAGU) and Colegio Humanístico Costarricense (CHC); SAMAGU is a semi-private catholic high school located in Santo Domingo of Heredia while CHC is a project of the area of Estudios Generales of the Universidad Nacional of Costa Rica (UNA). In that way, this research analyzed how three variables (school's curriculum, teachers' qualities and pedagogical mediation) involved in the learning environment influence students' engagement. The data was analyzed by using a mixed paradigm: descriptive statistics and qualitative data which were triangulated. The results show that there is a strict relation between these three variables and student engagement. Finally, the results and conclusions gotten from this analysis allowed the researchers to provide a constructivist and humanistic proposal for teachers that can be applied in high schools where they work in order to create a more meaningful English language learning process for current high school students.

**Key words:** Learning a foreign language, engagement, learning environment, teacher qualities, school curriculum, pedagogical mediation

Research study presented as a requirement to obtain the degree of *Maestría Profesional en Segundas Lenguas y Culturas con Énfasis en Inglés como Lengua Extranjera para Alumnado Adulto*, in fulfillment of the bylaws and regulations established by the *Sistema de Estudios de Posgrado* at Universidad Nacional, Heredia, Costa Rica.

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## I. Introduction

Currently, most teachers have been trying to engage students in their classroom in order to promote meaningful learning. Years ago there was an idea that the teachers were 'fillers' and students were mere 'recipients' of information. In recent decades, classroom engagement has become a powerful tool to encourage students' learning meaningfully. Marks defines engagement as "...a psychological process, specifically, the attention, interest, investment, and effort students expended in the work of learning" (qtd. in Park 88). That is, if teachers are able to promote engagement in class, students' learning processes and development of activities come more easily. On the other hand, if students show a lack of engagement, many negative situations may arise about the learning process like negativity towards the subject matter, low achievement performance in the language, and failure of communication (Park 88; Zhou 18). In fact, student engagement started to be discussed around 1996 among the educational arena. By promoting student engagement, the understanding given is that students are "psychologically investing in their learning" (Newman 34). In other words, by promoting engagement in students, teachers enhance meaningful learning. Therefore, if students are engaged when they are involved in classroom tasks, despite the challenges and obstacles they may face, they will be willing to participate in the learning process and consequently improve their English proficiency as well.

In Costa Rica, the English teaching-learning process has been criticized by researchers and educators (Barboza and Saborío) who have focused on the changes needed in the Costa Rican EFL educational system in a way to improve outcomes which means, increasing students' language proficiency. Barboza ascertains that the Costa Rican educational context in English language teaching answers the needs of the country, but it is not educational per se ("Just a Hunch" 1). Barboza adds that

the Costa Rican educational context in English language teaching is not educational because it is not focused on the process but in the product; leaving aside an important factor which is: how are teachers trying to make students learn the language? In fact, Barboza states that the Costa Rican educational context focuses on the outcomes of the English programs towards competitiveness and English performance, but they leave specific factors aside, those involved in the current learning environment, such as engagement.

The teaching of English in Costa Rica has also become a challenge for all the teachers who work either in public or private institutions; and it is even more difficult to teach this language if we take into consideration more aspects that go beyond the education system. For instance, Costa Rican English teachers must face situations such as dealing with large groups of students in their class (37 to 40 students), the lack of economic resources makes it hard for students to buy materials and resources that are needed, and also the students' lack of support in their academic performance from their working or absent parents (or even illiterate parents in other cases). Besides, there is discrimination against students who tend to mispronounce the English words due to the strong Latin American influence (L1), so their classmates make jokes about it and this makes them feel uncomfortable and unable to speak.

If we take a look at the numbers, Barrantes states that “En el 2013, el 53% de colegios públicos tuvo una calificación promedio inferior a 70 en la prueba de inglés. [In 2013, 53% of public high schools had a grade point average below 70 in the English test]” (8A); consequently, all those aspects described above have had a major influence on students' engagement in class, hence their achievements. In fact, Barrantes added that four out of ten students in Costa Rica are under level two, which is A2, from the six levels of performance in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) (8A) (see appendix 1).

For this reason, this study intended to describe and analyze in detail the learning conditions that students at eleventh grade at academic high school like Colegio Santa Maria de Guadalupe (SAMAGU) and Colegio Humanístico (CHC) experience in order to identify how the characteristics of that environment contributes to promote engagement and English learning and which leads to the improvement of the teaching and learning process of English in the contexts studied.

The study was conducted with a population of 75 students of 11th grade at both SAMAGU and CHC high schools,; Santa María de Guadalupe is a semi-private catholic high school located in Santo Domingo of Heredia while Humanístico high school is a project of the school of Estudios Generales of the Universidad Nacional of Costa Rica (UNA). The data was collected by means of different instruments and techniques such as interviews, surveys, observations and questionnaires that were applied to students, teachers and the principals of both institutions. This data was analyzed by using triangulation of techniques and the results and conclusions gotten from this analysis allowed the researchers to provide a constructivist and humanistic proposal for teachers that can be applied in high schools where they work in order to create a more meaningful English language learning process for current high school students.

The study is divided in five different chapters: Introduction, Theoretical Framework, Methodology, Analysis of Results and the Conclusions. In the introduction, the problem, the importance and the purpose of the study are presented in addition to the research questions and the objectives of the study; the Theoretical Framework includes the most relevant constructs and works of different authors who have also researched and written about engagement; The Methodology presents the way the data was gathered as well as the instruments used. Then, the Analysis of Results includes the data gathered from the instruments that were applied to all the research's participants; and finally, the Conclusions' chapter includes the results derived from the study. The coaching proposal will be

included as the end of the study as part of the conclusions and results of the research.

### **1.1 The Problem and its importance**

Costa Rican students are not attaining the English proficiency level expected after five years of English teaching in public high schools, which represent most of the educational offer of the country. This is reflected in the data provided by Barrantes and in the National Report provided by the National English Advisor, Marianela Granados Sirias, which states that 72.77% of the students are achieving level A2 or below from the CEFR when performing on vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension on 2010 Ministerio de Educación Pública's (MEP) exam. This data also supports the arguments stated by Barboza and Saborío who mention that the education system must be improved since students are not reaching the aims stated in the English National Program (Barboza, "Washback in English Language Education" 1; Saborío 278).

Based on the knowledge and experience the researchers have as English teachers and the experts opinions we previously presented, the MEP public academic English program is failing in the objective of making students' proficient in the use of English. They consider that the school's curriculum as well as other factors such as the English syllabus and the methodology are not being engaging enough for students in the learning process. Consequently the public educational system in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Costa Rica may lack of meaningful learning (Barboza, "Washback in English Language Education" 1; Saborío 278; CONARE 30-1). Therefore, classroom engagement could become an important aspect for ministry authorities, English advisers, English coordinators and English teachers, in general, as a way to promote high achievers in life by motivating students in learning the language.

Stefani simplifies the definition of engagement by asserting that, “At its simplest ‘engagement’ in an educational context refers to the time, energy and resources that students devote to activities designed to enhance their learning at University” (11.3). Although, Stefani emphasizes in university studies, the core of the definition clarifies the term engagement in the educational context, allowing educators to concentrate in such aspects as student's energy, time and resources to promote engagement.

The investigation was carried out in two English as Foreign Language (EFL) classes of eleventh graders at Colegio Santa María de Guadalupe (SAMAGU) and Colegio Humanístico Costarricense (CHC). Both of the institutions were selected due to three main reasons. First, they have decided to apply an ‘emphasis’ on the English subject by teaching more lessons than the MEP assigns (in SAMAGU’s case, eleventh graders take to 6 lessons of English while CHC’s eleventh grade students take seven lessons of English; five lessons of ‘*Inglés básico*’ and two lessons of ‘*Inglés de Profundización*’—which implies an increase of three more lessons of English compared to the five lessons assigned by MEP in public academic high schools), and by amplifying and enriching the MEP’s target contents. SAMAGU and CHC are two Costa Rican institutions of secondary education that work under the authority of the MEP. SAMAGU is a subsidized institution by the state while the CHC is an area-focus public high school that only teaches the levels of tenth and eleventh grade. Second, the two institutions are placed in the list of the best 100 high schools in Costa Rica according to official information given by the MEP in 2012, see fig. 1 (“Solo 26 Colegios Públicos Entre Los 100 Mejores”) where CHC and SAMAGU possess positions number 35 and 40 respectively according to the MEP exam.



35	COLEGIO HUMANISTICO COSTARR.	84.06	HEREDIA	PUB
36	CENTRO EDUC. SAN MIGUEL ARCANGEL	83.97	DESAMPARADOS	PRI
37	CRISTIANO PALABRA DE VIDA	83.93	ALAJUELA	PRI
37	COL INTERNACIONAL SEK-COSTA RICA	83.93	SAN JOSE (CENTR	PRI
38	COL.BRITANICO DE COSTA RICA	83.81	SAN JOSE (OESTE	PRI
39	LICEO ISLA DE CHIRA	83.38	PUNTARENAS	PUB
40	COLEGIO SANTA MARIA DE GUADALUPE	83.29	HEREDIA	SUB
41	COLEGIO SAINT CLARE	83.27	SAN JOSE (NORTE	PRI
42	ACADEMIA TEOCALI	83.25	LIBERIA	PRI

*Nota: toda la información publicada es oficial y emitida por el MEP.*

Fig. 1. MEP 100 Best High Schools in the Country.; "Solo 26 Colegios Públicos Entre Los 100 Mejores En Examen De Bachillerato." *89 Decibeles*. N.p., 7 May 2012. Web. 27 Sept. 2014.

Third, the official data that La Nación newspaper published in 2012 on the ranking of the best high schools in the country in relation to the UCR admission test ("Ranking de Colegios: Admisión UCR"), see fig. 2, shows that both CHC and SAMAGU being public or semi-public grasp the 13<sup>th</sup> and 71<sup>st</sup> place, respectively, out of 764 high schools throughout the country.

Pos <sup>▲</sup>	Colegio	◆ Tipo	◆ Promedio de examen	◆ Número de aplicantes
1	COL.CIENT.COSTARRICENSE- SAN PEDRO-	PÚBLICO	79.99	160
2	COLEGIO CIENTIFICO DE ALAJUELA	PÚBLICO	78.02	112
3	COL. CIENTIF. COSTARRIC. DE SAN RAMON	PÚBLICO	76.70	126
4	COLEGIO CIENTIF.COSTARRIC.(CARTAGO)	PÚBLICO	76.23	136
5	COL.CIENT.COSTARRICENSE- P.ZELEDON-	PÚBLICO	75.49	156
6	ESCUELA DE LOS AMIGOS DE MONTEVERDE	PRIVADO	71.05	13
7	COL. CIENTIF. COSTARRIC. DE SAN CARLOS	PÚBLICO	70.95	152
8	SAINT FRANCIS COLLEGE	PRIVADO	70.40	734
9	COLEGIO HUMBOLDT	PRIVADO	69.06	398
10	COLEGIO EUROPEO	PRIVADO	68.98	68
11	COLEGIO METODISTA	PRIVADO	68.49	772
12	COLEGIO CIENTIFICO DE LIBERIA	PÚBLICO	68.09	151
13	COLEGIO HUMANISTICO COSTARRICENSE	PÚBLICO	68.05	237

Pos <sup>▲</sup>	Colegio	◆ Tipo	◆ Promedio de examen	◆ Número de aplicantes
55	CENTRO EDUCATIVO CAMPESTRE	PRIVADO	57.79	160
56	SAINT GREGORY SCHOOL	PRIVADO	57.67	178
57	COLEGIO INTERNAC. S.E.K. DE COSTA RICA	PRIVADO	57.64	409
58	SAINT ANTHONY HIGH SCHOOL	PRIVADO	57.56	325
59	COSTA RICA ACADEMY	PRIVADO	57.56	30
60	COLEGIO DEL VALLE (PEREZ ZELEDON)	PRIVADO	57.41	100
61	CENTRO EDUCATIVO BANDECO	PRIVADO	57.34	67
62	INST.CRIST.BILING.PALABRAS DE VIDA	PRIVADO	57.29	121
63	C.EDUC.CRISTIANO OASIS DE ESPERANZA	PRIVADO	57.19	149
64	COLEGIO BILINGUE NUEVA ESPERANZA	PRIVADO	57.08	437
65	LICEO EXPER. BILINGUE DE NARANJO	PÚBLICO	56.97	887
66	COVAO	SUBVENCIONADO	56.91	1149
67	ESCUELA VISTA DEL MONTE, MOUNT VIEW SCHOOL	PRIVADO	56.83	113
68	SAINT PETER`S HIGH SCHOOL	PRIVADO	56.33	118
69	C.PROF. ADMINISTRATIVO SAN MARCOS	PRIVADO	56.04	100
70	COLEGIO NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL SION	PRIVADO	55.98	508
71	COLEGIO SANTA MARIA DE GUADALUPE	SUBVENCIONADO	55.81	1712

Fig. 2. High school Ranking.; "Ranking de Colegios: Admisión UCR." *La Nación*. N.p., 23 Oct. 2012.

Web. 27 Sept. 2014.

Besides the three main reasons previously presented, another one was due to the fact that these two institutions also share similarities among their integrated and humanistic vision of education allowing students to acquire the knowledge and develop their own learning skills and critical thinking to be able to face the challenges of a globalized world (see appendix 2 and 3).

Considering all the above aspects, both high schools have similar conditions in English subject matter and have similar visions towards the educational curriculum of English, the research can analyze in a similar deep manner how some factors involved in the learning environment like the school's curriculum, teachers' qualities and pedagogical mediation can promote student engagement in EFL classrooms.

On the other hand, in regards to the participants, the researchers have selected the eleventh graders due to several reasons. First of all, the research must collect the data from students who have had a path in the institution they attend to, so seniors are the ones who have more years studying there. Furthermore, in the case of eleventh graders at SAMAGU, at the end of the year students are offered to take the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) test in order to know the level of English they have reached (taking the test is optional for students). Students have shown to reach a good level that allows them to communicate in the English language. For example, in the results gotten on the year 2013 most of the students who took the test had an average of 400 points based on the scale and levels stated in the CEFR (see appendix 4).

The eleventh graders who were the participants in this study have been 5 years at SAMAGU (from 7th to 11th grade) and 2 years at CHC (10th and 11th grade), so that means that the English they speak has been the product of the corresponding institutions; especially on SAMAGU's students. With regards to the two teachers chosen as the participants of the research, they were selected due to the academic achievement they have shown to have with their students in their time working with the

highest levels of secondary education in both SAMAGU and CHC. The high schools have provided the results and statistics of the last generations in terms of the class promotion and the percentage of promotion in the national English test from the MEP in 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively (see appendix 5). Both teachers were contacted and accepted voluntarily to be part of this research as well as collaborating with the design of the coaching proposal for teachers by the end of the investigation.

The interest of the researchers arose from the observations held by the researchers, as teachers, who have noticed that there are students who are more engaged during the class activities than others besides questioning and asserting the ideas exposed by Barboza and Saborío. Furthermore, although several scholars have written about classroom engagement and articles about this issue have been consulted, there is no study that describes student engagement in two semi public institutions in relation to English learning in the Costa Rican context and that handles a coaching proposal for English teachers immersed in the context to boost engagement in class. As a result of that, the researchers wonder about how the school's curriculum influences engagement, which teachers' qualities and what types of activities and tasks a teacher may select to engage students in class, and what a student perceives as engaging for him/her in the tasks completed in the English class. It is very necessary for educators to take a look on the process and see what causes students to be engaged and that the literature shows that the teachers, mediation and curriculum help with that, but it goes beyond since the class environment, the teacher and the institutions influence the way students feel and succeed.

In brief, this study describes what causes engagement in eleventh graders at SAMAGU high school and Humanístico high school; consequently, it is considered that curriculum designers, educative institutions and English teachers as the target audience of this investigation (whose academic background is rooted in applied linguistics, linguistics, ESL or EFL) must be interested in looking for information, theory or strategies that can help to promote class engagement through different activities.

Therefore, and as stated in previous paragraphs, this audience can benefit from this research.

It is important to clarify that even though other variables such as students' affective filter, socio-economical background, learning styles and multiple intelligences can influence class engagement and improve the learning process (Vermette and Jensen), this investigation focuses only on the school's context, teachers' qualities and pedagogical mediation as the main variables. Moreover, from each of the constructs cited above two or three variables have been derived: school's curriculum will focus on school's philosophy and English syllabus; experience, teacher-student interaction and class management are included in teachers' qualities; and teaching approach, methodology, and activities are within the pedagogical mediation.

## **1.2. Purpose of Study**

The present study analyzes how the learning environment contributes to improve English learning and enhancing student's engagement by comparing two populations, one in Colegio Santa María de Guadalupe (SAMAGU) and the other in Colegio Humanístico Costarricense (CHC). The language learning environment will be divided in three main constructs: school's curriculum, teachers' qualities and pedagogical mediation which influence and promote the students' learning processes, hence improving performance and reaching achievements in the language. Schlechty affirms that engagement will help the learning process by making students more attentive, committed, persistent and interested in the classroom (429). Thus, students' English learning and language proficiency should be improved.

### 1.3. Research Questions

Taking into consideration the school's curriculum, teachers' qualities and pedagogical mediation when analyzing the learning environment that are present in EFL classrooms across the country specifically both SAMAGU and CHC, and relating such aspects to the great amount of work that English teachers have to deal with by teaching English and by incorporating and engaging students in their classes to increase motivation and to make learning meaningful, the following questions will guide this investigation:

1. How can the school's curriculum represented in the schools' philosophy and the English syllabus contribute to students' engagement in EFL classes?
2. How can teachers' qualities such as experience, management and teacher-student interaction promote English learning by enhancing students' engagement in EFL classes?
3. How can the pedagogical mediation expressed in the classroom arrangement, teaching approach, methods, techniques, and activities promote English learning by enhancing students' engagement in EFL classes?
4. How can constructivist and humanistic pedagogical techniques help teachers enhance classroom engagement and students' English learning?

#### **1.4. General Objective**

To investigate how the aspects of school's curriculum, teachers' qualities and pedagogical mediation involved in the learning environment influence engagement in EFL classes in eleventh graders at Colegio Santa María de Guadalupe and Colegio Humanístico Costarricense by enhancing a constructivist and humanistic classroom pedagogy for high school English teachers in both contexts in order to promote meaningful English learning.

##### **1.4.1. Specific objectives**

- To analyze to what extent the school's curriculum such as the school's philosophy and English syllabus present in EFL learning environments promote engagement in eleventh graders at Colegio Santa María de Guadalupe and Colegio Humanístico Costarricense.
- To determine to what extent the teachers' qualities such as the teachers' experience, class management and the teacher-student interaction promote classroom engagement in eleventh graders at Colegio Santa María de Guadalupe and Colegio Humanístico Costarricense.
- To determine the way in which some aspects of the pedagogical mediation such as class arrangement, teaching approach, methods, techniques, and activities in eleventh graders EFL classes at Colegio Santa María de Guadalupe and Colegio Humanístico Costarricense promote students' engagement.
- To design a constructivist and humanistic pedagogical proposal for high school English teachers in order to provide pedagogical techniques that help teachers enhance classroom

engagement and make learning meaningful.

### **1.5. Theoretical Antecedents**

The literature review, through the main arguments of different researchers, reveals the connection between engagement and its impact on English learning. Studies done by Park, Goldspink, Winter, Foster and Nunan often base their theories of learning environments taking into account different variables such as pedagogical philosophy, curriculum design and social climate; yet, there is little research on the effect of school context or teachers' qualities on students' engagement. Shernoff has also researched about the importance of providing optimal learning environments in the English classroom to maximize students' engagement focusing on pedagogical mediation. In relation to engagement, research in Costa Rica is scarce; that is why the variables of this present study are investigated separately. The following passage will identify previous works on the school curriculum and its relation to engagement where concepts like school philosophy and the English syllabus play a crucial role.

Akey presents a deep study related to school context and engagement where the author researches how the school setting influences student's academic achievements. As part of the school context Akey refers to the following variables: supportive relationships, clear, high and consistent academic expectations and high-quality instruction. If Costa Rican academic educational systems could emphasize on those variables, students' engagement could be enhanced and so language proficiency can be improved. In order to achieve such goals, all the aspects of the learning environment should be envisioned towards engagement; for that reason, the school's curriculum, the teachers' qualities and the pedagogical mediation play a crucial role on achievement, English proficiency and engagement.



In the literature revised, the school curriculum, understood as the cultural expectations, values, school's perspectives, school structures, and the institutional rules, plays an important role in enhancing students' engagement in the classroom by promoting their well-being and involvement in the educational experience. In fact, Jones, Marrazo and Love present how a school curriculum can promote engagement by identifying an inviting school culture as well as three key elements of a positive school curriculum. Indeed, these authors talk about promoting an engaging school curriculum in the classroom by developing and maintaining an initiative in schools "...dedicated to creating a culture of student engagement, involving students in school life activities, and a rigorous and relevant education for all students" (74). These aspects discussed by Jones, Marrazo and Love are determined within the school's philosophy that indicates the direction of what the school wants to achieve and how the school wants to achieve it. In addition, Taylor and Parsons affirm that in order to engage students, the school context needs to be shaped according to students' needs. Likewise, Reger explains how a study carried out in the University of Michigan evaluated the school context as a mediator for student engagement; thus Reger affirms that "Schools must provide opportunities for students to make their own choices. But they also must create a more structured environment so students know what to do, what to expect, from school" (1). Nunan also asserts that the school curriculum should be done collaborative and include students' perceptions while Stefani claims that educators, policymakers and administrators should take into consideration students' needs and interests when designing the curriculum. In order to study carefully the relationship between school's curriculum and engagement, it is necessary to grasp two fundamental aspects involving the curriculum: the school's philosophy and the English syllabus.

In such sense, school's philosophy refers to the values and ethics illustrated in the mission and the vision of the institution as well as implied in the hidden curriculum. In fact, Berg, Mellaville and Blank cite that the first key to engagement in schools is to know where it is going by creating a vision

and a mission of what the school wants to achieve, incorporating a variety of interests of all members of the school and develop a plan to achieve those objectives.

In relation to the Costa Rican English syllabus, the English syllabus dictated by MEP is the same for all the institutions in the public academic educational systems; however, there are some institutions that can maximize their level of teaching inside their classrooms by making changes in the EFL teaching process in order to reach the two main goals that MEP has established, which are:

1. To offer students a second language which can enable them to communicate within a broader social-economic context in and outside Costa Rica.
2. To give students a tool to directly access scientific, technological and humanistic information and , in this way expand their knowledge of the world. (MEP 14)

Nevertheless, Saborio mentions the inconsistencies of the national plan for English Teaching used by the Ministry of Education; in fact, she asserts that by the end of eleven years (from primary school to high school) students do not reach a competent level of English proficiency and universities have to teach starting from the basics of the language in their different majors (275). Saborio expresses her concern of what is happening in the primary and secondary schools of Costa Rica, which is reflected in the low English performance that students reach when they graduate from high school. Although the following study, is not going to work specifically with students performance in the language, different authors (Park 87; Stefanni 2; and Plevin 328-411) consider that engaging students in class can boost achievement. Additionally, although Bovil defines as the structure and content of a unit or program a curriculum design, for the following study such concept will be labeled as the English syllabus, she asserts that students should have a role in designing and choosing the topics or activities to carry on in classes in order to promote engagement and meaningful learning.

The MEP affirms that the syllabus is a very flexible guide to plan the (the teacher's) classroom

activities. Teachers have been provided with a new curricular structure in columns to help them choose and organize their teaching practice. It clarifies that the structure is not:

... a recipe to be followed. You are able to choose from other topics, other objectives and procedures according to the topic you are teaching. [...] They are there as the basics to start teaching. It means that you can add as many language patterns, functions, values, procedures and evaluation activities as you want and according to each group progress (23).

The MEP gives freedom to EFL teachers by letting them add topics, functions or what they might consider necessary, though the omission of a target content or objective is not allowed unless in some specific cases like the students with significant accommodations.

When researching about the relation between teachers' qualities and engagement, it is necessary to evaluate the process of some studies throughout EFL history. In the first half of the XX Century teachers were evaluated with scales including qualities like professional attitude, understanding of students, control of the class, planning, creativity, individualization and pupil participation that, in addition to other researchers such as C.L Hill, F. Schrage, J. Stronge and B.C Shapiro, support the idea that effective teaching affects students' learning. Also, Dehghan and Jalilzadeh mention that empirical evidence supports the belief that good teaching qualities contribute to cognitive student outcomes and students learn by following the example of their teachers.

Moreover, Goldspink, Winter, and Foster suggest that there are fundamental factors related to educators towards engagement such as educators' beliefs, their pedagogical approaches, training and experience. Consequently, Goldspink's, Winter's and Foster's research will enable this study to clarify the constructs that lie within teachers' qualities such as a teaching-student interaction, teachers' experience and class management.

Teachers' experience is a significant feature related to how teachers' qualities affect engagement. For O'Malley and Uhl experience is related to how much time the teacher takes to plan and create engaging activities in classes because the learning process is focused on the learner. Furthermore, Stronge affirms that effective teachers possess experience which is noted by their management of the classroom (106). Finally, Park claims that teachers' experience as well as the teachers' education are two transcendental variables to promote student engagement and, thus, students' academic achievement.

Secondly, teacher-student interaction is an essential aspect of a teachers' qualities. In fact, teaching and learning a second language are interconnected among students and teachers relationship in terms of attitudes and preconceptions that may arise during the learning process. This teacher-student relationship plays a significant role in the student's success. Dehghan and Jalilzadeh investigated in the Islamic Azad University in Iran about the qualities that a teacher must have in order to be a good teacher. According to them, students mentioned that high quality teachers must have two main factors: the first one is related to pre-service and humanistic qualities that a teacher can portray; that is, related to teachers' training, and the second is related to what the teacher actually does in the classroom. According to these two authors, "...it was until late in the XIX Century those researchers became interested in exploring the qualities of effective teachers" (2). In fact, authors like Heflin; Goldspink, Winter and Foster collaborate with the study by explaining the value of analyzing how teachers' qualities can influence students' engagement.

Furthermore, Nunan explains that one of the main roles to be portrayed by teachers in the classroom is related to the interaction between the participants in class. Similarly, Reese exemplifies how a teacher can improve engagement in students when offering positive interactions towards student by praising, noticing details, and connecting personally with students. Likewise, Doug Lemov affirms

that teachers need to motivate students intrinsically to engage them in classes.

Finally, teachers should consider the way they manage their classes because it can influence engagement. Indeed, Richards acknowledges that methods are secondary variables when promoting engagement, that this first aspect involved is the management of the learning process by the teacher. Richards claims that the teacher should have a constant control of the different aspects involved in the learning process. Similarly, Lemov affirms that a teacher's classroom management should imply teaching students for effective learning, teaching discipline, focusing students to complete tasks correctly not only giving them consequences, but having effective transitions from activity to activity, having class routines and teaching what to do instead of what not to do. Lemov claims that “The best lesson plan is of little use if the classroom management component is lacking or the teacher lacks rapport with the students” (68).

In terms of engagement, the pedagogical role of mediation is paramount as part of the core of the learning process; that is, without pedagogical mediation classes may not function or even exist. Veliz criticizes Hooks' engaged pedagogy by affirming that “Hooks thinks that engaged pedagogy is important and necessary because it aims to restore student’s will to think as well as their will to be self-actualized” (1). Although Veliz diminishes engaged pedagogy for subject matter related to logical thinking, he suggests this pedagogy can be applied in subject matters related to social sciences such as language classes. For this reason, the teaching approach, the methodology, the activities, the resources and the class arrangement play a role in an engaging pedagogical mediation that will improve students' self-perspective on the subject.

Nunan considers that the Communicative Approach is a key element in involving learners in the language class and, thus, promoting engagement. He asserts that communicative tasks are dynamic and interactive which will enable the students to participate actively in class. Additionally, Pilcher affirms

that teachers need to encourage a 'learning ladder' methodology for their students where every step presents a new challenge that helps students not only to acquire new learning but to become more confident and engaged. For Shernoff, an optimal learning environment includes some necessary pedagogical mediation like "...activities that can be challenging and relevant for the students, and also that allow them to feel confident and in control, with concentration but also providing enjoyment. They have to be intrinsically satisfying in a short term as well as a foundation builder" (16). Besides the aspects that play a role in the learning environment due to the context of the school and students, the approach used in class and the activities performed by the students is part of the learning environment.

In terms of activities carried out in class, Goldspink, Winter and Foster discuss suitable theoretical models to promote engagement; then, they link such theoretical models to a set of instruments to be used in classes and their application; they relate this information to three different contexts. Interestingly, some of their findings point to an engaging learning environment where students experienced a "greater choice in what and how to learn; learning was more social; [and] learning was less class centered [...]" (13). Likewise, Christophe claims that activities should relate to the students' needs and wants in order to promote a personalized and engaging learning process. So-Young Park asserts that evaluation activities should be authentic and related to the reality.

Stronge recommends that teachers use authentic materials for students to create deeper connections. In fact, Anderson, Christenson and Lehr affirm that educators can increase participation and engagement by relating activities to the real world, working in small groups or teamwork, doing 'hands-on' activities and giving options to students. To conclude, teachers should be aware of classroom arrangement when planning different activities or tasks, and it can also influence students' engagement by either limiting or improving the learning process.

All in all, English teachers have had the goal of providing positive and engaging learning environments and using a variety of resources that can help to meet the needs of the students and the demands of the educational system. As long as the teachers can create this environment and the schools can come up with the resources, the process of learning will be more successful, and the students will have a more meaningful learning and a better English performance.

### **1.5.1. Controversial Ideas**

As a controversial article, Guthrie, Wigfield and You affirm that engagement is solely related to what they called as classroom practices which is the pedagogical mediation, leaving aside other constructs such as school's curriculum or the teachers' qualities. Moreover, Kerby analyzes in her study the variables of achievement and persistence in relation to cognitive engagement. The results of her study demonstrated that there was a strong relationship between achievement and engagement but not between persistence and engagement which can contradict many of the authors researched above who object that persistence is a main quality an engaged student portray. Nonetheless, no strong controversial studies or authors were found alleging that aspects such as school's curriculum, teachers' qualities and pedagogical mediation do not affect engagement. In such a way, this study advances within the boundaries of the known.

## II. Theoretical Framework

There are many studies related to the factors that enhance students' engagement; however, in this study we are working specifically with those related to the school's curriculum, teachers' qualities and the pedagogical mediation of EFL classroom and its influence on classroom engagement. This theoretical framework will be organized by presenting every construct with its definition and relevant aspects that are part of it.

However, before presenting the author's ideas of every variable being investigated, it is important to present a brief background of the current English teaching situation of Costa Rica. In terms of the Costa Rican English language learning context, the fact of learning English became part of the worldwide academic needs of the XXI Century. Since the year 2008, the Costa Rican education system implemented the program called *Costa Rica Multilingüe* in order to improve the English linguistic competence of its citizens so they can meet the current needs and demands of the country, This program aims to increase the level of competitiveness among their workers.

As part of this program, MEP established in the year 2012 new educational policies to the English National Plan established since 1994; now called *Teaching of English as a Foreign Language Program* (Ministerio de Education Pública Official Webpage, 2014). This program is currently being implemented in the primary and secondary public high schools with the purpose of including new strategies to develop students' capacity by improving their English language competence.



## 2.1. Engagement

First, it is necessary to fully describe what student engagement is. Authors, like Trowler, explains that “Student engagement is concerned with the interaction between the time, effort and other relevant resources invested by both students and their institutions intended to optimize the student experience and enhance the learning outcomes and development of students and the performance, and reputation of the institution” (2). As a matter of fact, Trowler notes three important points: 1. engagement is related to the dedication of resources (such as time and effort) of the students towards their learning; 2. institutions should be aware and enhance student engagement; and 3. students' outcomes and development in the learning process is related to their engagement into it.

On the other hand, Park tallies certain constructs to the meaning of engagement by defining “...engagement as a psychological process, specifically, the attention, interest, investment, and effort students expended in the work of learning” (88). According to this, engagement is much more than supplying time and effort to learning.

However, Stefani simplifies the definition of engagement given by Parks by inferring in the definition the constructs Park talked about. “At its simplest ‘engagement’ in an educational context refers to the time, energy and resources students devote to activities designed to enhance their learning at University” (Stefani 11.3). This concise definition clarifies the term engagement in the educational context, allowing educators to concentrate in such aspects to promote it.

It is transcendental to focus on promoting engagement inside the classroom. For this reason, Barkley's theory is necessary to take into consideration within a classroom. Barkley ascertains that “student engagement is the product of motivation and active learning. It is a product rather than a sum because it will not occur if either element is missing” (390). According to Barkley, students need to be

not only motivated in the classroom but participating actively in the learning process. In fact, Barkley explains that “...engagement occurs on a continuum: it starts at the intersection of [student] motivation and [teacher] active learning, but these two work synergistically and build in intensity. At the far end of the continuum are the transformative, peak experiences that constitute the treasures milestones of an education” (416). In such sense, for a classroom to be motivating it is necessary for students to participate actively in their learning and to be engaged in order for them to create the necessary 'experiences'; that is a meaningful learning.

Even so, for the purpose of the study, the analysis of engagement is a relevant topic. That is why it is important to identify the components of engagement:

behavioral – participation in school ranging from involvement in school-based extra-curricula activities (Fullarton, 2002) to attendance at or absenteeism from school (Willms, 2003), also involvement in learning and academic tasks (Fredricks et al., 2004);

emotional – a sense of belonging (Willms, 2003) and value;

cognitive – a belief that school is ‘for me’ (Munns, 2005), an engagement and investment in learning and the school community. (Goldspink, Winter and Foster 2)

As described before, the behavioral component can be easily observed and grasped from the scene itself while the emotional and cognitive component can be compassed through face-to-face interviews. Nevertheless, student engagement whether it is behavioral, cognitive and emotional should be promoted by both participants in the classroom (the student and the teacher) such as Barkley explained before.

Taking into consideration such components, Goldspink, Winter and Foster assert that “...it is possible to define engagement as a complex variable involving three independent dimensions related to

behavior, affect and cognition” (11) which means that in terms of identifying it, one can denote each component with different types of criteria, thus creating a different analysis for each dimension.

In the same line Schlechty presents four aspects that are present when a student is engaged:

1. The engaged student is attentive, in the sense that he or she pays attention to and focuses on the tasks associated with the work being done.
2. The engaged students is committed. He or she voluntarily (that is, with-out the promise of extrinsic rewards or the threat of negative consequences) deploys scarce resources under his or her control (time, attention, and effort, for example) to support the activity called for by the task.
3. The engaged student is persistent. He or she sticks with the task even when it presents difficulties.
4. The engaged students finds meaning and value in the tasks that make up the work.

(429)

By being attentive, committed and persistent students indeed find meaning to the work done in class, creating an engaged environment in classroom and creating meaningful learning.

Nonetheless, as educators, many have encountered situations that may affect learning in a classroom. These situations are usually related to engagement and motivation in the classroom. How can educators teach meaningfully? How can educators involve students in the learning process? It is necessary to improve engagement in order to have an effective classroom where students learn meaningfully. In fact, Plevin notes four situations that rise unmotivated students:

Reason #1: Relevance --they do not see any relevance in what is being taught. Bored or frustrated students who see no point in the work usually become a major disruption in lessons.

Reason #2: Fear --They fear failure and embarrassment. Think how you feel when you are asked to do something outside your comfort zone, and remember that the fierce arguments, bold complaints and other seemingly offensive or vindictive actions from some students may simply be a means to conceal the real reason they appear unmotivated: fear of embarrassment, ridicule, criticism or failure.

Reason #3: Inadequacy --they feel inadequate. School has become somewhere where they struggle and they see no light on the horizon.

Reason #4: Uninspiring work --they expect to be bored. The problem emerges when the majority of lessons all follow the same format. If there is a continual lack of challenge, a continual lack of variety and a continual lack of novelty there will almost certainly be a continual lack of interest from the students. (328 – 411)

Thus, these four reasons (relevance, fear, inadequacy and uninspiring work) should be taken into account whenever a teacher wants to increase engagement. Park explains “...that the most obviously disengaged students disrupt classes, skip them, or fail to complete assignments. In contrast, engaged students make a psychological investment in learning and try hard to learn what a school offers” (87). Consequently, engaged students experience meaningful learning while disengaged students have a meager learning. As a consequence, in order to create meaningful learning, it is necessary for teachers to take into account the aspects that can enhance engagement in class. For this reason, the following research is based in such prerogative by focusing on three major aspects involved in class engagement: school's curriculum, teachers' qualities and pedagogical mediation.

Finally, it is possible to appoint an integrative definition of engagement by consolidating the definitions and constructs of different authors explained above. So for the present study, engagement is defined as the student's investment of resources (mainly psychological) such as the attention, interest,

commitment, persistence, energy and effort that happen as a product of student's motivation and active learning due to teachers' work where tasks/activities that are irrelevant, fearsome, inadequate and uninspiring are left aside. Besides, engagement considers three different dimensions for ease of measurement such as the behavioral (which considers the involvement and participation in school activities as well as within the classroom), emotional (that is related to a sense of belonging and well-being) and cognitive (when students are involved in the school community as well as the learning process). In regards to identifying the variables related to engagement, the study based and adapted the criteria of the Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER 2011) for developing the instruments and collecting data.

The following excerpt will be based on the disambiguation of the terms motivation and engagement by presenting the definition of motivation, the root theories of motivation, the types of motivation and finally differencing both terms.

## **2.2. Engagement versus motivation**

Motivation and engagement in learning have constantly been related one to the other when talking about students' success. Keeping students interested in school and motivating them to succeed are challenges to every teacher in every school. But what is the difference between engagement and motivation? In order to answer such question, Brewster and Fager delineate the term motivation itself as "the student willingness, need, desire, and compulsion to participate in, and be successful in the learning process" (3). In a deeper manner, Gardner asserts that,

It really isn't possible to give a simple definition of motivation, though one can list many characteristics of the motivated individual. For example, the motivated individual

is goal directed, expends effort, is persistent, is attentive, has desires (wants), exhibits positive affect, is aroused, has expectancies, demonstrates self-confidence (self-efficacy), and has reasons (motives). (2)

Gardner denoted that motivation is necessary for any individual to achieve their goals, in this case in school. Besides, Skinner and Belmont developed the definition by saying that a motivated student in class “select tasks at the border of their competencies, initiate action when given the opportunity, and exert intense effort and emotions during ongoing action, including enthusiasm, optimism, curiosity and interest” (3).

Moreover, Sureda defines three root theories of motivation: behaviorist, humanistic and cognitive. Briefly, the behaviorist theory is based on the theory of Skinner's operant conditioning. According to this theory, the individual's behavior can be changed through reinforcement (negative and positive), extinction and punishment. Positive reinforcement is used for a repeating of a certain action in the individual. Negative reinforcement has the same objective as positive reinforcement but the medium is different, as some aversive component is removed. Finally, punishment seeks to remove certain behavior by applying an aversive stimulus. Therefore, behaviorists consider motivation as an average between stimulus and response (Sureda).

Furthermore, the humanistic theory is related to the theories of Maslow, McClelland and Alderfer theory of “Existence, Value and Knowledge (ERC)”. The first two state that certain needs govern human beings such as the physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization need. These needs are in a hierarchy, thus the individual cannot meet certain needs if he/she has not fully satisfied the previous ones. While the Alderfer theory of ERC relates, as well, to the needs but they are grouped into three categories: the existence need (basic physiological needs), the relationship need (social needs) and the growth need (self-improvement needs) (Naranjo). In fact, the

humanistic perspective emphasizes the ability of the person to achieve their growth, their positive features and the freedom to choose their destiny.

Finally, the cognitive perspective is related to the achievement of goals through the perception of a person. This perspective is related to three theories cited by Naranjo: the theory of expectations of Vroom which includes two characteristics worth (the value a person gives to certain goal) and instrumentality (the use the individual gives the achieved goal); the Stacey Adams theory of equity which is based on the criterion that a person has "inputs" (contributions to achieve the goal) and the "outputs" (the rewards for the achieved the goal); and the model of setting goals or objectives that is related to certain factors which an individual must possess to achieve a goal as the knowledge it is possessed of the goal, the acceptance of what is desired, and the difficulty it suggests.

Once the root theories and terms of motivation are clarified, the dichotomies of such term should be clarified: as intrinsic vs. extrinsic motivation, positive vs. negative motivation, and micro vs. macro motivation. Firstly, micro-motivation usually refers to individuals in a business or company; however, it can also be related to the educational context. According to Zornoza, the micro-motivation focuses on motivation within a single organization in order to improve employee productivity (1). In other words, it is the kind of motivation that is specifically designed for a group of individuals to achieve some goal in particular. While macro-motivation comes from a wider context, that focuses on motivation outside the company (Zornoza 1). In education, macro-motivation evokes to the values that are promoted inside and outside the classroom. On the other hand, the negative and positive motivation is characterized by the way an individual seeks to avoid any unintended consequences (negative) or get a reward (positive). These types of negative and positive motivation are related to behaviorist theory and rely on external factors (Naranjo).

Finally, Dev explains that extrinsic motivation refers to the fact that a student engages in

learning "purely for the sake of attaining a reward or for avoiding some punishment" while intrinsic motivation is when a student "...will not need any type of reward or incentive to initiate or complete a task" (qtd in Brewster and Fager 3). Those types of students actively engage themselves in learning because of interest, curiosity or enjoyment to achieve their own personal goals.

Moreover, by analyzing the above constructs of motivation and recalling the definition of engagement: the student's investment of resources such as the attention, interest, commitment, persistence, energy and effort that happen as a product of student's motivation and active learning due to teachers' work; it is appropriate to say that motivation and engagement differs in the idea that basically engagement is the result of motivation; either by micro, macro, negative, positive, intrinsic or extrinsic reasons. In fact, Toshalis and Nakkula state that "...engaging is what students do when they move from being motivated to actively learning" (16). Thus, students can be motivated but they also have to be engaged in the class; even highly motivated students need school work that actively engages them by building up their own learning.

As Brewster and Fager state, teachers who are the most successful in engaging students develop activities that cover students' needs since they need work that can develop their sense of competency and that allows them to develop connections with others to develop autonomy and provide opportunities for self-expression (7). Basically the main challenge that teachers have is to create an adequate learning environment that attends all those needs and motivate students to engage in the activities and tasks performed in class. "In other words, improving students' motivation helps boost engagement, which in turn leads to greater achievement" (Interactive Educational Systems Design 6), that is motivation is a key factor in reaching class engagement and; finally, in improving students' performance in the language.

The next section of the theoretical framework is concerned with defining the learning



environment in order to grasp its importance towards engagement.

### 2.3. Learning Environment

Students engagement may differ depending on the type of environment it occurs. Warger and Dobbin delineate everything that is related to the learning environment into the following definition:

The term *learning environment* encompasses learning resources and technology, means of teaching, modes of learning, and connections to societal and global contexts. The term also includes human behavioral and cultural dimensions, including the vital role of emotion in learning... (3)

In that way, the learning environment is referred to as the surroundings where learning takes place which includes the students social context, the educational context (i.e. high school), the teacher, and the teachers' pedagogy. In addition, Adelman and Taylor mention that classroom climate is a key concern in discussions about school improvement. They mention that a positive climate can have a beneficial impact on students and staff; also a negative climate can be another barrier to learning and teaching:

Although the climate and culture at a school is affected by the surrounding political, social, cultural, and economic contexts (e.g., home, neighborhood, city, state, country) their research analysis suggest significant relationships between climate at school and matters such as student engagement, behavior, self-efficacy, achievement, and social and emotional development, and overall quality of school life. (16)

Thence, Adelman and Taylor mention that studies report strong associations between

achievement levels and classrooms that are perceived as having greater cohesion and goal-direction and less disorganization and conflict; that is engaged classes. For this reason, it is necessary to consider the aspects involve with engagement within the learning environment. In this study three were main aspects were recognized within the learning environment: the school's curriculum, the teachers' qualities and the pedagogical mediation.

### **2.3.1. School's Curriculum**

For the purpose of this research, the school curriculum will be related to the cultural expectations, values, school's perspectives, school structures, and the institutional rules, which have an educational consequence in the students (Sorenson et al, Diamond and Null). This study focused on two main aspects involved in the curriculum that enhance engagement which refer to school's philosophy and English syllabus. Nonetheless, in order to understand such variables, the curriculum, especially in the Costa Rican context, needs to be defined and described in terms of engagement.

Elliot Eisner has stated that "the curriculum of a school, or a course, or a classroom can be conceived of as a series of planned events that are intended to have educational consequences for one or more students" (31). So, analyzing the Costa Rican English curriculum, especially in public academic high schools, many authors have criticized it . For example, Barboza, explains that the school curriculum and the English syllabus are made in relation to political ideals but are not thought for the reality that educators have in the classroom. In order to change this situation and promote a pro-engagement philosophy, Stefani ascertains that "It is not actually difficult to develop authentic learning tasks and assessment strategies but it requires commitment within an institution to reshaping the curriculum, to maintaining a clear focus on what we are trying to achieve and to taking risks in order to give our

students a competitive edge in an increasingly competitive employment market” (11.6). In other words, an engaged curriculum will focus on reaching practical objectives, and on boosting 'real-world' experiences and competitiveness to the students in order for them to succeed academically and professionally outside the school.

However, the aspects described before are not the only features that make an engaged curriculum. According to Nunan, it is mandatory for the curriculum to incorporate students in its process:

Curriculum development becomes a collaborative effort between teachers and learners... Of course, no curriculum will ever be totally subject-centred or totally learner-centred. However, even within institutions in which teachers and learners have minimal input into the curriculum development process it is possible to introduce elements of learner-centredness. It is worth considering the ways in which your curriculum might be modified to make it more learner-centred. (19)

That is, in an optimal learning environment students as well as teachers could have a word on designing the curriculum; however, the Costa Rican reality, especially in both institutions, provide educators with a mandatory curriculum. In relation to this, Nunan clarifies that although there is little to no involvement in the creation of the curriculum, it does not mean that there are no ways were teachers can modify the curriculum in order to make it more student-centered.

On the other hand, the school curriculum can affect engagement from the way its mission and vision related to the English subject is stated as well as to the way it organizes the syllabus and reaches the objectives proposed. In fact, Kuh says that programs can impact the effectiveness of its implementation and student engagement. He states that “Another critical step is making sure the programs are actually having the desired effects. One of the reasons so many college impact studies

show mixed findings is because the program or practice being evaluated was not implemented effectively” (38). That is why, institutions need to provide students with the appropriate curriculum and opportunities to make it possible and promote specific kinds of interactions so that the students can take advantage of engaging and educational opportunities with a consequence and impact in their lives.

### **2.3.1.1. School's Philosophy**

The authors consulted clarify the idea of the school's philosophy as the cultural perspectives, cultural values, and academic, social, and behavioral expectations established by schools, policymakers and educators (Sorenson et al; Diamond and Null), more specifically the aspects that a philosophy should have in order to promote engagement such as clear objectives, real experiences, competitiveness, students' collaboration, student-centeredness, social environment, staff's accessibility, participation in extra-curricular activities, high expectations, student involvement and student well-being (Smith; Stefani; Jones, Marrazo and Love; Nunan; Goldspink, Winter and Foster; Laevers; DiMartino and Clarke).

There are some aspects that are needed to be included in school's philosophy. Firstly, schools need to make students its primary objective. DiMartino and Clarke emphasize six areas where schools are failing:

- ✦ Depersonalization: Because managing adolescents and young adults in one building is overwhelming, high schools offer few options that appeal to young people with distinctive interests, talents, and aspirations.
- ✦ Lack of adult support: ... Young people follow their peers because they do not see any alternative.

- ⤴ Unresponsive teaching: Facing more than 100 students each day, teachers use the same plan for all students, even when those students are characterized by vast differences.
- ⤴ Imperceptible results: ...Students want to see that they are making progress --toward common standards and their own goals.
- ⤴ Invisibility: ...Yet high school students crave the recognition of others, even as they dread public exposure.
- ⤴ Isolation: High schools are designed to protect young people from exploitation by the adult world --at the same time that they aim to prepare students for adult roles. High school students need opportunities to engage the larger community so they can aim their education toward a clear purpose. (96)

These six areas are related to the school's philosophy; that is, the school's mission and vision of learning and involvement of students in the institution. Besides, the positive aspects derived from the previous constructs (personalization of curriculum, adult support, perceptible results, recognition, real-world preparation) that need to be immersed in the curriculum to promote engagement, Goldspink, Winter and Foster include two other features, "...involvement and wellbeing are intermediate process variables which reveal the quality of pedagogy through its immediate effect on the learner. Importantly, Laevers defines them in such a way as to make them sensitive to all of the variables known or expected to influence engagement and learning outcomes" (3). Therefore, students' involvement and well-being should take part on the school's philosophy.

Additionally, there are other features that should be considered when creating a school's philosophy that promotes engagement. On this topic, Stefani ascertains that "We also need to consider institutional factors that might mitigate against engagement for some students, such as the social

environment that is provided or promoted, the accessibility of administrative staff and procedures, the potential for cultural alienation and the hidden costs...” (11.4). In this way, as part of analyzing the school's philosophy in relation to engagement, it will be necessary to observe the social environment related to student well-being and involvement, and the accessibility of the staff in both institutions being studied following and adapting the criteria found in “Ray Chesterfield Classroom Observation Tools”, “ACER Student Engagement Questionnaire” and “Student Engagement: Teacher Handbook”.

Besides clear objectives, real experiences, competitiveness, students' collaboration, student-centeredness, social environment, staff's accessibility and economy, there is one more aspect that should be included in designing a philosophy that enhances engagement and thus propels meaningful learning. Jones, Marrazo and Love assure that,

The best way to promote high levels of student engagement is to develop and maintain a schoolwide initiative that is dedicated to creating a culture of student engagement, involving students in school life activities, and a rigorous and relevant education for all students. (74)

Indeed, the participation in extra-curricular activities is nearly related to involvement, in the sense that by being part of school life activities students feel part of the school itself promoting involvement.

Furthermore, Smith mentions that student engagement studies have provided, with their findings, valuable assessment tools for colleges, universities and high schools to track how successful their academic philosophy is in engaging their students. For example, the annual survey of freshmen and seniors shows what has motivated the students to go ahead in their studies and be engaged in their classes. The results of the survey carried out by Smith shows the following:

- Level of academic challenge: Schools encourage achievement by setting high

expectations and emphasizing importance of student effort.

- Active and collaborative learning: Students learn more when intensely involved in educational process and are encouraged to apply their knowledge in many situations.
- Student-faculty interaction: Students able to learn from experts and faculty serve as role models and mentors.
- Enriching educational experiences: Learning opportunities inside and outside classroom (diversity, technology, collaboration, internships, community service, capstones) enhance learning.
- Supportive campus environment: Students are motivated and satisfied at schools that actively promote learning and stimulate social interaction. (2)

Smith states that institutions where cognitive elaborating and enhancing critical thinking promote engagement have some specific characteristics like high expectations for students and their effort; there is active learning, a safe interaction between student and teachers (which is related to Stefani's idea of staff's accessibility), the student's active learning is seen inside and outside the classroom (through extra-curricular activities as Smith's thought) and there is a supportive social environment that enhances student involvement (related to Stefani's theory).

These aspects will serve as basic criteria for analyzing and collecting data in relation with engagement and school's philosophy. Nonetheless, it is needed to go in depth into the syllabus to notice the boosting of engagement and thus meaningful learning; for this purpose, the following aspect defines the English syllabus, denotes some important aspects the English syllabus encompasses and relates the topic to the Costa Rican reality.

### 2.3.1.2 English Syllabus

The curriculum per se cannot be the solely armor of the school context; the English syllabus should be as guilty of influencing engagement on students as the curriculum. In order to comprehend distinctly the difference between syllabus and pedagogical mediation Nunan states that, “Turning more specifically to language teaching, the distinction traditionally drawn between syllabus design and methodology suggests that syllabus design deals with the selection and grading content, while methodology is concerned with the selection and sequencing of learning activities” (15). In this study, the English syllabus is defined as the outline and summary of topics to be covered in an education or training course which includes the objectives, the means of obtaining them, an outline of what will be covered in the course; a schedule and the evaluation for the course.

As well as the school's curriculum, in order for the syllabus to promote engagement they have to portray certain aspects. Anderson, Christensen and Lehr note such aspects as the following:

- Providing opportunities for successful academic experiences and individual assistance.
- Creating a positive interpersonal climate with opportunities for relationships to develop between students and teachers.
- Structuring course work to be relevant to student’s lives and future goals.
- Providing help for serious personal problems.
- Intervening early with students’ academic and behavior problems. (66)

For the syllabus to boost students' engagement, it needs to provide experiences where students can be successful (that is the activities/tasks provided should not overlap students’ abilities and knowledge in the language by doing so frustration instead of engagement will be boosted), to have positive teacher-student interaction, to enrich contents that are relevant and interesting to students, to



rise a humanistic approach towards learning and to channel disruptive behavior into positive ones. More importantly, the English syllabus contents should have a relation to students' needs, interests or future in order to make them meaningful and thus to make students engaged.

### **2.3.2. Teachers' Qualities**

Surprisingly, specific research on teacher qualities promoting engagement was scarce; in fact, Park claims that, “The lack of research is surprising when it is considered that teachers are the most significant people in schools for boosting student engagement and achievement” (87). However, authors like Heflin; Goldspink, Winter and Foster collaborate with the study by explaining the value of analyzing how teachers' qualities can influence students' engagement. When talking about teacher qualities, this study refers to the attributes an educator should possess in order to boost engagement such as a strong relationships with the students, team work, professional maturity, and class management.

In their study, Goldspink, Winter and Foster denote some specific characteristics for educators to have when implementing an effective curriculum:

- Educators' beliefs and pedagogical approaches grounded in personal ideology, training and experience...;
- Structural factors including children and educators' unpredictable and casual attendance patterns and large group sizes...;
- Power relationships...;
- Inadequate professional development related to resourcing...;
- Educator's professional maturity and wellbeing (achieved through education and

qualifications, public and industrial recognition, professional experience and support)...

(7)

That is, an educator should possess strong relationships with the students, should work as part of a team and should possess professional maturity. In simpler terms an educator needs to have certain qualities to boost engagement in classes being those qualities important not only in his or her professional development but also as personal growth as well. Goldspink, Winter and Foster clarify, at the end, that if the educator possesses well-being, he or she is more likely to portray a good job. Similarly, Heflin explains that effective learning is given when "... the teacher is proficient with the content, a leader of experiences, and one who fully engages with the learners in the process of learning" (255). In fact, the second variable of this project will include the study and analysis of these three aspects in a teacher: Teacher's experience, teacher-student interaction and class management.

#### **2.3.2.1. Teacher's experience**

As an aspect to be analyzed in this study, the teacher's experience, which is part of the teachers' qualities; is related to the years of teaching, certifications and teacher trainings an educator might possess. It is necessary to obtain a clear idea of the teacher's pedagogical training as O'Malley and Uhl explain at the end of their study, and as Park denotes from his study. "Teacher experience and teacher education were the most important input variables to enhance students' academic achievement" (Park 88). For that reason, experience is considered as a vital factor on enhancing engagement and promoting positive learning on students. In fact, Park found out in his study that

...full certification was more influential on student achievement than students' demographic information such as poverty, minority status, and language background.

She contended that the proportion of fully certified teachers in a state was the most consistently significant predictor of student achievement in math (Darling-Hammond qtd in Park, 88).

According to Darling-Hammond and Park engaged students can be promoted by having certified teachers in the subject and in pedagogy. That is why, the following project intends to identify and determine the characteristics that rise engagement in term of teaching experience (years of teaching, certifications and teacher trainings) in both teachers at the researched institutions.

#### **2.3.2.2. Teacher-student interaction**

Inside and outside the classroom, educators need to have positive interactions with students in order to allow an easy flow of the learning-process. That is way, an interaction between a teacher and the students which includes features such as control, inspiration, creativity, civility, respect, confidence and praise on both ends of the relation enhances engagement and boosts meaningful learning. In fact, Breen and Candlin quoted in Nunan explain that “the teacher has three main roles in the communicative classroom. The first is to act as a facilitator of the communicative process, the second is to act as a participant, and the third is to act as an observer and learner” (87). These roles as implicitly related to the interaction that teachers should portray inside the classroom with their students. If teachers fail to establish positive relationships with their students, engagement fails to be an aspect of the class. Indeed, Goldspink, Winter and Foster state that “A strong connection was demonstrated between educators’ pedagogy and the relationships they establish with children, and children’s engagement in learning” (6). In this case, the authors are relating not only the teacher's pedagogical mediation to engagement but most importantly they relate teacher-student relationship with

engagement.

Nonetheless, a question may arise from this theory and is: how do educators can enhance positive teacher-student interaction? In order to answer this question, Lemov assures that “Teachers who have strong control succeed because they understand the power of language and relationships: they ask respectfully, firmly, and confidently but also with civility, and often kindly. They express their faith in students” (148). In this quote Lemov summarizes some aspects that positive teacher-student interaction has in order to promote engagement. Nevertheless, later Lemov affirms that not only control is needed to have positive relationship with students. Indeed, he clarifies that “Inspiring students to believe, want to succeed, and want to work for it for intrinsic reasons is influencing them. It's the next step beyond control. Control gets them to do things you suggest; influence gets them to want to internalize the things you suggest” (149). In this sense, educators need to be creative and not only sympathizers but empathizers of student's situation in order to be able to inspire them and motivate them thus promoting engagement and meaningful learning in the class. Moreover, control and inspiration are only the peak of the iceberg when talking about teacher-student relations. Reese states that “The one-to-one connection between teacher and student, often involving praise, is a powerful tool for establishing respect in the classroom. Using a child's name and bringing attention to positive behavior can do wonders” (1). Hence, Reese notes respect and praise to be important in connections between students and teachers.

Therefore, features such as control, inspiration, creativity, civility, respect, confidence and praise should be part of the criteria when analyzing positive teacher-student interaction that enhance engagement in this project. As a warning and a recommendation Reese states that focusing on negative aspects is easy but analyzing the situation as a whole is the big step.

It's easy to focus on the behavior of one disruptive student or one challenging class. It's

more difficult to become introspective and examine what you, the teacher, can do to change your interaction with the situation. Your frustration and exhaustion grow when you're under the misconception that you are responsible for all the control in the classroom. Connecting with the student and understanding the student's motivation behind the behavior and the student's perception of the situation will be time well spent, even with a school load of four hundred students or more. (Reese 2)

Taking that usually educators tend to focus on the negative aspects and not on the situation as a whole, on the student's view of the situation and on the 'other side of the coin'; Reese then gives a recommendation worth analyzing in this project: it is necessary to consider the student's perspective in order to improve teacher-student connections, and further engagement. Finally, as part of the teachers' qualities classroom management can be a key element when boosting engagement and promoting meaningful learning.

### **2.3.2.3. Classroom management**

It is a fact given that the lack of classroom management can hinder the objectives of the class to be achieved, thus promoting a lack of meaningful learning. Lemov ensures that “Effective classrooms need management systems”(147). In order to clearly understand the construct of classroom management, Richards provides the following theory:

Classroom management refers to the ways in which student behavior, movement, and interaction during a lesson are organized and controlled by the teacher to enable teaching to take place most effectively. Good managerial skills on the part of the teacher are an essential component of good teaching. (38-9)

This research based the definition of classroom engagement in Jack Richards' definition since it is a complete and simple quote that allows the comprehension of what lies beneath classroom management (such as student behavior, movement, and interaction during a lesson). According to Richards when talking about class management, this is merely related to the way students meet the expectations through the way the teacher manages the class and motivates students. He states that “in a well-managed class, discipline problems are few, and learners are actively engaged in learning tasks and activities; this contributes to high motivation and expectations for success”. (39) Teaching with discipline implies motivating students as Richards says, but to carry out a front-end investment in teaching requires a fair amount of planning.

In relation to this, Doug mentions that way students sit, line up, enter the classroom, and take notes; it also means investing in a whole lot of practice and deciding implicitly how good is good enough to meet standards as part of planning discipline in the classroom (147); but besides knowing how to arrange the class, teachers have to let the students know what successful learning is. Doug also states that:

...all too often teachers have not taken the time to teach their students, step by step, what successful learning behavior looks like, assuming instead that students have inferred it in previous classrooms or doubting the value of having a right way to do things, like sitting in class, taking notes, and following directions. (146)

The teacher also must let the students know how to carry out tasks and not just establish consequences for doing them wrong. To truly succeed the teacher must be able to control students, that is, get them to do things regardless of consequence, and to inspire and engage them in positive work (Doug 147). By inspiring students to learn to work appropriately in class, teacher will be able to engage them more.

On the other hand, but also related to class management and engagement, teachers must keep in mind the importance of creating routines that can reinforce the aspects that the students must learn to do instead of the things they are not supposed to do. Jill Reese states that all teachers must create basic routines in the classroom and procedures that can contribute to student management and save time once they have been established (3). Procedures are the foundation of student expectations, and a solid foundation allows the teacher to guide rather than control. According to Reese, it is easy to guide rather than control once consistent expectations are established, but it is almost impossible to do anything but control when consistent procedures and expectations are missing (3). Added to this Doug mentions that in class “telling students what to do rather than what not to do is not only far more efficient and effective but it reinforces us, even in moments that are about behavior, on teaching” (178). Teachers should always remember that instead of wanting to have control of their class, they should guide the students to reach the objective that is proposed by telling them what is expected from them to do instead of what the teacher does not want them to do in their class. In fact, Lemov states that the difference between the teachers' classes from his study and others was

...the pacing of the activities. Just as the teachers made strong use of routines, these routines were often conducted one after another, starting with the warm-up routines and moving into lesson content. In order to keep the energy of the class moving teachers would quickly switch from one activity to the next, often using simple songs to transitions the activities. (9)

In the above quote, Lemov mentions two fundamental aspects that take part in class management which are: routines (discussed as well by authors such as Reese and Doug) and transitions (which are the moment the teacher pass from one activity to the other).

Moreover, it is essential that the teacher recognizes that good teaching is not simply related to

the methodology used in class, but also from the management that the teacher possess to make students realize about the importance of creating their own learning. In relation to this, Richards mentions that

...good teaching is not viewed as something that results from using Method X or Method Y, or something that results from teacher modifying teaching behaviors to match some external set of rules and principles. Rather, it results from the teacher active control and management of the processes of teaching, learning and communication within the classroom and from an understanding of these processes (42).

To this extent teachers must understand what the role of classroom management is, and that it is not only related to their way that discipline is controlled in the classroom. In fact, when having students that misbehave in class, Doug says that “ignoring misbehavior is the most invasive form of intervention because it becomes more likely that the behavior will persist and expand” (175). On this wise, the best lesson and accurate control of classroom management is a little use of temper and more of managing the process of teaching.

### **2.3.3. Pedagogical Mediation**

The pedagogic interventions related to the theories of learning and practice such as the approach, methods, and techniques are embraced by the definition of pedagogical mediation. In fact, different authors such as Smith have stated that classrooms where cognitive elaboration and critical thinking is promoted engage students (135); thus, teachers are seen as the vehicle for the development of clinical problem-solving skills, and new information is acquired through self-directed learning.

Lori Becket in the area of pedagogical mediation states that pedagogic interventions include engaging with theories of learning and practice in order to understand and challenge the practice, and



reflect upon practice experience in order to understand and challenge theories (47). For that reason, teachers may develop their activities based on a learning theory or theories that can challenge students to promote engagement. Moreover, students must be given practice and activities that represent a challenge for them and enhance their critical skill because engaging students in learning is a responsibility of the teacher who becomes less a giver of knowledge and more a designer and facilitator of learning experiences and opportunities.

Furthermore, the MEP portrays in the English Syllabus the Communicative Approach such as the theory where the methods, techniques and activities should be based on in order to enhance engagement (see fig. 3).

<b>LEARNER</b>	<b>TEACHER</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Central, active, creative and participative.</li> <li>- <b>Responsible for his/her own and others learning, planning, resources and assessment.</b></li> <li>- Confident, motivated.</li> <li>- Develops full potential and builds on interests.</li> <li>- Individual/collective roles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facilitator, guide.</li> <li>- Participates in process - with learners.</li> <li>- Not the center of the process.</li> <li>- Takes more time for individual needs.</li> <li>- Gains skills and takes responsibility from planners, writers, linguists.</li> <li>- Shows expert role.</li> </ul>
<b>AIMS</b>	<b>MATERIALS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication</li> <li>- Gain transferable skills.</li> <li>- Cooperation</li> <li>- Concentrate on meaning and process.</li> <li>- Focus on fluency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Authentic, real-world significance.</li> <li>- Related to learners' needs, interests and culture.</li> <li>- Flexible.</li> <li>- Motivating and interesting.</li> </ul>
	<b>LEARNING ENVIRONMENT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Successful (even conventional terms).</li> <li>- Permanent learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Real-world context.</li> <li>- Beyond classroom, into community.</li> <li>- Relevant, stimulating, interesting.</li> </ul>
<b>LEARNING STYLE</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Integrated skills</li> <li>- Real-life skills in communicative contexts.</li> <li>- Active.</li> <li>- Active-based.</li> <li>- Variety of style, pace, etc.</li> <li>- Flexible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communicative competence.</li> <li>- Process-oriented.</li> <li>- Continuous.</li> <li>- Profiling skills.</li> <li>- Learning process.</li> <li>- Self and peer assessment.</li> </ul>

Figure 3. The Communicative Approach; Ministerio de Educación Pública. “Programa de Inglés para Educación Diversificada”. 2003. Web. 20 Mar. 2014.

As seen in fig. 3, the main aspects of the communicative approach are related to the teacher as a facilitator and the students as having the main role in the classroom and so both techniques and activities should be done with such a perspective.

In addition to this, Phillip Schlechty states that instead of thinking of teachers as performers, the teacher should “prefer to think of them as designers of experiences for students (227). When talking about classroom engagement, teachers must consider the fact that students are devoted to learning and that a supportive learning environment will provide the necessary aspects so engagement can take place; especially if that environment is designed by their own experiences.

Robert Diamond talks about the final outcomes gotten from the students. He mentions that

To ensure that students develop the higher-level competencies that you believe to be essential will require thinking about how you and your students spend time both inside and outside the classroom, what the responsibilities of your students should be, and how you will assess them during and at the end of courses, and at the conclusion of their learning experience (580).

In reference to what Diamond states, some educators have reached a point where, in addition to become more efficient and effective, have to rethink at a basic level what they teach and how they teach it. Effective teachers get students to do work successfully in class, and they design tasks for them to do that are right for the students level and needs (Schlechty 534). Aspects such as an academic challenge and collaborative school policies, an active learning, educational student and staff interactions and enriching educational experiences will give the students the different factors they need to feel engaged in their EFL classes.

### **2.3.3.1. Class arrangement**

When talking about class arrangement, it is obvious to imagine the way the classroom looks at the time of teaching certain class; and in fact it is that way. But, how can the class arrangement interfere or play an essential role in class engagement? James Stronge defines class arrangement as follows:

Typically, a well organized classroom has various instructional organizers, such as rules, posted on walls. The furniture arrangement and classroom displays often reveal how the teacher uses the space. The teacher's plan for the environment, both the organization of the classroom and of the students, allows the classroom to run itself amid the buzz of student and teacher interaction. (39-52)

As it is known, effective class arrangement is essential to the success of both the student and the teacher. The kind of communication as well as the amount of communication may be determined by the way students are grouped in the class. Sometimes it gets difficult to provide this accurate communication to the whole group, especially when teachers have to deal with large classes of more than 30 students. In this case, student-teacher interaction may be more difficult to reach but the teachers must look for options and strategies to arrange the class in the most convenient way, as Stefani Lorraine says "students value different types of interaction with staff but large classes and heavy workloads often mitigate against out of class interactions" (11.4).

Moreover, the issue of classroom arrangement does not dictate that the teacher always have to be in front of the class transmitting the information to the students. The teacher can also change its role and communicate with the students in a different or even more personalized way. In relation to this, Elizabeth Barkley states that:

...students need to do the work required to learn. We can help them by reversing our typical roles in the classroom instead of standing in front of the classroom working hard to present information as clearly as possible to students who are expected to sit quietly and absorb it, we can set up conditions where they are doing more of the work. (716).

In such manner, the teacher gets the freedom of setting the classroom in the way is considered the most adequate and with the materials needed as long as the purpose of transmitting the communication may not be affected by such distribution. When providing an adequate atmosphere, students have more chance to succeed in their own learning.

#### **2.3.3.2. Teaching approach, methods, techniques and activities**

The teaching approach refers to the principles for learning and teaching (i.e. communicative, constructivism, TPR, etc), the teaching methods are related to class participation, demonstration, recitation, memorization, or combinations of these. The choice of teaching methods to be used depends largely on the teaching approach or a mixed approach (i.e. communicative and constructive) chosen and teaching techniques refers to the strategies used in the class in the different activities or tasks an educator plan (i.e. writing a letter to a pen pal in order to enhance writing skills).

When engaging students in the learning process, the teacher must take into account different aspects such as the approach to be used, the methodology, the techniques and the activities that will work as the vehicle to put into practice the approach selected. For engaging students in class, these aspects will be essential in the learning process of the students. Lorraine Stefani states that “engaging students in the learning process and encouraging them to understand the attributes that will enhance their employability in a fast changing chaotic world must be at the core of the powerful pedagogical

idea” (11.2). So as Stefani says, the most powerful idea that teachers can apply is to engage students so they can perceive that their own learning will be a tool for being more competitive in a future world.

On the other hand, Pilcher when talking about approach and engagement states the theory of the 'learning ladder' that teachers need to take into account when planning the activities. According to Pilcher, students climb the learning ladder assisted by the teacher, his or her feedback, the challenges proposed and tasks to be carried out. Pilcher affirms that the 'learning ladder' promotes engagement “as students continue to move up the ladder they gain more confidence in their learning ability, become more engaged each day, and work hard to achieve the final learning targets” (222). Such theory will serve as a guide for this study to picture if the teacher's methodology is progressive and challenging enough to engage students.

One of the approaches that enhance class engagement is the communicative approach that, with the help of the constructivist approach, has been the one applied since years ago in the field of language learning. When using communicative activities students have shown to feel more engaged in class. Nunan states about the communicative approach that “... they all imply that tasks involve communicative language use in which the user's attention is focused on meaning rather than linguistic structure” (10). When students see that their learning is directed towards meaning and usefulness rather than memorizing grammatical rules, they feel more motivated to learn because they are able to produce their own learning into context and meaningful situations. Added to this, Nunan also says that he considers the communicative task as a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form (10). Some of the ideas to broad communicative activity types that Nunan cited from Clark proposes related to the previous words are summarized as follows:

Clark proposes seven broad communicative activity types [...]. Language programs, he suggests, should enable learners to:

- solve problems through social interaction with others... (convergent tasks);
- establish and maintain relationships and discuss topics of interests through the exchange of information, ideas, opinions, attitudes, feelings, experiences and plans (divergent tasks);
- search for specific information for some given purpose, process it and use it in some way...;
- listen to or read information, process it, and use it in some way...;
- give information in spoken or written form on the basis of personal experience...;
- listen to, read or view a story, poem, feature etc. and perhaps respond to it personally in some way...;
- create an imaginative text (for some learners only).” (Clark 238-9 qtd. in Nunan 67)

Finally, as Littlewood said, some of the contributions that communicative activities can make to language learning are that they provide 'whole-task practice', they can improve motivation, they allow natural learning, and they can create a context which supports learning (178). In fact, working with the communicative approach can provide teachers with many reasons in which students can feel engaged in their class.

It is crucial that besides enhancing real life situations, activities should be challenging to the students in order to connect them to a world they will encounter in a future. So-Young Park mentions that ”as a source of enhanced student engagement, authentic instructional work measures how much the work that the students are asked to do in academic subjects is cognitively challenging and connected to the world beyond the classroom (88). Those activities that can be challenging and relevant for the

students, also must allow them to feel confident and in control, with concentration but also providing enjoyment; they have to be intrinsically satisfying in a short term as well as a foundation builder (Shernoff 16).

An aspect that can collaborate with such satisfaction of students in classes is the use of technology as a tool to teach new knowledge. In fact, West asserts that “Technology-rich activities can sustain high levels of student engagement and peer collaboration compared to less technology focused activities” (2). In such way, West affirms that having tasks were technology is used can promote student engagement in class.

On the other hand, Marshall and Drummond recall another important aspect involved in the pedagogical mediation which is assessment. They consider that “...the spirit of AfL [Assessment for Learning] is instantiated in the way teachers conceptualize and sequence the tasks undertaken by pupils in the lesson. The nature of these tasks affects all subsequent interactions within the class” (148). In this sense, the assessment done in class will closely affect students' engagement in class and it is based on the teacher's point of view of learning.

In brief, as teachers consider how students encounter content in specific locations, they might ask what strategies or methods would facilitate the interaction between students and subject to create experiences that will facilitate learning in this environment. As Michel Christopher states “to become meaningful, information needs to be personalized, made relatable, made to speak to us, and relevant to our needs. We need a connection” (183). Learners benefit when information is articulated in very concrete ways; and abstractions are made concrete since learning happens when our students encounter content of some kind.

## 2.4. Coaching Proposal

After obtaining the results of what engages students in class the most, a coaching proposal was done in order to provide teachers with strategies and techniques to engage their students in class. First of all, James Stronge says the importance of effective teaching must be emphasized since “effective teaching combines the essence of good classroom management, organization, effective planning, and the teacher’s personal characteristics” (67). These aspects will be essential to be presented as a way to help teachers to reach and effective teaching in our classes. Furthermore, Goldspink, Winter and Foster state that when giving results of investigations with the purpose of contributing knowledge to the field, the results of different research confirm that the anecdotal evidence of constructivist practice can have a positive effect on students experience of learning and that this can in turn lead to improved social, meta-cognitive and academic outcomes (13).

Moreover, the use of a humanistic approach to education can help teachers engaged students in class since the “Human-centred education places the human being at the center of the education process. In the words of A.S. Neill (1992), the idea is to make the educational processes and environment 'fit the child' rather than the other way around (Gill and Thomson 177). By stating such definition of the humanistic approach Gill and Thomson, identify the most important quality of humanism in education: the focus is the growth of the student as a 'whole person' not the process per se. Indeed, Gill and Thomson clarify that by “identifying the values that ought to underpin educational activities” (186) high schools can offer students a humanistic education which focuses on three aims: education as a means to social ends, as a means to academic achievement and as a means to individual's development. The humanistic approach in teaching has been accepted and adopted by different institutions around the world. The humanistic teacher must focus on developing the student's self-



concept; which means that the pupils need to feel good and confident about himself/herself to show a positive attitude; since only when the self-esteem is raised, the student becomes aware of the responsibilities in the learning process. Besides, teachers who work with this approach must know that their responsibility is not only transmitting knowledge, but also direct students to self-motivation and thus, class engagement (Vasuhi 1).

When researching about class engagement, teachers must know that if they are looking for ways to engage their students, first of all they must keep in mind that students are constructing new knowledge as opposed to re-transmitting old knowledge if the class is dynamic, active and engaged (Stefani 11.10). Besides, teachers must remember that as Elizabeth Barkley mentions, active learning means that the mind is actively engaged. Its defining characteristics are that students are dynamic participants in their learning and that they are reflecting on and monitoring both the processes and the results of their learning (570).

Effective systems and routines can also make your classroom more productive and teachers should be able to transmit enthusiasm since it is contagious; if teachers love the content they teach, students will catch that passion.

Table 1

## Engagement in a glance

<p><b>Engagement</b> is defined as the student's investment of resources (mainly psychological) such as the attention, interest, commitment, persistence, energy and effort that happen as a product of student's motivation and active learning due to teacher's work where tasks/activities that are irrelevant, fearsome, inadequate and uninspiring are left aside. Besides, engagement considers three different dimensions for ease of measurement such as the behavioral (which considers the involvement and participation in school activities as well as within the classroom), emotional (that is related to a sense of belonging and well-being) and cognitive (when students are involved in the school community as well as the learning process) (Trowler, Park, Stefani, Barkley, Goldspink, Winter and Foster).</p>	
Aspects	How can these aspects promote student engagement?
<i>School philosophy</i>	The school's philosophy includes aspects that enhance engagement such as student personalization, students involvement in school, student well-being and administrative staff accessibility for students.
<i>English syllabus</i>	The contents of the English syllabus are meaningful for students. The students find practicality and meaningfulness in the objectives stated in the English syllabus. The English syllabus is related to student's needs.
<i>Teaching experience</i>	The teacher should be academically prepared to teach since it is reflected in his/her practice.
<i>Class management</i>	The English class management includes features that promote engagement such as clear instructions, tight transitions, discipline management and clear routines.
<i>Teacher-student interaction</i>	The teacher-student interaction includes aspects that enhance engagement such as control, respect, confidence and participation.
<i>Class arrangement</i>	The English class includes an arrangement of the class that eases

	interaction flow by setting the rules of the classroom and linking the setting with the students needs and likes.
<i>Teaching approach</i>	The teaching approach reflects the principles of the communicative, constructivist and humanistic approach.
<i>Teaching techniques or activities</i>	The teaching methods enhance class participation and combine demonstration, recitation, memorization. The language components are appropriately included in the daily basis lesson plan. The learning strategies are being satisfactorily included in the lesson. Finally, the teaching techniques, activities and lesson plans enhance engagement by relating them with students preferences.
<i>Teaching materials</i>	The materials and resources used in class are related to the communicative approach, congruent with the level of performance, engagement, and relevance to the learning process.
<i>Assessment</i>	The evaluations applied are related to the objectives seen in class and the objectives of the program.

Source: Own elaboration; October 2014

## 2.5. Glossary

**Engagement:** The student's investment of resources (mainly psychological) such as the attention, interest, commitment, persistence, energy and effort that happen as a product of motivation and active learning

**Learning environment:** The surroundings where learning takes place which includes the students' social context, the educational context (i.e. high school), the teacher, and the teacher's pedagogy.

**English as a Foreign Language:** The study of the English language by non-native speakers in countries where English is generally not a local medium of communication (i.e. Costa Rica).

**Meaningful learning:** Meaningful learning is committed to engagement by linking the affective

commitment to learning new 'constructs'; thus not only learning but acquiring new 'constructs' for life.

**School's curriculum:** The schools curriculum will be related to the cultural expectations, values, school's perspectives, school structures, and the institutional rules.

**School's philosophy:** A stance that emphasizes the values and ethics portrayed in the mission and the vision of the institution as well as implied in the hidden curriculum.

**English syllabus:** An outline and summary of topics to be covered in an education or training course which includes the objectives, the means of obtaining them, an outline of what will be covered in the course; a schedule and the evaluation for the course.

**Teachers' qualities:** The attributes an educator should possess in order to boost engagement such as a strong relationships with the students, team work, professional maturity, and class management.

**Teacher's experience:** It is part of the teachers' qualities that help them to enhance engagement; it is related to the years of teaching, certifications and teacher trainings an educator a teacher might possess.

**Classroom management:** The ways in which student behavior, movement, and interaction during a lesson are organized and controlled by the teacher to enable teaching to take place most effectively.

**Teacher-student interaction:** An interaction between a teacher and the students which includes features such as control, inspiration, creativity, civility, respect, confidence and praise on both ends of the relations.

**Pedagogical mediation:** The pedagogic interventions related to the theories of learning and practice such as the approach, methods, and techniques.

**Class arrangement:** It is related to providing an adequate atmosphere where students have more chance to succeed in their own learning, especially in the way an educator sets the classroom (i.e. the desks, the board, and other resources such as bulletin boards)

**Teaching approach:** It refers to the principles for learning and teaching (i.e. communicative,

constructivism, TPR, etc)

**Teaching methods:** They are related to class participation, demonstration, recitation, memorization, or combinations of these. The choice of teaching methods to be used depends largely on the teaching approach or a mixed approach (i.e. communicative and constructive) chosen.

**Teaching techniques:** They refer to the strategies used in the class in the different activities or tasks an educator plan (i.e. writing a letter to a pen pal in order to enhance writing skills).

**Constructivism:** It is a theory of knowledge that argues that humans generate knowledge and meaning from an interaction between their experiences and their ideas.

**Humanistic education:** It is an approach to education based on the person-centered teaching where empathy, caring about students, and genuineness on the part of the learning facilitator are key traits of effective teaching. It seeks to engage the "whole person": the intellect, feelings, social capacities, and artistic and practical skills are all important focuses for growth and development.

### **III. Methodology**

The present descriptive study collected data by means of different instruments and techniques like interviews, surveys, observations and questionnaires that were carried out within an eleventh grade group in CHC and two eleventh grade groups at SAMAGU and their corresponding English teachers. The variety of the instrument applied and the different sources assured the project to be both meaningful and real. Moreover, the following passages will detail how the researchers applied the procedures and which type of research was applied to this study based on purpose, time range, and depth. In the same way, the constructs of the paradigm and the approach of the investigation were conceptualized in order to have a clear idea of how this study proceeds. The subjects and sources of information were identified and the information gotten from them was analyzed as well.

#### **3.1. Type of Investigation**

This study analyzed the students' engagement in EFL classes based on the learning environment aspects such as the school context, the teachers' qualities and pedagogical mediation, in two high schools (CHC and SAMAGU) in Heredia. This research employed a mixed used of primary research and secondary research by collecting data from subjects as well as from sources. Primary research was the focus of the study because as stated by Brown it "...is derived from the primary source (e.g., students who are learning a language)" (2). In fact, it is clarified that the data collected for the study was taken from different instruments (observations, interviews, and questionnaires) and different subjects of information such as the eleventh grade students from both groups, both teachers being

observed and the administrators at both of the high schools researched. On the other hand, “Secondary research, that is, research based on sources...” (1) helped us to analyze and explain in depth the variables and constructs present in the study.

Furthermore, this is a descriptive study since it describes a phenomenon; in this case how the learning environment affects student engagement and English learning. The data collected and analyzed provided the results and the conclusions due to the fact that the systematic collection of information required a careful selection of the constructs studied and an analysis of each variable in order to demonstrate validity. Furthermore, the participants of the study are not randomly assigned and they belong by nature to the groups being studied. The researchers when selecting this design tried to have control for as many potential variables as possible in order to try to reach a valid casual conclusion. For this reason, this study presents the following typology:

### **3.1.1. According to purpose**

This study followed the characteristics of a basic investigation that looks for information instead of applying certain phenomena to a specific situation. The first three specific objectives led the research to focus on explaining how the integration of a variety of aspects in the classroom helps to promote students’ engagement. In fact, basic research is conducted for the purpose of gathering information and building on existing knowledge by analyzing the different variables immersed in the EFL classes. Dos Remedios affirms that basic investigation is a curiosity-driven study (1).

However, the last objective of this study aimed to design a pedagogical proposal with the knowledge gathered from the previous objectives to promote engagement. In such sense, the investigation also portrayed, especially in its last objective, features of an applied research. After all,

the lines between basic and applied research can be blurred when a study seeks not only to explain how the different factors investigated promote student engagement, but also to design a pedagogical proposal for teachers to apply in the different high school contexts around the country.

### **3.1.2. According to time range**

The following study analyzed certain specific phenomena like school context, the teacher's qualities, and the pedagogical mediation and how they impact engagement in three eleventh graders' groups, two at SAMAGU and the other at CHC. This research was carried out between a specific period of time which refers from the months of August to October of 2014. This time was chosen since the students and the teachers who work as the participants of the investigation were in eleventh grade only for the present year, and so due to the MEP national tests, they left the high school by the month of November.

Furthermore, the research suggested an application of a cross-sectional study by analyzing certain phenomena (students' engagement) that occurred in a specific time, so it generated a descriptive and observational research. As Brown refers to this, cross-sectional studies "... consider a group of people as a cross section of possible behavior at a particular point or at several distinct points in time" (3). For this reason, the research is considered as a cross-sectional study.

### **3.1.3. According to Depth**

The depth of this research is characterized from the perspective of social sciences in which different types of research are presented. Barrantes claims that there are four types of research:



exploratory, correlational, descriptive and explanatory (131-2). On the other hand, Boeije affirms that there are six types of research in qualitative or mixed designs (32-3). This research focused on a mixed design paradigm with a descriptive design.

The descriptive design, as Barrantes and Boeije identify, guides the study through several observations and other techniques for the researcher to describe the reality in the classroom focusing on specific aspects of the research and, thus, to evaluate the variables involved and their results. According to Boeije descriptive designs

"...offer the opportunity for participants to describe the subject of study in their own words and to do so largely on their own condition. [...]. Likewise, with the use of various observation methods, extended descriptions of cultural behavior, knowledge and artifacts it can be obtained" (32).

In other words, descriptive design allowed the researches to determine how the school context, teachers' qualities and pedagogical mediation influence engagement.

Finally, the explanatory study was also used in this research to further analyze the variables and their relationships to students' engagement. According to Barrantes, their main aim is to explain why a phenomenon occurs, under what conditions it occurs or why two or more variables are related to such phenomenon (132). This explanatory research looked for the explanation of how a phenomenon such as students' engagement is related to specific factors and it seeks to explain what aspects of the learning environment promote students' engagement; being a social issue per se the qualitative approach is required to develop such study.

Thus, this research is presented as a descriptive and explanatory study. However, the fourth specific objective intends to design a coaching proposal for promoting engagement in EFL classes. For that reason, the final phase of the investigation proposed an action research that aims to improve the

impact of teaching a foreign language.

#### **3.1.4. Investigation Paradigm**

This research was guided by the mixed paradigm; that is, qualitative and quantitative paradigm played an important role in the development of this project. Firstly, there is the naturalistic or interpretive view that seeks to understand and interpret the social reality, the meanings of people, perceptions, intentions, and actions of individuals. This paradigm is related to the qualitative approach as their characteristics are similar in the fact that both give a holistic emphasis on research; it considers observation and interviews as key tools for collecting data and for trying to understand a situation through the eyes of the subject. Nevertheless, a quantitative research approach cannot be ignored since surveys and questionnaires are going to be applied to both teachers and students from which the sample data is going to be processed using percentages and totals.

As it is mentioned above, the researchers worked with a mixed paradigm; which means that for this research study there was a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. As Creswell mentions, many researchers nowadays decide to use multiple methods of data collection and analysis drawn from within methods; such as different types of qualitative and quantitative data collection strategies and procedures (174). For this research, the dominant-less dominant design was selected. Creswell defines this model as “a design where the researcher presents the study within a single, dominant paradigm with one small component of the overall study drawn for the alternative paradigm” (177). For this study, qualitative observations, questionnaires and interviews were carried out with a limited number of informants (dominant), followed by one or two quantitative surveys (less dominant). By using this approach, a consistent paradigm picture of our study is presented, at the same

time that limited information was gathered to probe one aspect of the study in detail.

### **3.1.5. Investigation Approach**

As mentioned before, the focus of the research is a mixed paradigm and approach. First, Harwell clarifies that "qualitative research methods focus on discovering and understanding the experiences, perspectives, and thoughts of participants—that is, qualitative research explores meaning, purpose, or reality" (148). In other words, qualitative research does not focus on numbers and statistics but on the qualities of the investigated phenomenon. For this reason, this research suggested a qualitative analysis, as it tries to find the 'inner nature' of a reality that is taking place at CHC and SAMAGU. In addition, it seeks to explain what aspects of the learning environment promote students' engagement; being a social issue per se the qualitative approach is required to develop such study.

Moreover, Harwell states that "quantitative research methods attempt to maximize objectivity, replicability, and generalizability of findings, and are typically interested in prediction." (149). Additionally, the methods used as surveys, questionnaires and analysis (creating tables and diagrams) are, also, part of the quantitative research. Nonetheless, it is essential to understand that the different aspects of the quantitative approach will support the different features of the qualitative approach in this study. For this, Creswell affirms that there are six methods for using mixed approaches (qtd in Harwell, 153).

The study considered two types of those designs: a) the concurrent triangulation design and b) sequential transformative design. In the first design, the use of qualitative and quantitative data is used to validate information collected. Harwell states that "Qualitative and quantitative data are collected concurrently, such that weaknesses of one kind of data are ideally offset by strengths of the other kind

concurrent transformative design” (155). The latter, collect both qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously and uses both in the analysis mixing both types which means that qualitative and quantitative data are collected at the same time and can be weighted equally or unequally during the integration of findings” (157). This means that qualitative and quantitative data are usually mixed during the analysis phases of the investigation.

### **3.2. Subjects and sources of information**

Firstly, both settings were chosen following the principle of maximization as Boeije says “This means that a location should be determined where the topic of study manifests itself most strongly” (34). For this reason, SAMAGU and CHC were chosen because of being two institutions placed in the list of the best 100 high schools of Costa Rica according to MEP in 2012 and La Nación newspaper in 2013. Besides, their similarities among their integral and humanistic vision of education, they offer and emphasis on English not only by giving more classes of English than the MEP’s assign for eleventh graders but by expanding the program besides the MEP’s syllabus. This enabled the study to analyze in a similar deeply manner how some aspects as the learning environment can promote student engagement in EFL classrooms.

#### **3.2.1. Subjects of information**

There are many factors that needed to be considered when selecting a sample of students that were part of this investigation such as the lack of homogeneity in the school system and among the

pupils in terms of life background, differences in abilities, or language competences and performance. The study carried out a non-probabilistic sample where, as Haque says, "...the sample are selected deliberately by the researcher instead of using the techniques of random sampling" (3). In this way, the researchers selected both sample in each institution following the convenience principle; that is, choosing the sample is related to the convenience of the researchers due to the easy access of both groups in terms of schedule and place.

However, a judgmental or purposeful sample was also carried out by selecting the sample that was most productive and related for the research question. Informal interviews within both institutions (teachers, students, principal) were carried out by the researchers taking into account their personal knowledge of both contexts to select the teacher and the class. In fact, Marshall affirms that this sampling technique "...can involve developing a framework of the variables that might influence an individual's contribution and will be based on the researcher's practical knowledge of the research area, the available literature and evidence from the study itself" (523).

Moreover, SAMAGU's sample accounts to 51 students while CHC's sample is of 24 students, which sum up as a total of 75 students being researched for this study. The students researched were about 16 to 18 years old; and the sample encompasses 43 women and 32 men in total. Additionally, their socio-economical status varies from lower to upper within the samples of both high school; however, most of the students belong to the Costa Rican middle class. In regards to the English level proficiency, both groups were multi-level groups; that is, the students selected had a varied proficiency level in which the students round about A2 and B2 according to the Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEFRL); nevertheless, the vast majority of students belong to a B1 proficiency level in the language.

Additionally, in this research two teachers chosen as the participants of the research were

selected due to the success they have shown to have with their students in their time working with the highest levels of secondary education in both SAMAGU and CHC. The high schools have provided the results and statistics of the last generations in terms of the class promotion and the percentage of promotion in the national English test from the MEP in 2010, 2011 and 2012 respectively. Both teachers were contacted and accepted voluntarily to be part of this research and collaborate with the design of the coaching proposal by the end of the investigation.

### **3.2.2. Sources of Information**

When talking about sources of information, there are two types of sources: primary and secondary sources. The study complemented the primary sources of information (data collected from students and teachers) with the secondary sources (variety of authors and theories about the variables). For this reason, the data collected by different instruments (observations, interviews, questionnaires and focus groups) were taken as a primary source of information, applied to the specific example of this research. Moreover, as secondary sources, the research analyzed different authors' insights related to learning environment and students' engagement. To do so, this study involved an intense search for information, in both the libraries of Universidad Nacional and the journals, articles and data sources found online.

### **3.3. Analysis of information**

The next excerpt as an essential part explains how the researchers compared and analyzed the data collected to achieve the objectives in the investigation. The information gathered was analyzed by

triangulating the data and the instruments, as the data collected from different sources (students, teachers and library sources) through searches, observations, questionnaires and interviews.

Firstly, the analysis is intrinsically linked with the objectives, in order to visualize more concretely the data collected that led to the results. Therefore, the aspects that a meaningful and engaging school context present need to be identified by determining features like the school curriculum and English syllabus used in classes. Then the qualities required by the teacher to promote engagement such as the experience, the teacher-student interaction and the class management were identified. Also the aspects such as class arrangement, the teaching approach, the methods, techniques, the activities and the resources were described. Finally, a coaching proposal for promoting engagement in high school was defined. In order to analyze the information in a coherent, valid and reliable manner the following chart represents how the analysis took place:

Table 2.

Conceptual, Instrumental and Operational Definitions

Conceptual Definition	Instrumental Definition	Operational Definition
<p><u>A. Engagement:</u> is the student's investment of resources (mainly psychological) such as the attention, interest, commitment, persistence, energy and effort that happen as a product of motivation and active learning</p>	<p>A. Quantitative: Ordinal Scales</p> <p>- Adapted from the instruments used by the Australian Council for Educational Research to measure class engagement</p> <p>Qualitative: descriptive data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher's perspective (interview)</li> <li>• Students' perspectives (interview and questionnaire)</li> </ul>	<p>A. 100% of students show engagement in the English class</p>
<p><u>1. School's Curriculum:</u> related to the cultural expectations, values, school's perspectives,</p>		

<p>school structures, and the institutional rules.</p> <p>1.1. School's Philosophy: A stance that emphasizes the values and ethics portrayed in the mission and the vision of the institution as well as implied in the hidden curriculum.</p> <p>1.2. English Syllabus: the outline and summary of topics to be covered in an education or training course which includes the objectives, the means of obtaining them, an outline of what will be covered in the course; a schedule and the evaluation for the course</p>	<p>1.1. Qualitative: descriptive data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers observations</li> <li>• Artifacts: collect mission and vision from both institutions</li> <li>• Students' perspectives (interview and questionnaire)</li> <li>• Administrative staff perspectives (questionnaire)</li> </ul> <p>1.2. Qualitative: descriptive data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers observations</li> <li>• Artifacts: collect English syllabuses</li> <li>• Teachers' perspective (interview)</li> <li>• Students' perspectives (interview and questionnaire)</li> <li>• Nominal scale</li> </ul>	<p>1.1. Does the school's philosophy include aspects that enhance engagement such as student personalization, students involvement in school, student well-being and administrative staff accessibility for students?</p> <p>1.2. Are the contents of the English syllabus engaging for students? Are the objectives of the English syllabus clear stated? Is the English syllabus related to student's needs? 100% of the administrative staff (English coordinator, Academic coordinator and principal) knows the English syllabus</p>
<p><u>2. Teachers' Qualities:</u> the attributes an educator should possess in order to boost engagement</p> <p>2.1. Teacher's Experience: it is related to the years of teaching, certifications and teacher trainings an educator a teacher might possess.</p> <p>2.2. Teacher-student interaction:</p>	<p>2.1. Ordinal scale Ordinal scale Qualitative: descriptive data.</p> <p>2.2. Qualitative: descriptive data</p>	<p>2.1. 100% hold a BA degree in EFL teaching 100% certifications and trainings in EFL pedagogy. How many years of experience do the teachers posses?</p> <p>2.2. Does the teacher-student interaction include</p>



<p>refers to the ways in which student behavior, movement, and interaction during a lesson are organized and controlled by the teacher to enable teaching to take place most effectively.</p> <p>2.3. Class management: an interaction between a teacher and the students which includes features such as control, inspiration, creativity, civility, respect, confidence and praise on both ends of the relations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers observations</li> <li>• Teacher's perspective (interview)</li> <li>• Students' perspectives (interview and questionnaire)</li> </ul> <p>2.3. Qualitative: descriptive data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers observations</li> <li>• Teacher's perspective (interview)</li> <li>• Students' perspectives (interview and questionnaire)</li> </ul>	<p>aspects that enhance engagement such as control, respect, confidence and participation?</p> <p>2.3. Does the English class management include features that promote engagement such as clear instructions, tight transitions, discipline management and clear procedures?</p>
<p><u>3. Pedagogical Mediation:</u> refers to the pedagogic interventions related to the theories of learning and practice such as the approach, methods, and techniques.</p> <p>3.1. Class arrangement: It is related to providing an adequate atmosphere where students have more chance to succeed in their own learning, specially in the way an educator sets the classroom</p> <p>3.2. Teaching approach: refers to the principles for learning and teaching</p>	<p>3.1. Qualitative: descriptive data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers observations</li> </ul> <p>3.2. Qualitative: descriptive data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers observations</li> <li>• Teacher's perspective (interview)</li> <li>• Ordinal scale</li> </ul>	<p>3.1. Does the English class include an arrangement of the class, ease interaction flow and dictates classroom roles?</p> <p>3.2. Does the teaching approach reflect the principles of the communicative, constructivist and humanistic approach? Is the communicative approach being applied in a satisfactory manner? Is the constructivist approach applied in a</p>

<p>3.3. Teaching methods: related to class participation, demonstration, recitation, memorization, or combinations of these.</p> <p>3.4. Teaching techniques: It refers to the strategies used in the class in the different activities or tasks an educator plan</p>	<p>3.3. Qualitative: descriptive data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers observations</li> <li>• Teacher's perspective (interview)</li> </ul> <p>3.4. Qualitative: descriptive data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researchers observations</li> <li>• Artifacts: materials, students productions, evaluations, assessment, teacher's planning</li> <li>• Teacher's perspective (interview)</li> <li>• Students' perspective (interview and questionnaires)</li> </ul>	<p>satisfactory manner? Is the humanistic approach reflected in class?</p> <p>3.3. Do the teaching methods enhance class participation and combine demonstration, recitation, memorization?</p> <p>3.4. Are all the language components appropriately included in the daily basis lesson plan? Are the learning strategies being satisfactorily included in the lesson? Are the teaching techniques, activities and lesson plans enhancing engagement? Do the lesson plan includes all the elements stated in the program: preparation, demonstration, introduction of the activity, correction and follow-up? Are the materials and resources used in class satisfactory in terms of: related to the communicative approach, congruent with the level of performance, engagement, and relevant to the learning process? Are the evaluations applied related to the objectives seen in class and the objectives of the program?</p>
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Source: Own Elaboration; October 2014

**3.4. Data Collection Techniques**

The study required different data collection techniques, where participants could deepen the expected topics and thus reach accurate conclusions in relation with reality. Therefore, observations, interviews, questionnaires and surveys were conducted, which are described below.

### **3.4.1. Observation**

The study encompassed eight observations for CHC and six observations for SAMAGU; each observation was an hour and twenty minutes (or two lessons of classes). According to Taylor-Powell and Steele, two reasons that can lead researchers to use observation are when there is a need to seek for direct information and when an ongoing behavior or situation is trying to be understood (1996, 1). For this study, two natural (according to the place they were taken), non-participant (the researchers do not participate actively in the context), team (the observations were carried out by both researchers) and unstructured (observations that use researches field notes as entries) observations (see appendix 6) and four natural non-participant, team and structured (observations that use sheets, checklists and specific criteria) observations (see appendix 7 and 8) were carried out in both contexts. The first, non-structured observations helped the researchers grasp the most meaningful aspects of the context in relation to student engagement while the latter observations allowed the researchers to specify in the criteria the variables present in this study like the school context, teachers' qualities and the pedagogical mediation.

### **3.4.2. Interview**

Gill et al affirm that there are three types of interviews: structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews (291). The study implemented semi-structured interviews to both teachers being observed in each institution as well as to four students (two from each group) (see appendix 9 and 10). By interviewing the teachers and the students, specific aspects presented in the research questions and in the objectives were clearly and precisely clarified. The interviews tried not to limit the interviewees' perceptions and opinions of the topic.

In fact, Gill et al assert that "The purpose of the research interview is to explore the views, experiences, beliefs and/or motivations of individuals on specific matters" (292). For that reason, this research used the interview to elicit in participants (both students and teachers) feelings related to the variables investigated in the study. "Semi-structured interviews consist of several key questions that help to define the areas to be explored, but also allows the interviewer or interviewee to diverge in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail" (Gill et al, 291).

### **3.4.3. Survey: Questionnaires**

Additionally, the research applied a survey in means of a questionnaire for all the students within the groups being observed (that is, eleventh grade in both institutions), for both teachers being observed and to the principals of both high schools (see appendix 11, 12 and 13). The questionnaires, in this sense, served as a technique to collect extensive data on the opinions and perceptions of students, teachers, and high schools policy-makers. In fact, questionnaires allowed this study to register all the participants' perceptions in an impersonal manner, freeing the participants of the personal aspect that

the "face to face" interview may lay. However, "Questionnaire design is one of the most controversial issues among survey researchers because how respondents are asked questions has a great effect on the results" (Sato, 7). For this reason, the questionnaires involved four parts: the first part is related to closed questions about personal information data, the second, third, and fourth were centered on a scale where both students, teachers and administrators scored their degree of agreement with statements proposals. Finally, the last part portrayed open questions regarding the research topics for the students to voice their opinions and perceptions more deeply.

#### **3.4.4. Artifacts**

It is usual in qualitative and quantitative studies for researchers to collect artifacts. Indeed, the study presented some variables and criteria to analyze where the collections of artifacts can serve to explore the variable in depth, by doing so, it can foster understanding of such variables. There are many different types of documents researchers can collect; however, the following study collected: documents in the public sphere such as the mission, vision, policies and English syllabus of both institutions; statistical records such as the grade records in the subject per se and in the MEP national tests; and documents used in daily work (written procedures, wall posters, worksheets, practices, photographs and some students' production tasks). Nevertheless, Yanow states that "...researchers' interpretations are provisional, subject to corroboration, or refutation, by members of the situation under study, typically through direct inquiry, whether formally convened or informally initiated" (10). For that reason, it was necessary to analyze documents and artifacts collected in agreement with data collected by other techniques.

### **3.4.5. Scales**

In order to choose accurate statistics, Brown emphasizes on the types of scales, the number of variables and how each variable is viewed conceptually. In such case, the study definitely used most of nominal scales and some applying of ordinal scales when measuring engagement as well as descriptive data. As Brown defines “Nominal scales are used for naming and categorizing data in a variable... Memberships in such groups may occur naturally or artificially...” (21). In regards to this definition, the study presented nominal scales when categorizing the different criteria that each variable involves. Moreover, ordinal scales were also applied which recall for ranking; indeed, “...ordinal scale is used to order, or rank, data” (Brown 21). The study had ranked when quantitative data collections methods were applied such as checklists and questionnaires.

### **3.4.6. Validation**

Finally, triangulation was done as part of the process to provide real and reliable data, thus to develop the objectives thoroughly. On the one hand, the work triangulated techniques, since more than three methods were used such as interviews, survey, and observations. This allowed the researches to compare data provided and denote matches or discrepancies in answers or documented experiences (see table 2). Moreover, the research had a triangulation of data because the information was taken from theoretical sources, the students, both teachers and the administrators. Finally, the instruments were validated by assessment of the tutor professor and the professor of the course 'Seminario de Investigación' and by the application of few samples to the participants.

Table 3.

## Triangulation of techniques

Variable: Engagement							
Observation 1	Observation 2	Observation 3	Student Questionnaire	Teacher Questionnaire	Principal Questionnaire	Student Interview	Teacher Interview
Part I	Part I	Part I: 1-2	Part II: 1-2	Questionnaire #1	Part I: A-C	Questions: 1 and 6	Question: 6
Part II							
Variable: School Curriculum							
Observation 1	Observation 2	Observation 3	Student Questionnaire	Teacher Questionnaire	Principal Questionnaire	Student Interview	Teacher Interview
_____	_____	Part II: 1-2	Part II: 1-3	Questionnaire #2	Part II: A-C	Part B: 1-5	Questions: 1, 2, 3 and 4
Variable: Teacher Qualities							
Observation 1	Observation 2	Observation 3	Student Questionnaire	Teacher Questionnaire	Principal Questionnaire	Student Interview	Teacher Interview
_____	_____	Part III: 1-4	Part III	Questionnaire #3	Part III: 1-4	Questions: 3, 4, 5 and 8	Questions: 5, 11, 12
Variable: Pedagogical Mediation							
Observation 1	Observation 2	Observation 3	Student Questionnaire	Teacher Questionnaire	Principal Questionnaire	Student Interview	Teacher Interview
_____	_____	Part IV: 1-10	Part IV: 1-3	Questionnaire #4	Part IV: 1-2	Questions: 2, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12	Questions: 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14

Source: Own Elaboration; October 2014

On the other hand, reliability is a required aspect in qualitative research. Indeed, Joppe quoted in Golafshani claims that reliability is:

...the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable. (p. 598)

Nonetheless, it is important to clarify that it is not possible to attain exact replication because the researchers did not control the variables during the study.

### 3.5. Procedures

Firstly, the researchers got into the field by asking the necessary permissions to the teachers and the schools' administrators to carry out their research in both institutions. After all the permissions were authorized, by the start of the second semester of the present year, the researchers entered the field and carried out the different data collection techniques once the professor from the course *Seminario de Investigación* have validated our data collection techniques. Then, the analysis of the data collected took place and the results and conclusions were produced. Finally, the coaching proposal was designed by the researchers in order to help EFL teachers to promote engagement in class (see table 3).

Table 4.

#### Proposed Schedule

Task	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept.	Oct.	Nov
Entering the field	X									
Defining objectives and research questions	X									
Identifying variables	X									
Write the theoretical framework and methodology	X									
Editing details		X								
Proposing to CGA		X								
Carrying out observations							X	X		
Applying interviews								X	X	
Applying questionnaires								X	X	



Analyzing data collected									X	
Writing results and conclusions									X	
Designing the coaching proposal									X	X

Source: Own Elaboration; October 2014.

### 3.6. Scope of the Study

This research sought not only to analyze how students' engagement can be promoted, but it also aimed to provide a tool for an EFL education methodological transformation in order to optimize the English classes in high schools and other contexts throughout the country. For this reason, this research sought to achieve in the educational field a suitable proposal for enhancing students' engagement and its implementation by those teachers who are working for MEP or high schools. Because of its generalities, it can also be applied to any context similar to CHC and SAMAGU. Thus, a pedagogical change can be achieved in language teaching and students will be engaged in class and learn the language in a meaningful long-lasting manner.

By the end of the research, it is considered that the result gotten from the investigation may be of interest not of the high schools English staff but other English teachers who are encountering problems of how to engage large classes of teenage students in English; this because teenagers are more focus on media, social networks, and the outside world but on class. Certainly, the investigation results could provide teachers with different strategies, techniques, activities or tasks that can be used for engaging their students in the English class. Moreover, it is essential to consider that besides helping CHC's and SAMAGU's English teachers through the coaching proposal and the investigation

results, they could serve the researchers and other EFL teachers as a feedback to analyze the context, the qualities and the pedagogy necessary to engage students and create meaningful learning environment. Finally, this investigation can contribute in the professional growth of EFL high school teachers in the Costa Rican context and in other countries by knowing more about a trendy issue of education in the current situation given at English classes.

### **3.7. Limitations**

However, there are certain limitations that may arise along the way. First, as teachers who work at Santa María de Guadalupe High School with strong beliefs towards the communicative approach for teaching English; the study could suggest some subjective opinions. The solution was to keep in mind the objectivity of the research and to maintain such objectivity in the course of the investigation by monitoring each others' opinions and thoughts. In fact, being a pair work the research was more consistent given that fact that both researchers serve as anchors of reasoning, objectivity and focus for each other.

Moreover, the theoretical limitation renders a lack of sources of information for some of the variables related to engagement like teachers' qualities and the schools' curriculum. Therefore, research on each variable was carried out separately and then it was related well to each other, as the investigation unfolds.

Finally, two practical limitations may have arisen: the time when the studied was done and the denial of the participants. The time of the year when the research was carried out may have influenced students' perceptions of some variables given the fact that it was the end of the year for eleventh graders and MEP exams were around the corner. For that reason, the researchers started to observe and

carried out some instruments after midterm vacations. Secondly, the denial of the teachers, the students and/or the high school's authorities to conduct the interviews, surveys and observations in their classes could have affected the research. That is why the approval of the high schools' principals and the teachers was sought before writing this proposal and notifications can be sent to the students' parents in order to inform them about the research process going on as well as to seek for their cooperation with the investigation.

## **VI. Data Analysis**

Learning environment, students' engagement and students' achievement are three factors that go hand in hand in the game of the learning process. By analyzing specific features included in the learning environment such as school's curriculum, teachers' qualities and pedagogical mediation, student engagement can be researched and analyzed in order to provide clear information about aspects that are needed to be considered when promoting students' achievement in English learning. To do so, the following excerpt of this investigation will present the data analysis for the four main variables of this research and their sub-variables: engagement, school curriculum (school philosophy and English syllabus), teacher qualities (teacher experience, teacher-student interaction and class management) and pedagogical mediation (class arrangement, teaching approach, methods, techniques and materials).

### **4.1. Engagement**

When analyzing engagement, this investigation focuses on the characteristics given by Schlechty who exemplifies the engaged student as an attentive, committed, persistent, and visionary student (429). In that sense, the amount of students engaged by class in each high school, CHC and SAMAGU, was an important factor to denote (see fig. 4 and 5). Indeed, both graphs show that in the observations held in each establishment the average was that most of the students of the class were engaged in class. However, it is important to clarify that in the two last observations held in CHC, half of the eleventh grade class observed were attending extracurricular activities. Nevertheless, the amount of students engaged in each class observed accounts for the vast majority; the same situation happens in SAMAGU.

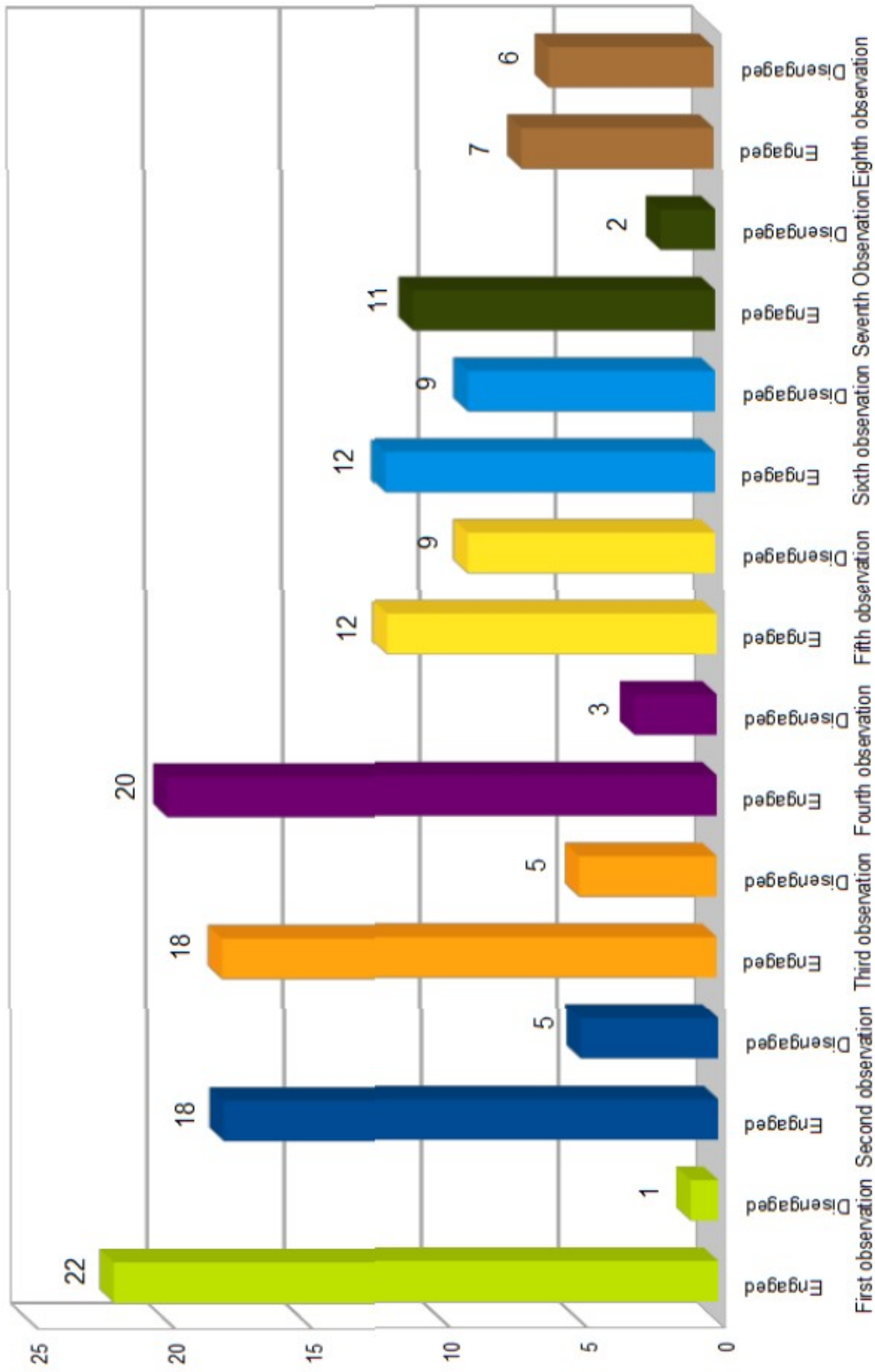


Fig. 4. Amount of students engaged and disengaged in CHC on each observation; Own elaboration, 15 October 2014

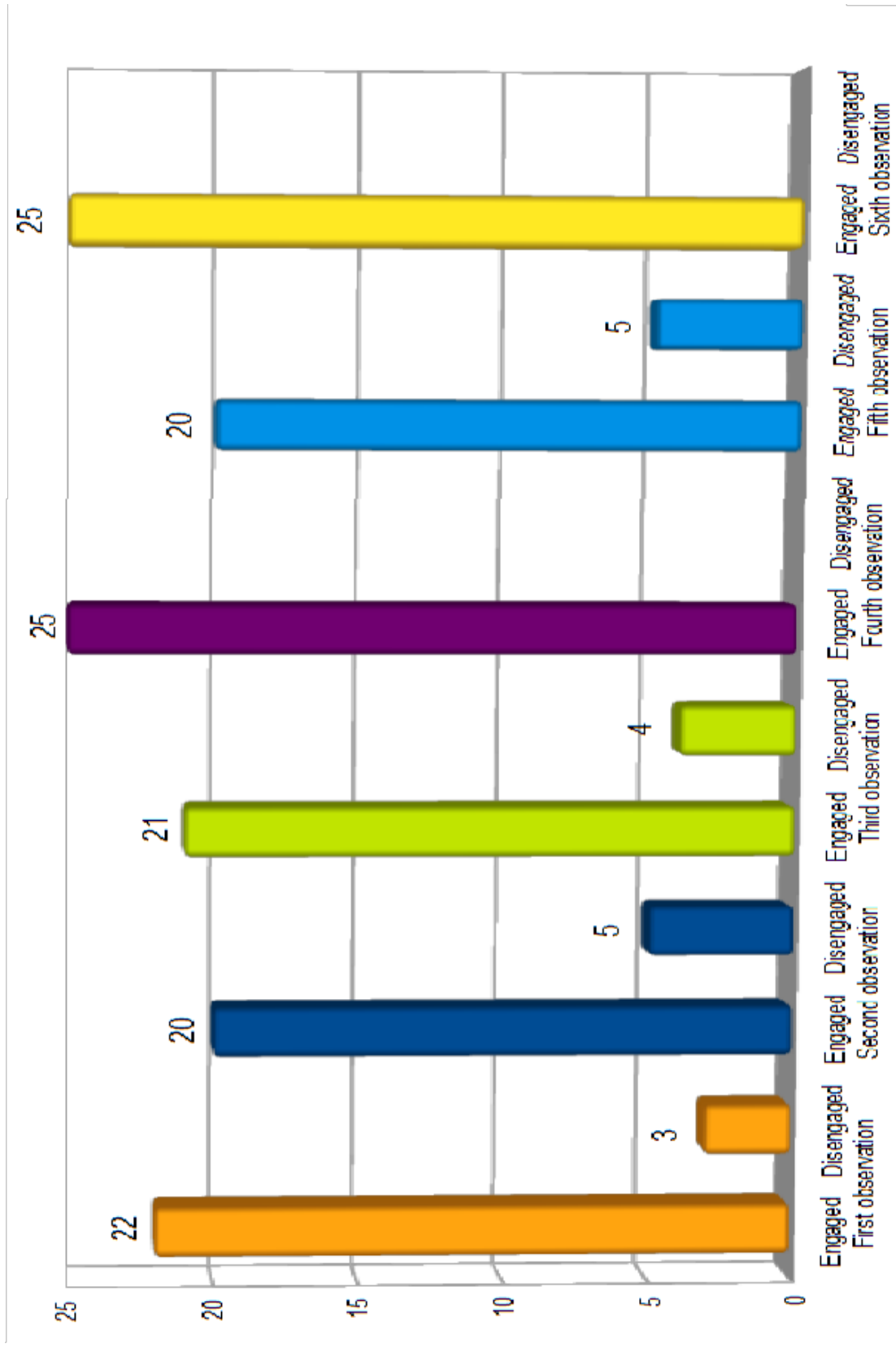


Fig. 5. Amount of students engaged and disengaged in SAMAGU on each observation; Own elaboration, 15 October 2014

Some specific characteristics, compiled from the different definitions of engagement given by Park, Trowler, Stefani, Barkley and much more, were observed in the engaged students such as: the investment of time in the class on doing the task or activity assigned by the teacher, the effort shown to complete the task properly, the usage of available resources to complete the task, the search for additional resources to enrich their learning and complete the task, the attention paid to the teacher explanations and examples, the interest shown in learning, the active participation in the learning process without being called or asked, the attitude shown towards the subject, the interest shown on learning what is being studied, the understanding of the new knowledge, the search for the teacher assistance to be guided or corrected in the task, the attention shown on what is being done, the commitment shown to the task and learning, the persistence when difficulties in the task arise, the effort made to complete the task in time and correctly and the display of energy shown when doing the tasks.

By analyzing fig. 6, in CHC, it is noticed that 100% of the engaged students pay attention to the teacher, are attentive and focused on the task being done, invest time to complete the task, demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning, show interest in class, and participate actively. Additionally, 85% of the engaged students observed show interest in learning; 71% use available resources, complete task appropriately, show energy when completing the task and show interest in learning; and 57% are committed to the task. However, less than half, make an effort to complete task in time, find meaning in new knowledge, look for teacher assistance, and understands new knowledge. Furthermore, in SAMAGU fig. 7, 100% of the engaged students observed invest time to complete the task, use resources and show a positive attitude; 83,3% of the students show effort to complete the task, pay attention, are committed to the task; while 66,6% participate, are attentive and show energy. Half the observed students make an effort to complete tasks in time, look for teacher assistance, and show

interest in learning.

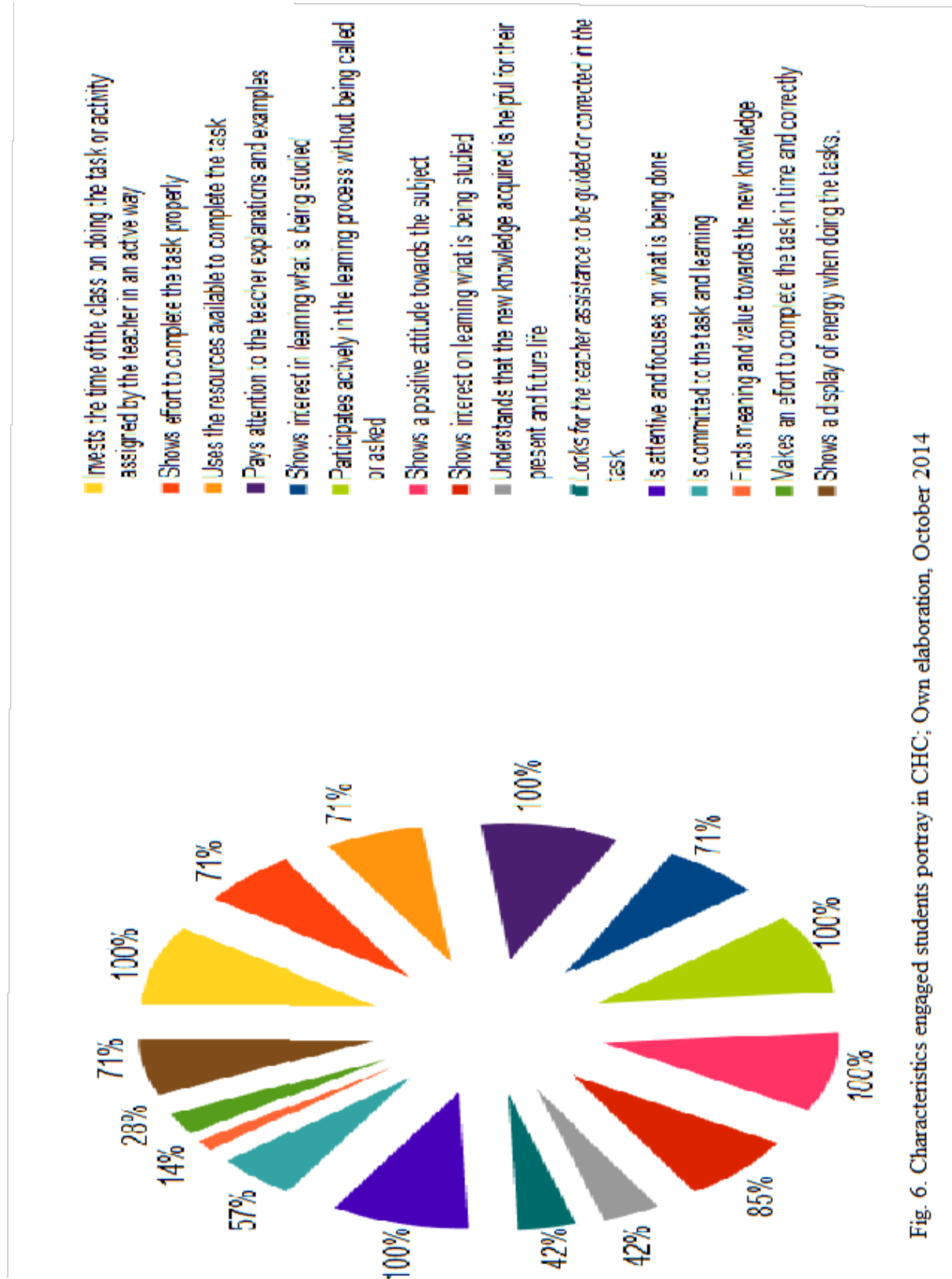


Fig. 6. Characteristics engaged students portray in CHC; Own elaboration, October 2014



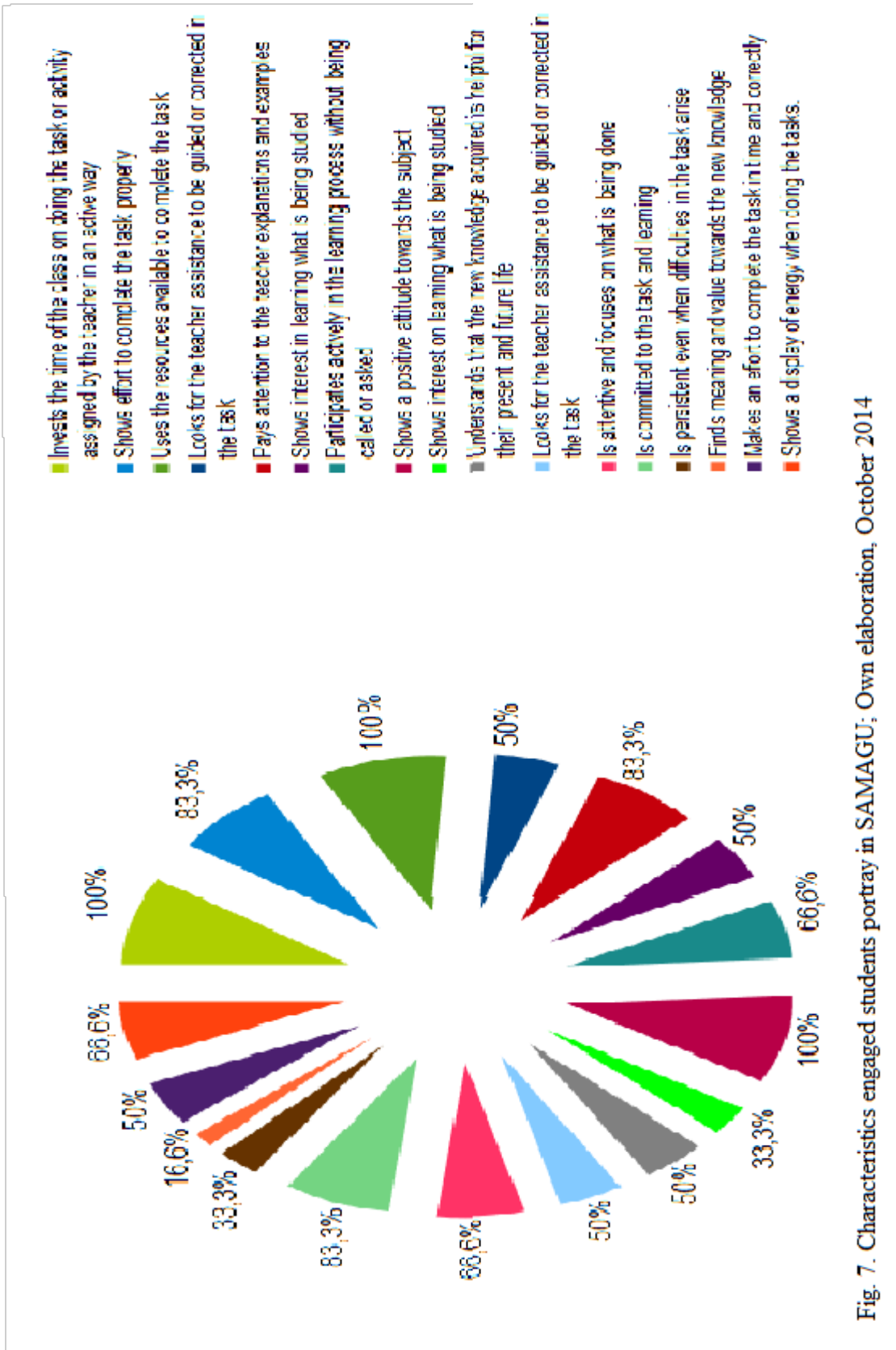


Fig. 7. Characteristics engaged students portray in SAMAGU; Own elaboration, October 2014

As observed in fig. 6 and fig. 7, the engaged students from both institutions present similar characteristics; interestingly, to seek for teacher assistance is portrayed by only half of the students while finding meaning and value towards new knowledge is the least portrayed characteristic. When talking with the students, one of the SAMAGU student affirms that the English class “*Depende del profesor puede ser como muy monótona y aburrida porque se ve mucha estructura. Para mi una clase de inglés activa es donde usted pueda hablar. [It depends on the teacher, it can be monotonous and boring if too many structures are taught. To me an active English class is one where you can talk]*”. Indeed, a class that focuses on grammar structures may not enhance engagement; moreover, a student interviewed in CHC asserts that “*Realmente que el profe es interactivo, digamos siempre trae videos y trata de mostrarnos y enseñarnos las cosas que vemos y aplicarlas en cosas que .. no se... llaman la atención, no solo ver la materia por verla. [Actually, the teacher is interactive, and brings videos and tries to show us and teaches us the things we learn and tries to apply them... I don't know... they call our attention, not to learn new topics just to learn them]*”. Interestingly, what this student declares is basic in an engaged pedagogy, the fact that teachers need to teach new topics and apply them to class may help students find meaning and value in learning; that is, finding practical applications of what is learned in the English class, in this case to speak it and write it in connection to other areas of knowledge.

This characteristics identified in eleventh graders' engaged students contrast with the behavior shown of disengaged students (see fig. 8 and 9) in CHC and SAMAGU which accordingly to the observations (see fig. 4 and 5) are the less in each class. In fact, 100% of disengaged students at CHC and 66,6% of SAMAGU do not pay attention, 75% of CHC and 50% of SAMAGU do not participate, only 75% of CHC do not show commitment, 37,5% of CHC and 33,3% of SAMAGU do not ask questions, 75% of CHC and 66,6% of SAMAGU do not do tasks, 75% of CHC and 33,3% of

SAMAGU do not let other students work and 37,5% of CHC and 33,3% of SAMAGU do not have a positive attitude. As observed, although few students show disengagement towards the subject, they show to some degree characteristics like asking questions and having a positive attitude in class.

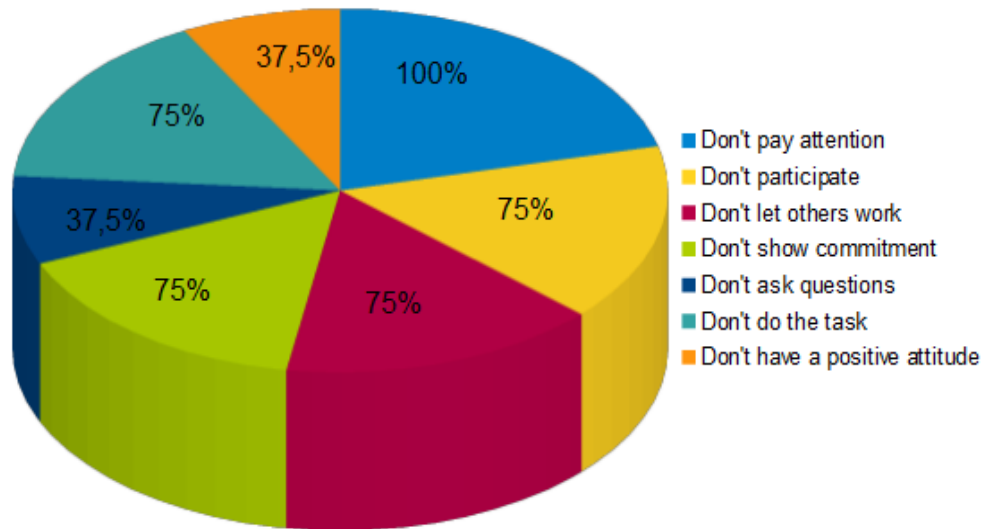


Fig. 8. Behavior of disengaged students in CHC; Own elaboration, October 2014.

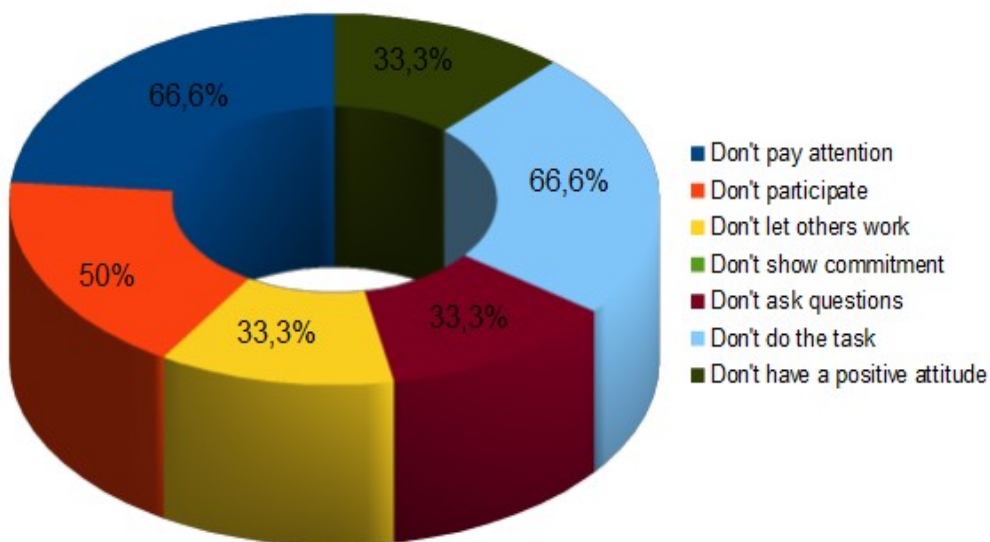


Fig. 9. Behavior of disengaged students in SAMAGU; Own elaboration, October 2014.

One aspect to take into consideration when observing the disengaged students is the schedule the class is on, this can be an aspect that can generate disengagement as a result not because of undisciplined students but of tired ones. In addition to this, one student of CHC alleges that the one thing she would change the English class is the schedule, “*Aunque no es decisión mía cambiaría el horario, porque este horario no es nada bueno.* [Although it is not my decision, I would have changed the schedule because this schedule is not good]”; given the fact, that CHC English classes observed were from 3:15 pm to 4:45 pm and some of the observed classes in SAMAGU were taught from 1:35 pm to 2:55 pm.

Indeed, Plevin sustains there are four reasons for students to be disengaged in class which are related to relevance of what is being taught, fear of failure and embarrassment, inadequacy of doing the task and uninspiring work (328 – 411). In this case, Plevin asserts that the lack of challenge, lack of variety and lack of novelty will cause students' lack of interest.

#### **4.1.1. Students' opinion about engaging tasks**

Students were questioned about their perspectives towards some tasks and if they considered they were necessary or not (see fig. 10 and 11). In CHC (see fig.10), more than half of the students considered strictly necessary the use of tasks that have a practical result, allow participation in possible careers/occupations, include different learning environments, have field trips and challenge them. Besides, most of the 43% consider that having interactive and dynamic strategies in class is very important but not necessary. However, tasks that include socializing with partners have a divided opinion, 50% consider it is not important while the other half considers it as important. As well as memorizing contexts where 43% consider it not to be important and 57% consider it to be important.

On the other hand, SAMAGU (see fig. 11) students consider all of the tasks listed to be very important or necessary; being tasks where they can participate in career/occupation related themes, the more agreed upon with 85% of students considering it strictly necessary. Moreover, 65% of the students agreed that having a variety of learning environments such as library, labs, multimedia encourages engagement.

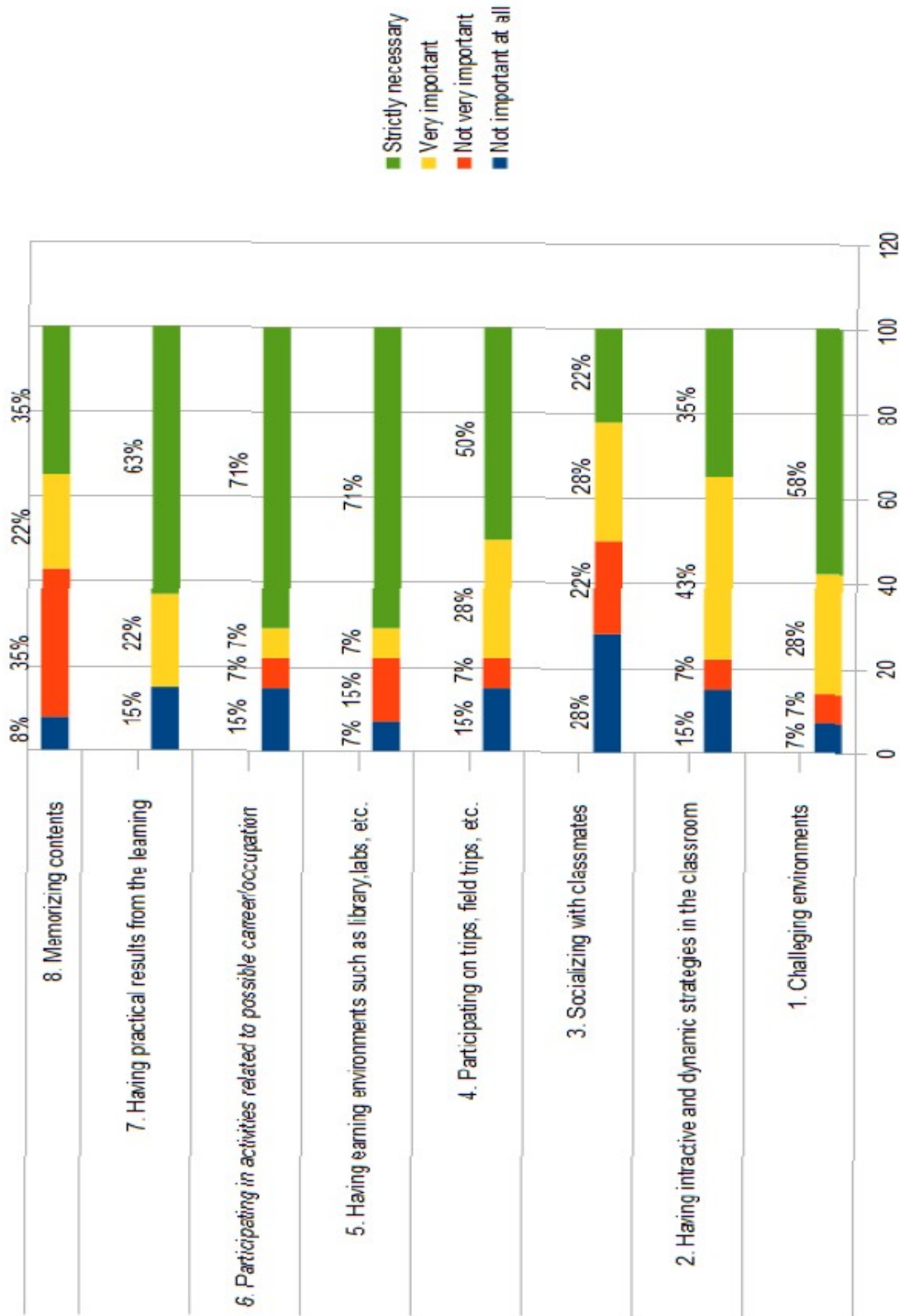


Fig. 10. CHC students opinion about engaging tasks; Own elaboration, October 2014.

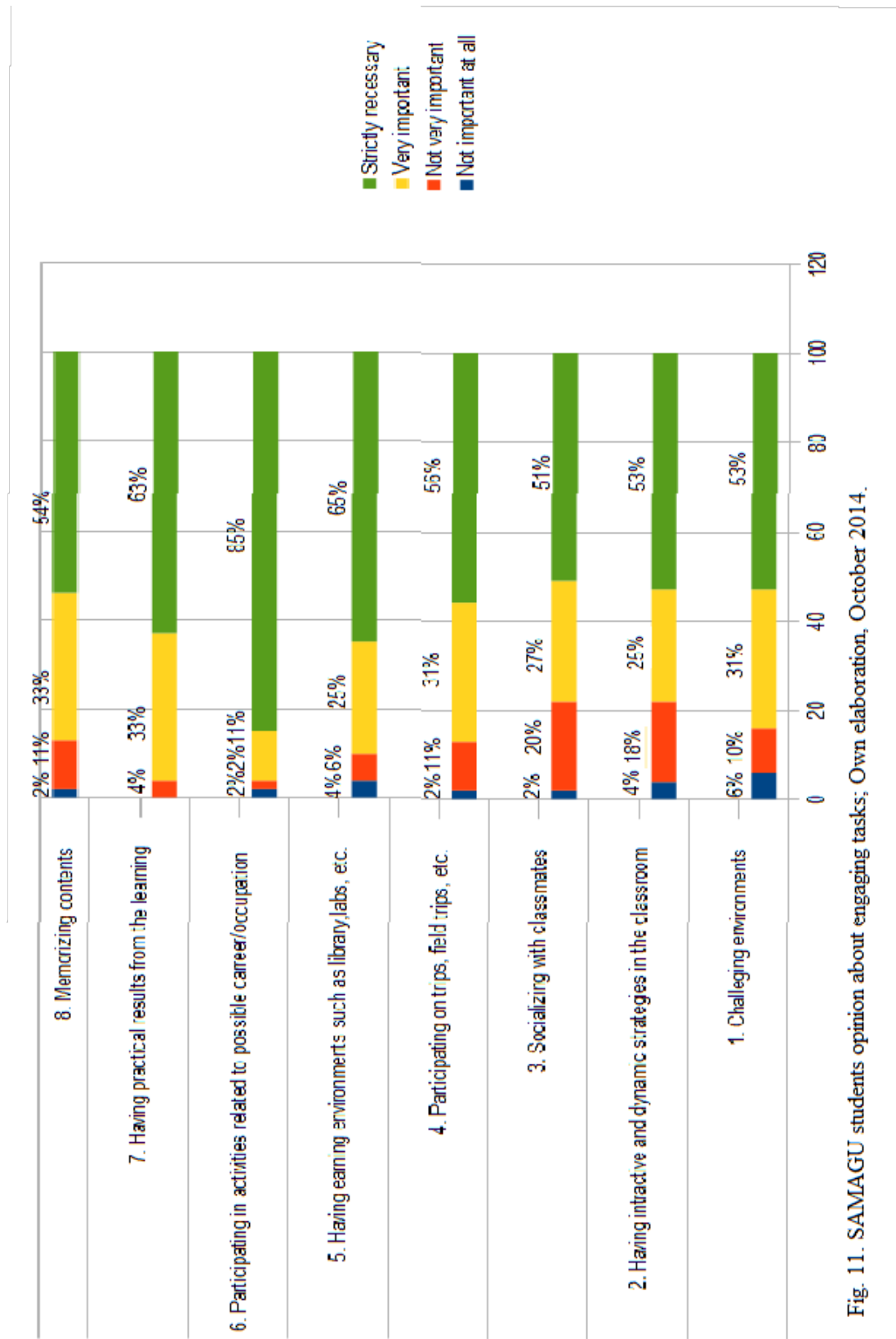


Fig. 11. SAMAGU students opinion about engaging tasks; Own elaboration, October 2014.

In fact, in the interviews many of the students researched agreed that what they like the most from English classes in CHC as well as SAMAGU is the used of dynamic and interactive environments:

*“Bueno de la clase de inglés es quizás la forma, digamos, tal vez los temas que se ven la literatura, lo que son las películas. [In the English class what I like most is maybe the way we go through the topics in literature and in movies]”* (Student 1, CHC)

*“Ehhh...no sé, que son muy entretenidas y bonitas a la hora de desarrollar los temas. [Well... I don't know, they are very entertaining and nice when developing the topics]”* (Student 2, CHC)

*“Ehhh.. la parte de participación activa a la hora de hacer exposiciones. [Well... the part where we participate actively when doing oral presentations]”* (Student 1, SAMAGU)

*“Sí me gusta pero puede ser cuando se hacen roleplays o algo así...no solamente estar en el libro. [Yes, I like it, when there are role plays or so, not only working on the book].”* (Student 2, SAMAGU)

Dynamic and interactive tasks are well received among students; besides, tasks as role plays encourage students not only to interact but to socialize among partners. This is why, students were asked which activities/tasks they could propose to enhance student engagement in the language (see fig. 11 and 12). CHC students (see fig. 12) proposed tasks that promote student interaction (42,3%), promote international exchanges (7,1%), have oral production (21,4%), use dynamic materials (35,7%), develop projects (7,1%), use English labs (21,4%), and improve perspectives towards English (7,1%). Additionally, SAMAGU students (see fig. 12) proposed tasks that promote student interaction (9,8%), promote international exchange (19,6%), have oral production (17,6%), use dynamic materials



(15,6%), develop projects (1,9%), have leveled English (1,9%), improve perspectives towards English (1,9%), use movies or music (17,6%), have updated information (11,7%), have formative evaluation (1,9%) and teach pronunciation (1,9%).

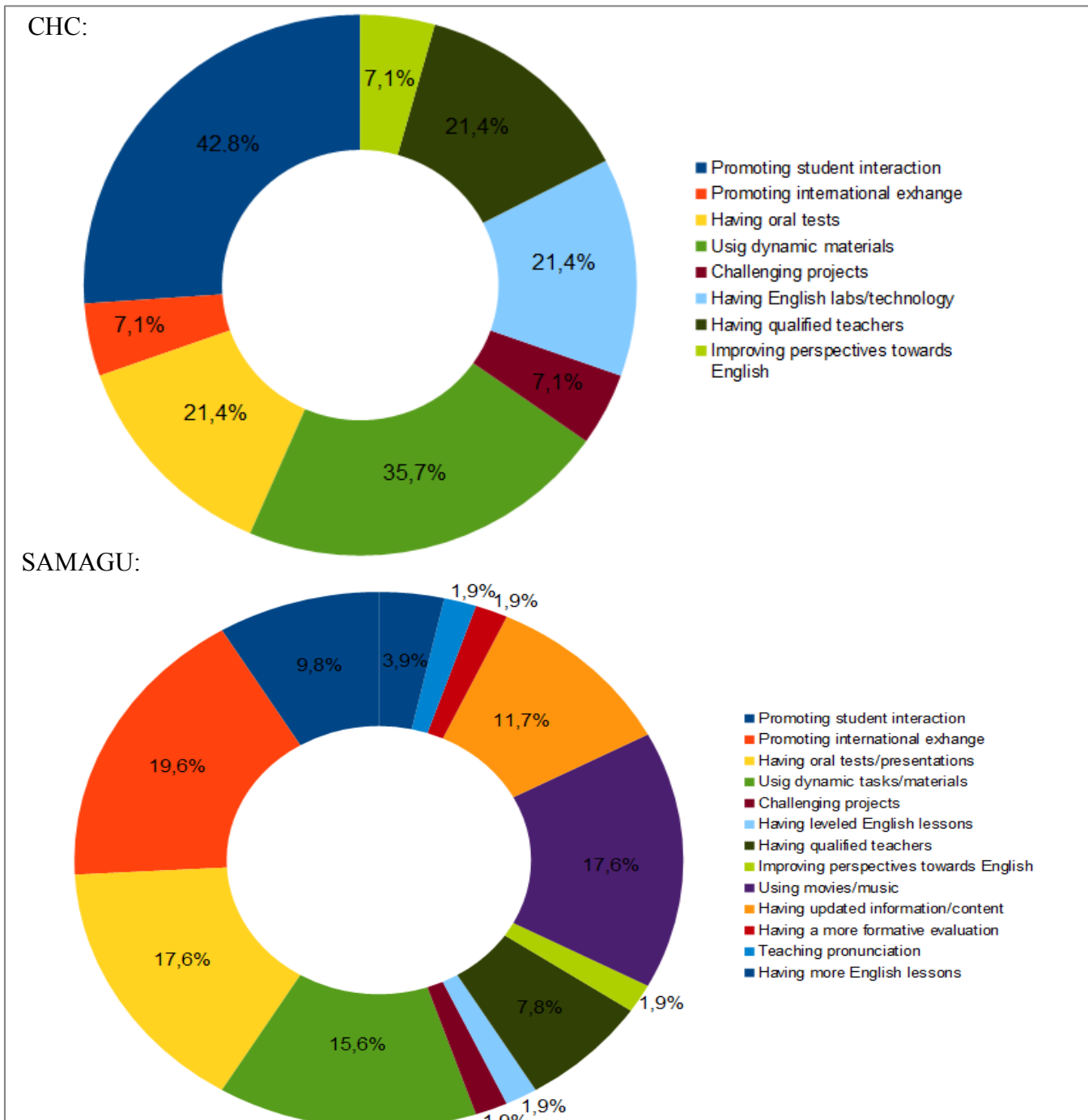


Fig. 12. Proposed aspects by students to improve engagement; Own elaboration, October 2014.

Accordingly, the CHC's principal asserted that the best features that the high school can offer the students to enhance engagement is “*Cursos variados (inglés básico e inglés de profundización), metodologías activas y participativas. Posibilidad de certificar el nivel avanzado.* [Varied courses (such as Inglés Básico and Inglés Profundización), active and participative methodologies. The possibility to certify the advanced level].” Likewise, the SAMAGU's principal affirmed that the best tools the high school has offered students to promote engagement in English is “*Metodologías de enseñanza atractivas, uso de la tecnología y la puesta en práctica del idioma.* [Attractive teaching, the use of technology and the practice of the language]”. According to them, those aspects that each high school provides to students can connect the motivated students to 'actively-learning' students, thus creating engagement. Just as Toshalis and Nakkula ratify that school work is needed to engage the motivated students (16). In fact, a well description of an engaged student was made by CHC's principal, when she states:

“*Un estudiante esforzado, comprometido con su aprendizaje y con una clara visión acerca de lo que quiere para su futuro, consciente de las oportunidades que le ofrece el dominio de varios idiomas.* [A student who shows effort, commitment with his/her learning and with a clear vision about what he/she wants for his/her future, conscious of the opportunities that are offered in regards to different languages].” This definition comprises the main aspects discussed in the theoretical framework that are related to engagement: the attention, interest, commitment, persistence, energy and effort that happen as a product of the student's motivation and active learning.

#### **4.1.2. Teachers' opinions about engagement**

Taking that into consideration, the opinions of both principals and the teachers from CHC (see

fig. 13 and 14) and SAMAGU (see fig. 15 and 16) clarify that developing environments which challenge students to learn (such as projects), engaging students in active learning practices (like dynamic and interactive tasks such as teaching pronunciation), interacting with peers (in exchanges, role plays, etc), participating in enriching educational experiences (such as trips and exchanges), providing environments which support learning and development, participating in hands-on forms of learning (by doing oral tests or presentations), developing higher-order thinking (when working on leveled English classes), developing general learning outcomes (by working on oral production), promoting student retention, enhancing a feeling of overall satisfaction with the entire learning experience are important when boosting students' engagement.

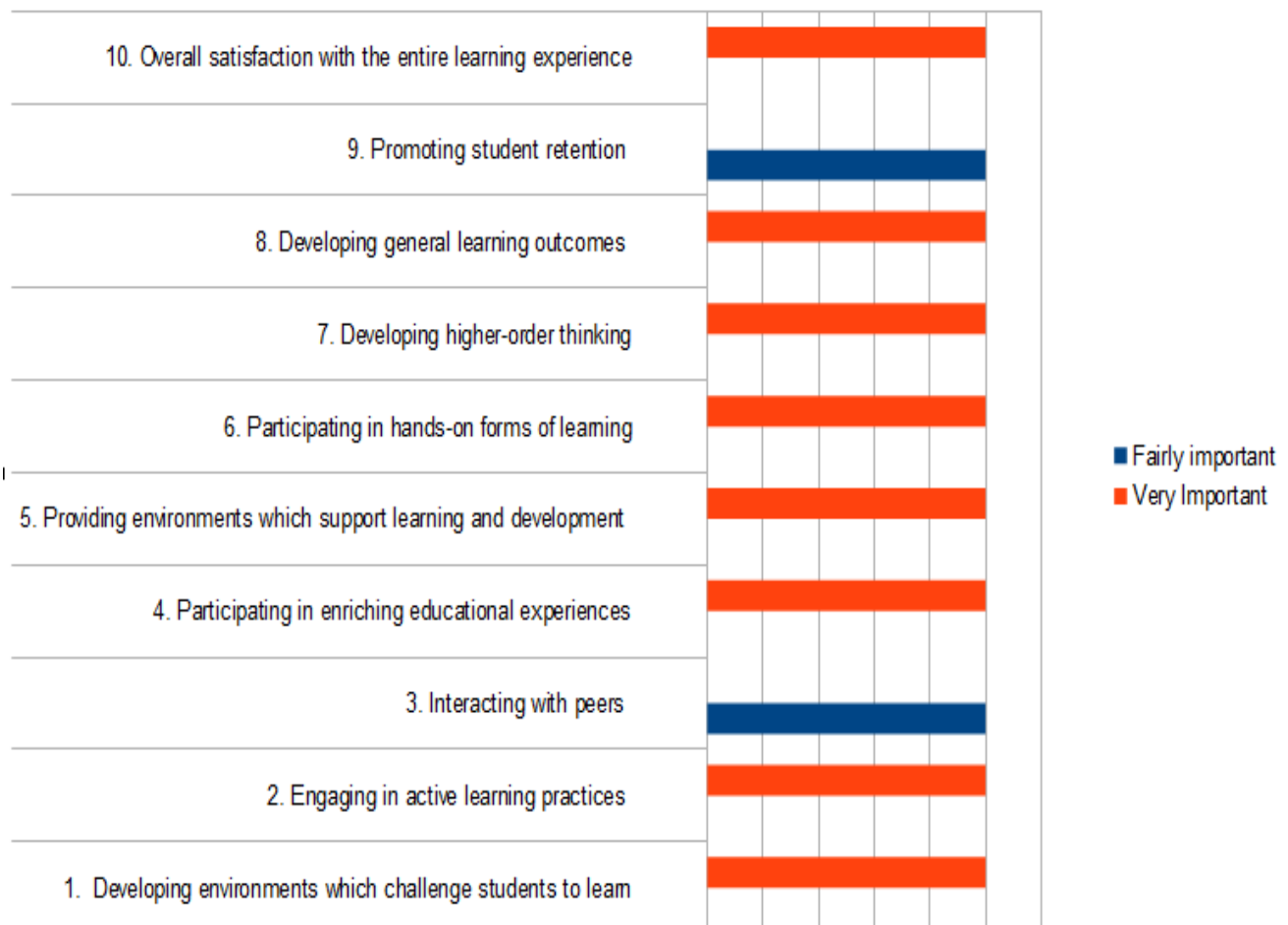


Fig. 13. CHC teacher's opinion about engaging aspects in class; Own elaboration, October 2014.

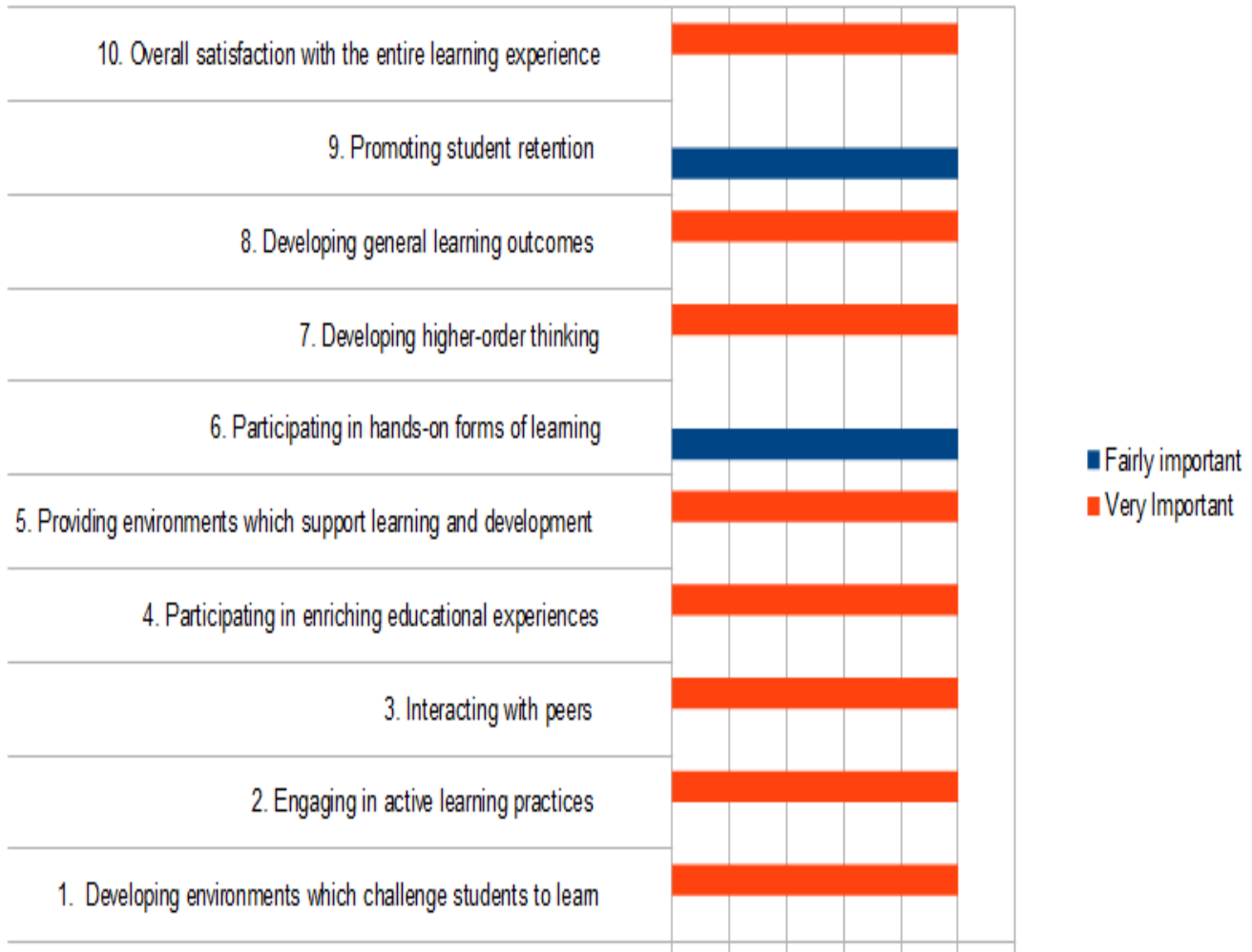


Fig. 14. CHC principal's opinion about engaging aspects in class; Own elaboration, October 2014.

Indeed, SAMAGU's teacher states that by “Try[ing] to give them activities that would be useful in their lives later on” engagement can be boosted in class. This, in fact, is noticeable in her opinion about the importance of school features where she answered that all of the above mentioned are very important (see fig. 15). While SAMAGU's principal expresses that promoting retention and interacting with peers are not as important as the other aspects listed (see fig. 16).

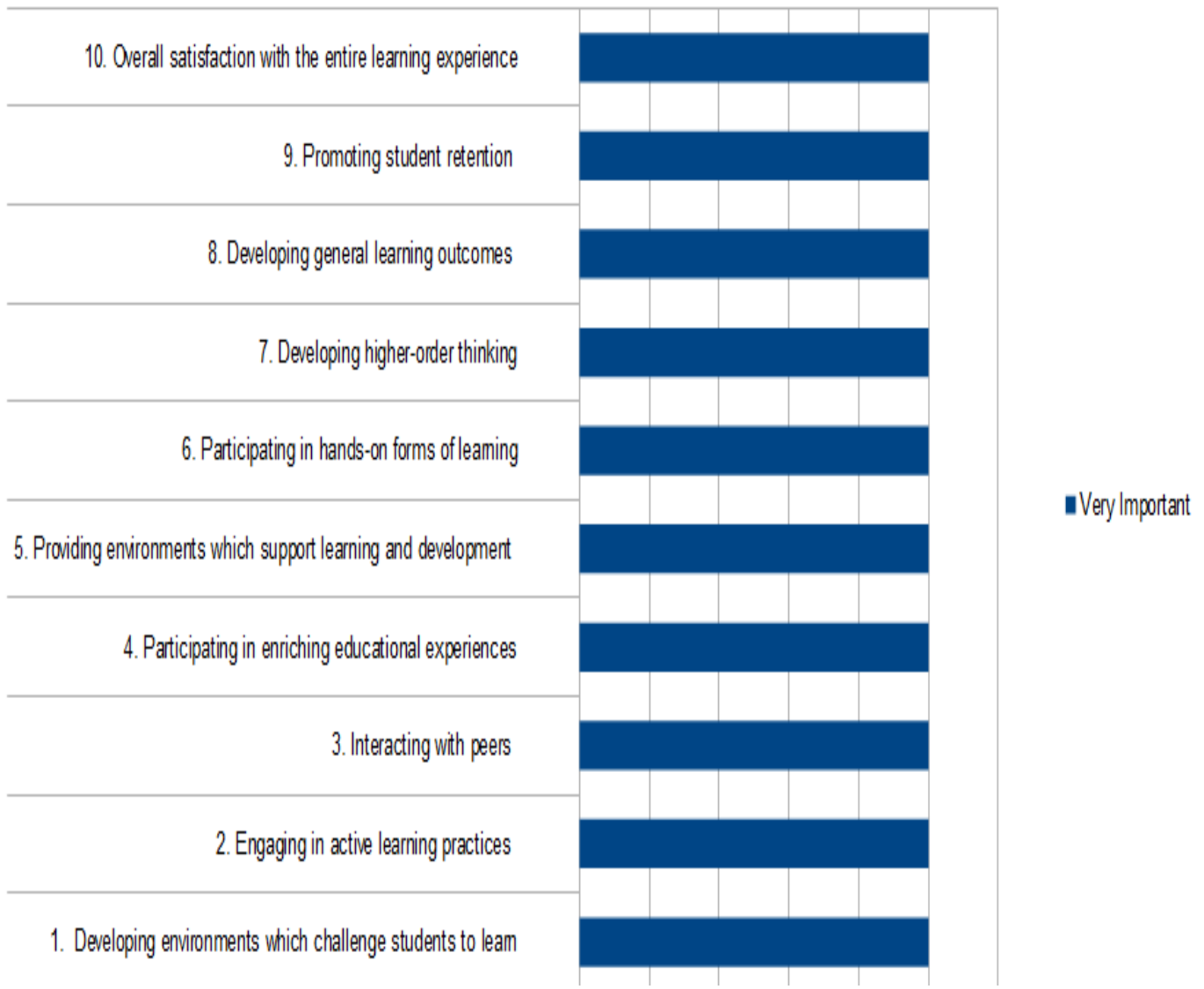


Fig. 15. SAMAGU teacher's opinion about engaging aspects in class; Own elaboration, October 2014.

Fascinatingly, SAMAGU's teacher says that she tries to include dynamic activities in her classes but sometimes the syllabus is not manipulable enough to do it. "Students love competitions so I try to give them competitive games related to the studied matter even though sometimes it is hard to fit them with the specific studied topic" (SAMAGU's teacher). In doing so, she is engaging students in active

learning practices. In fact, in one of the observations held she did a scanning practice with some vocabulary and questions as a competitive activity which motivated students to complete it (see appendix 14).

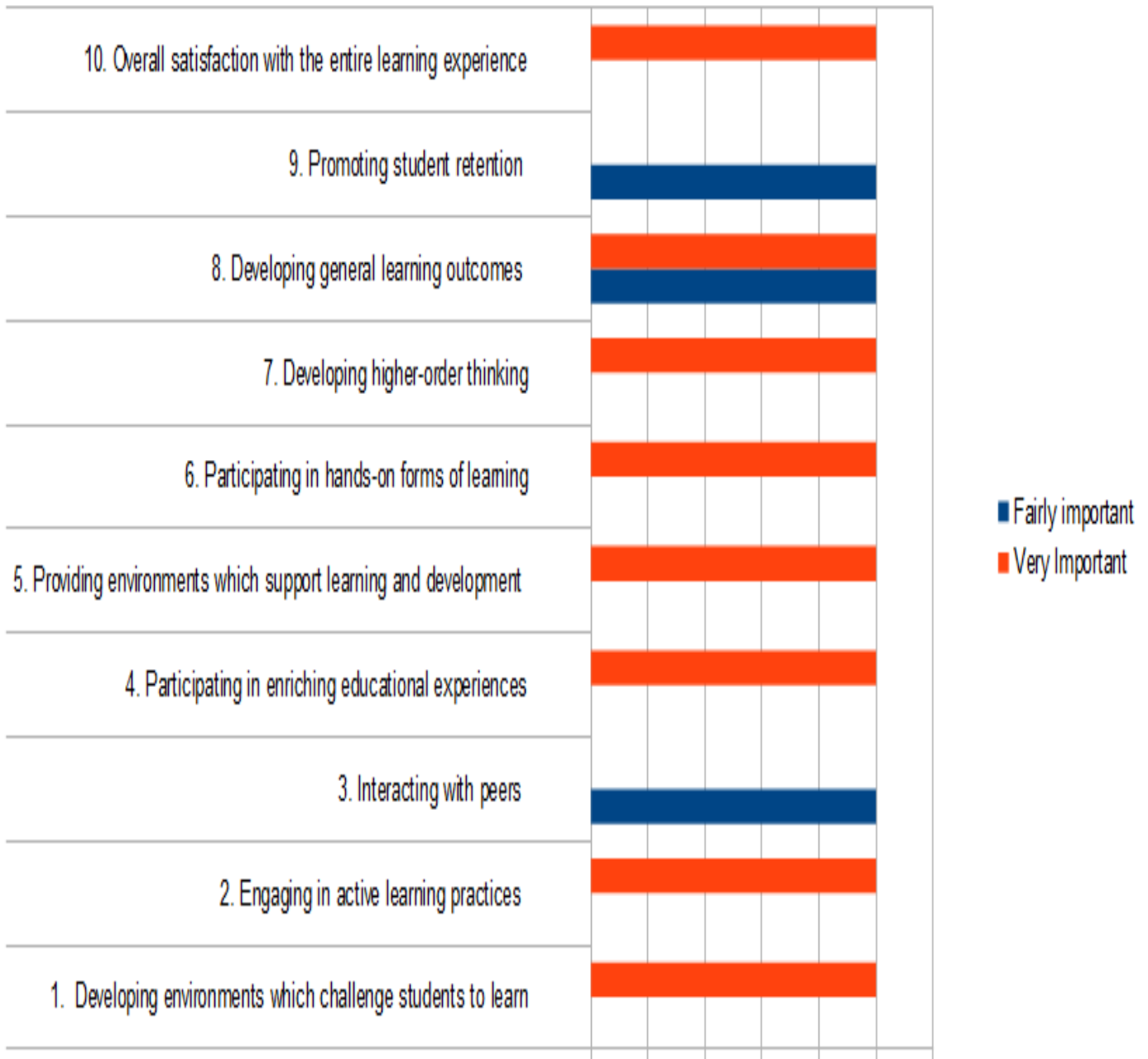


Fig. 16. SAMAGU principal's opinion about engaging aspects in class; Own elaboration, October 2014.

When asked about the commitment and attitudes students show towards the subject in general, the teachers' opinions were diverse. CHC's teacher postulates that students always use email or an on line forum to communicate with him; that students frequently do most of the aspects listed on fig. 17, and that they seldom work with the teacher on activities, work harder to meet standards or expectations, ask questions or contributed to discussions in class, and seek advice from the teacher (see fig. 17).

■ Cannot say ■ Never ■ Seldom ■ Sometimes ■ Frequently ■ Always

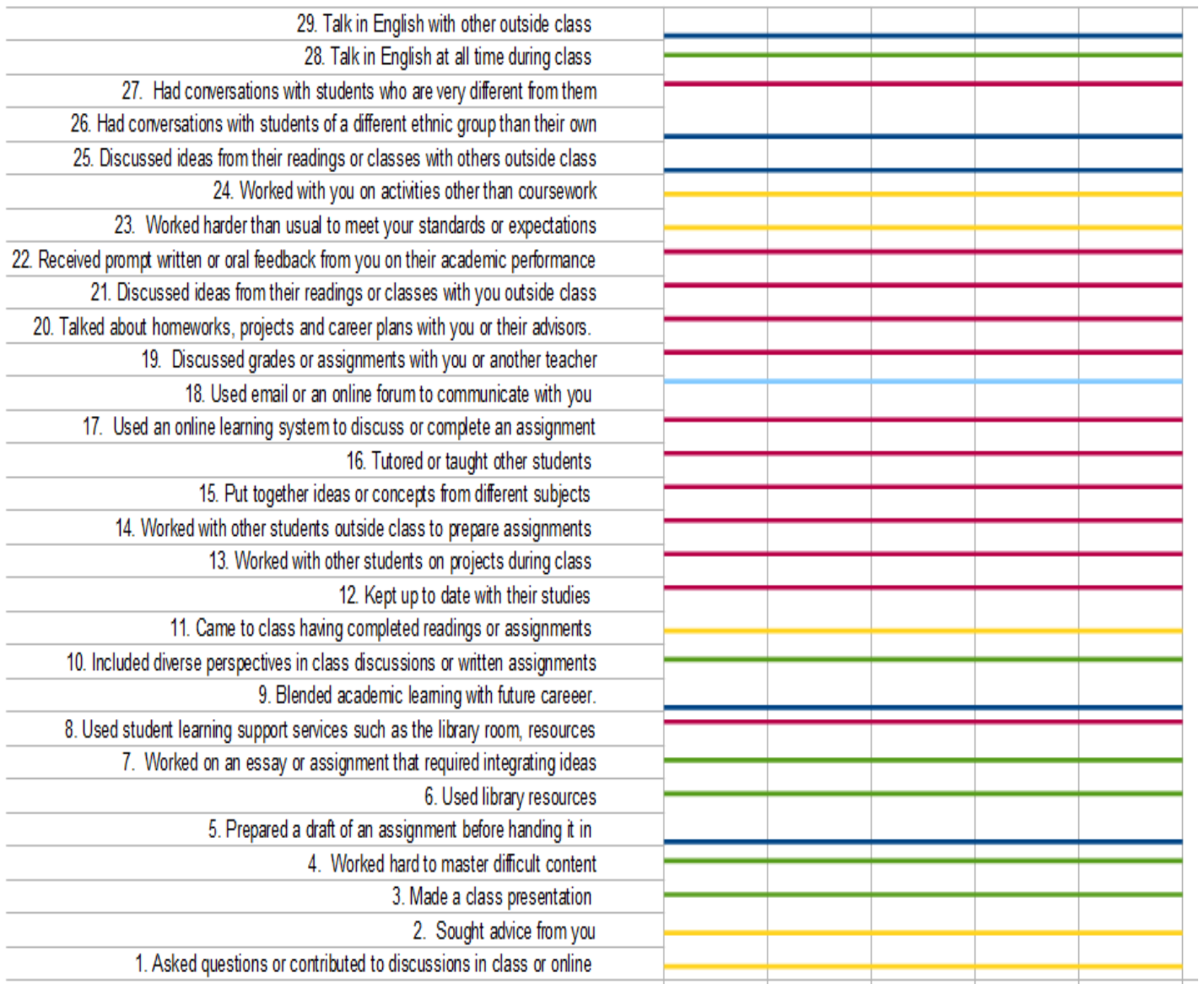


Fig. 17. CHC's teachers opinion about students' attitudes towards English; Own elaboration, October

2014

Similarly, the SAMAGU's students frequently do most of the aspects listed on fig. 18; nonetheless, contrary to CHC, they never use email or an on-line forum to communicate with the teacher. Besides, they always tutored other students and work with other students in projects (see fig. 18).

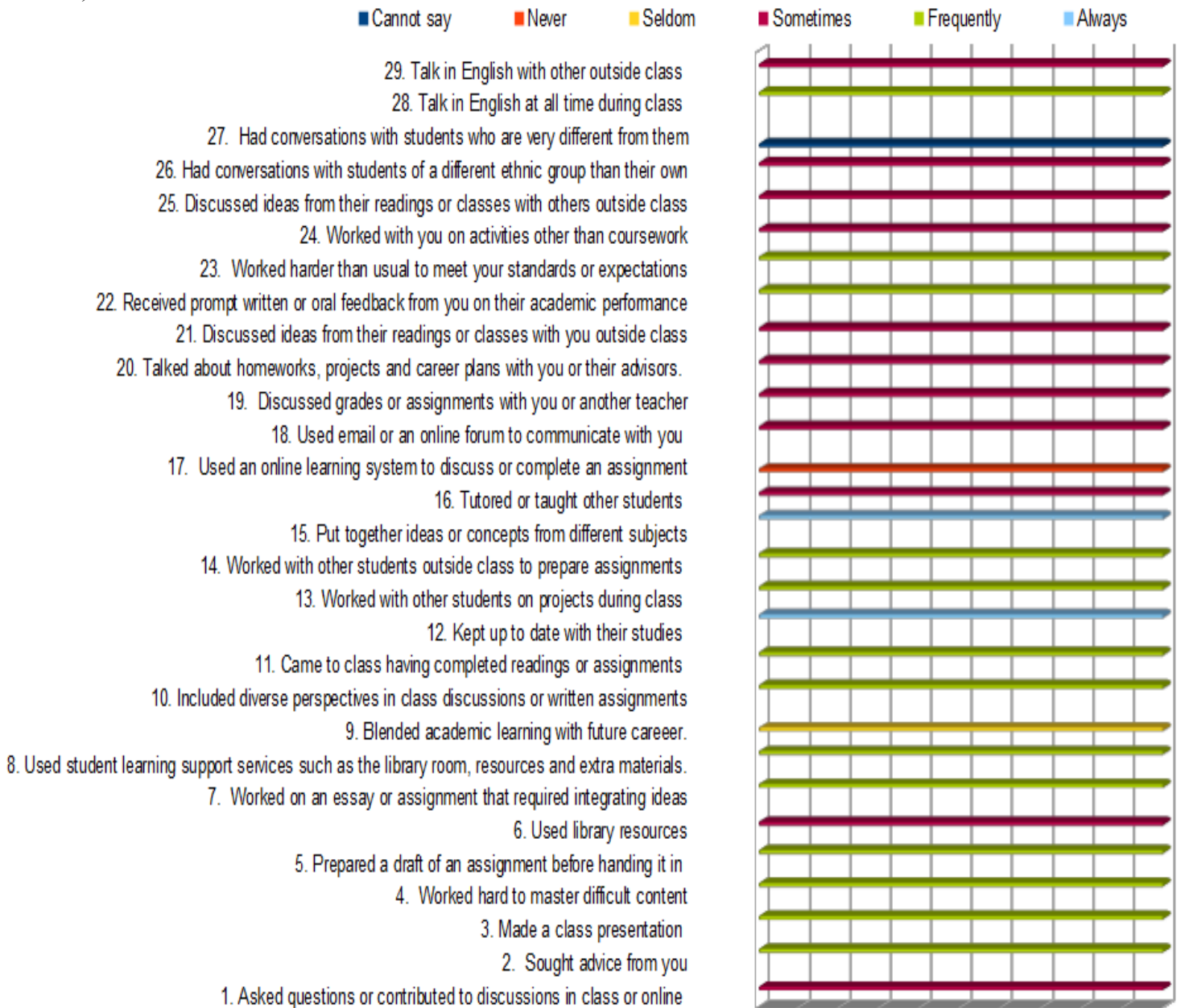


Fig. 18. SAMAGU's teachers opinion about students' attitudes towards English; Own elaboration,



October 2014

For these reasons, students' engagement can be boosted, in order to promote meaningful learning and achievement in the language. In fact, the students' academic achievement in the language are high in both institutions (see fig. 19 and 20).

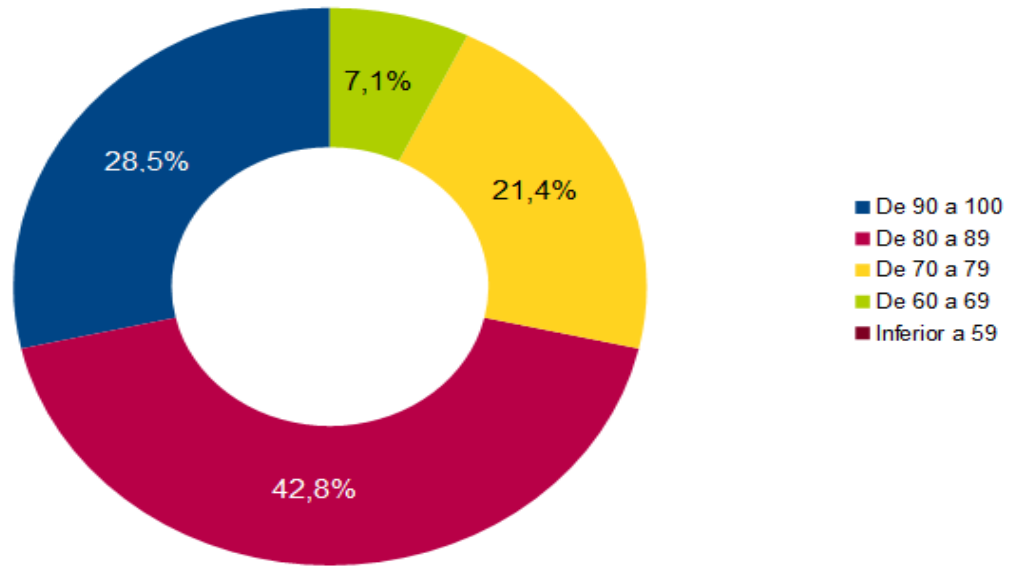


Fig. 19. CHC's eleventh graders academic achievement in English; Own elaboration, October 2014.

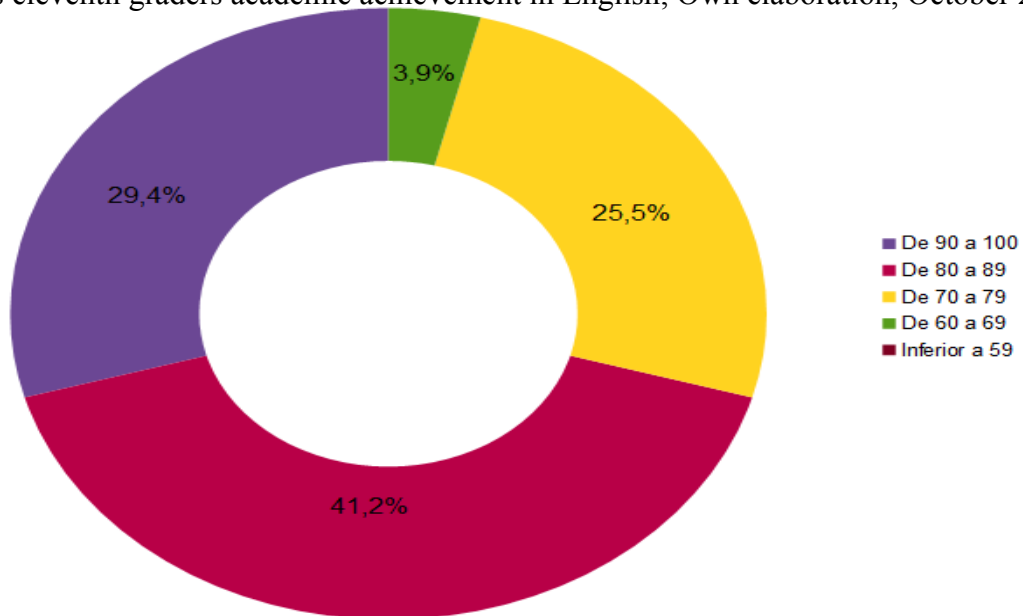


Fig. 20. SAMAGU's eleventh graders academic achievement in English; Own elaboration, October 2014.

## 4.2. School's Curriculum

Firstly, as being the school's structure part of the school curriculum, both high schools' commodities, in CHC and SAMAGU, were compared through eight observations in each institution in order to grasp the main aspects that both high schools facilitate students in order to improve their classes and enhance student engagement. From the observations held, the researchers noted that both high schools' infrastructure encompass the necessary commodities to enhance engagement such as computer labs, classrooms, materials, etc (see fig.21).

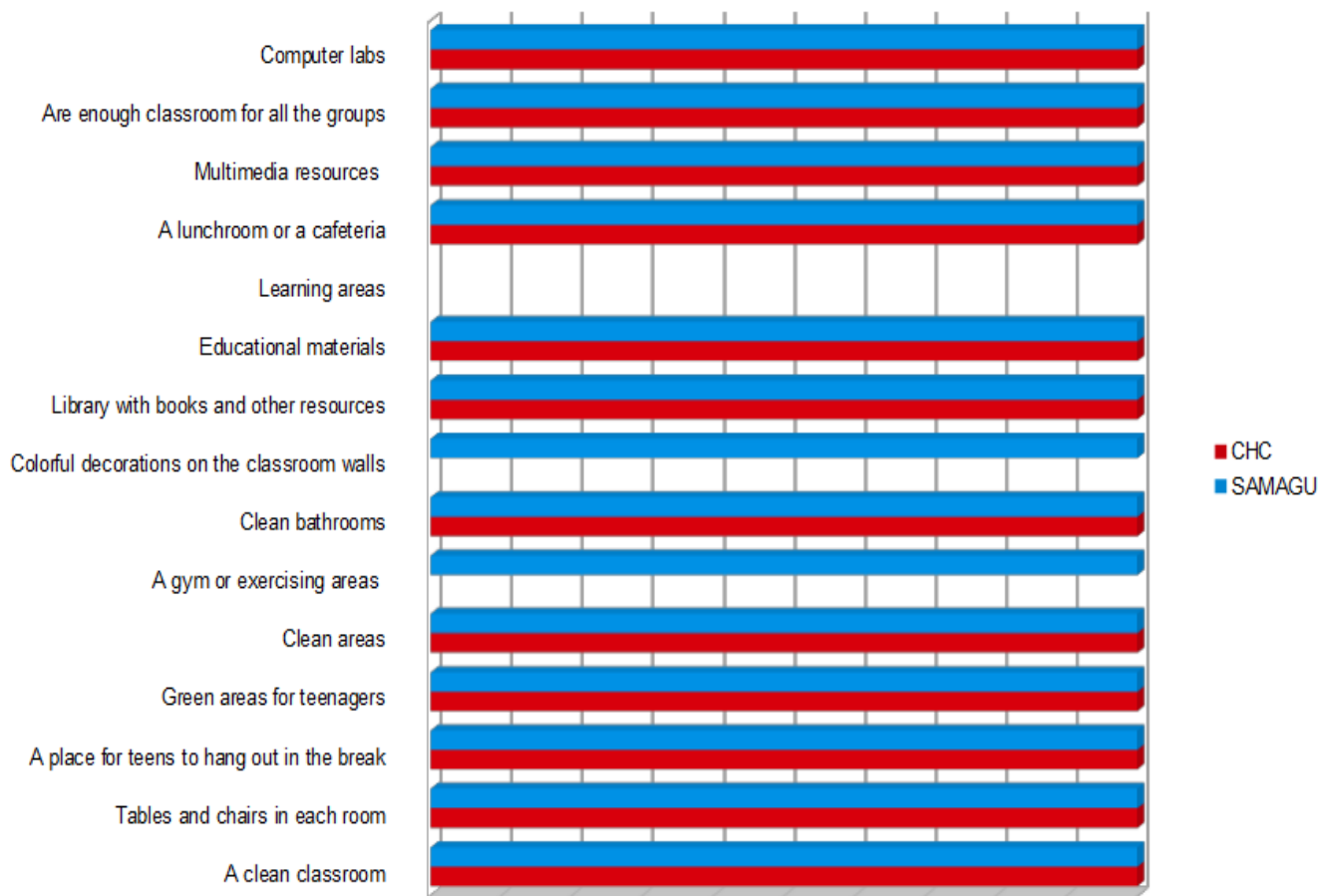


Fig. 21. Commodities CHC and SAMAGU provide students; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

As it is seen on fig. 21, both high schools offer students computer labs, enough classrooms for all the groups ( 4 classrooms at CHC and 46 classrooms at SAMAGU), multimedia resources such as video beam, computers, TV and DVD, a lunchroom or a cafeteria, educational materials such as videos and movies, audio discs, games, a library, clean bathrooms, clean areas, green areas, a place for students to hang out on breaks, enough tables and chairs in each rooms and a clean classroom. Although, CHC does not have a gym, as it is the case of SAMAGU, there is a bus service provided by Universidad Nacional (UNA) that takes students to the *Centro Recreativo Fondo de Beneficio Social* from the UNA, which is a recreational center that gives students soccer fields, basketball courts, pool and weights gym. Therefore, both high schools offer students the necessary conditions for appropriate and meaningful learning to take place.

However, fig. 21 denotes that both schools learning areas such as arts room, music room, labs and more are not taken into consideration given the differences between both institutions. In that sense, fig. 22 exemplifies which learning areas are available in CHC and SAMAGU.

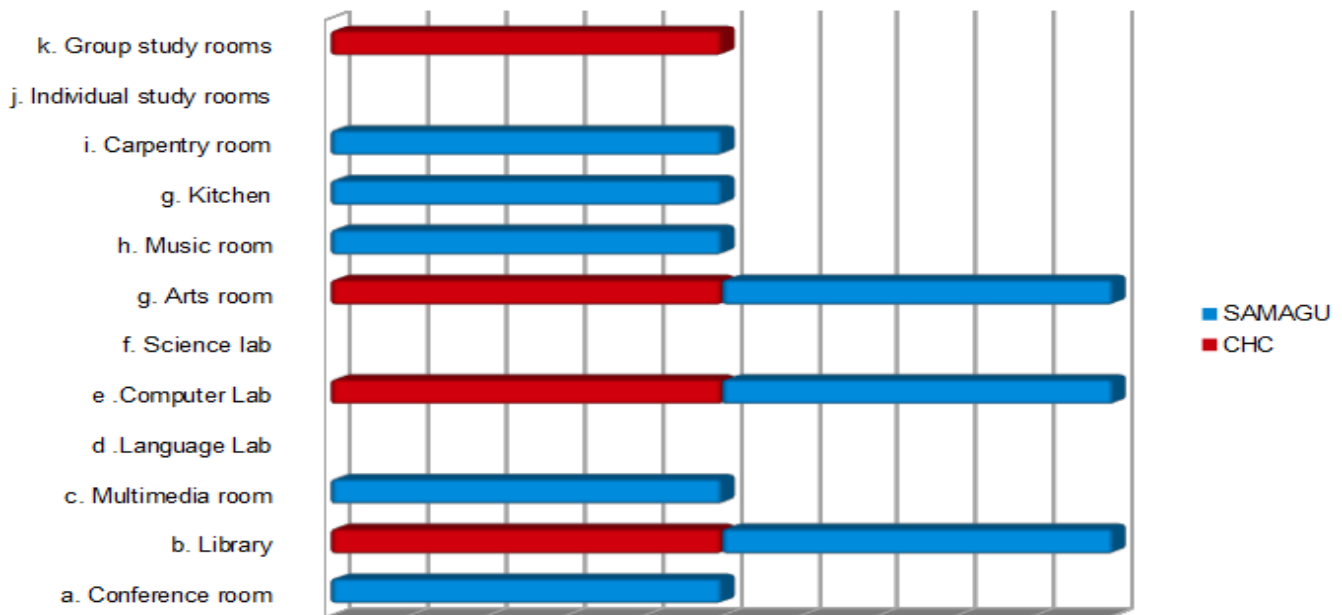


Fig. 22. Learning areas in CHC and SAMAGU; Own elaboration, 13 October 214.

As fig. 22 presents, SAMAGU includes learning areas such as carpentry rooms, kitchens, music rooms, art rooms, computer labs, multimedia room, library and a conference room; while CHC equips students with group study rooms, arts room, computer lab and a library. As it is seen CHC learning areas do not include rooms where subjects such as home education or industrial arts take place given that fact that it encompasses grades (tenth and eleventh) where those subjects are not part of the *Educación Diversificada* (Diversified Education) program given by MEP.

#### **4.2.1. School's Philosophy**

As it has been stated in this study, the school's philosophy deals with the cultural perspectives, values and behavioral expectations that the institutions must promote among the students to reach their objective. This basically includes real experiences, competitiveness, students' collaboration, student-centeredness, social environment and staff's accessibility. In order to know the opinion of the participant students about the school philosophy of these two institutions, their opinions towards this topic were collected through a questionnaire given to all the participant students, the interviews to the students, the schools' principal was provided with a questionnaire too and participant teachers were interviewed and filled out a questionnaire as well.

In the case of students at Colegio Humanístico Costarricense, the questionnaire revealed that most of the students feel good in most of the aspects related to its philosophy (see figure 23). Students consider that they felt well being in the institution and that they care of it: they felt safe and consider that their opinions are respected. Besides, students mention that there are adult people who can support them; they can feel also the support of their classmates; they can use their creativity when working and mainly, they feel original and comfortable enough when being in the institution. The results also show

that in many times the students feel the support of the high school staff and teachers; they consider that the school policies are fair. These aspects related with the areas which DiMartino states as essential for the school curriculum in order to promote engagement. DiMartino claims that in the curriculum there must be the positive aspects such as personalization of curriculum, adult support, perceptible results, recognition and real-world preparation (96). Nevertheless, in some occasions the students have considered moving to another high school although they are aware that the school policies are fair in most of the times. Since they think that they don't feel that those policies are well applied by all the teachers and the school community staff.

On the other hand, the questionnaires and interviews applied to the participant students at SAMAGU high school revealed that in general they feel well in the high school; they also care about it, they feel really safe while being in the institution and they feel comfortable enough to be themselves as well. Besides, students mentioned that they can feel their classmates' support, and they have found adult people who know them pretty well (as DiMartno stated as important aspects). The results also show that at SAMAGU high school students, in most of the occasions, feel the teachers and school staff support and that they are able to show their creativity when doing their own projects. Goldspink, Winter and Foster stated in their research of curriculum that , "...involvement and well-being are intermediate process variables which reveal the quality of pedagogy through its immediate effect on the learner" (3) .However, as it can be seen in fig. 24, SAMAGU's students unveiled the same aspect that the CHC's students, which is that they have considered transferring to another high school because they consider that the school policies are not fair enough and well applied by all the teachers and staff from the school.

In fact, some students' affirmations on the questionnaires showed the above situation:

*Porque tienen muchas reglas estúpidas y sin sentido y a veces le prestan más*

*atención al reglamento estúpido que al nivel académico.* [Because they have many stupid and non-sense rules, and sometimes they pay more attention to the stupid rule-book than to the academic level] (SAMAGU's student).

*Porque este es un colegio un tanto fundamentalista.* [Because this school can be a little fundamentalist] (SAMAGU's student).

*Hay algunas normas o aspectos que no me agradan.* [There are some rules or policies that I don't like] (SAMAGU's student).

*Es muy rutinario y no sabía si podía seguir con la exigencia.* [It is really routinary and I din't know if I could cope with the level of commitment] (CHC's student).

*Bueno, es muy bueno [el colegio], solo que algunas veces si meten las patas... pero si es muy bueno pero si se cae como en todo en algunos aspectos como las reglas.* [Well, it's good, but sometimes there are misleads... but is is very good but sometimes some aspects like the rules are not]. (CHC's student).

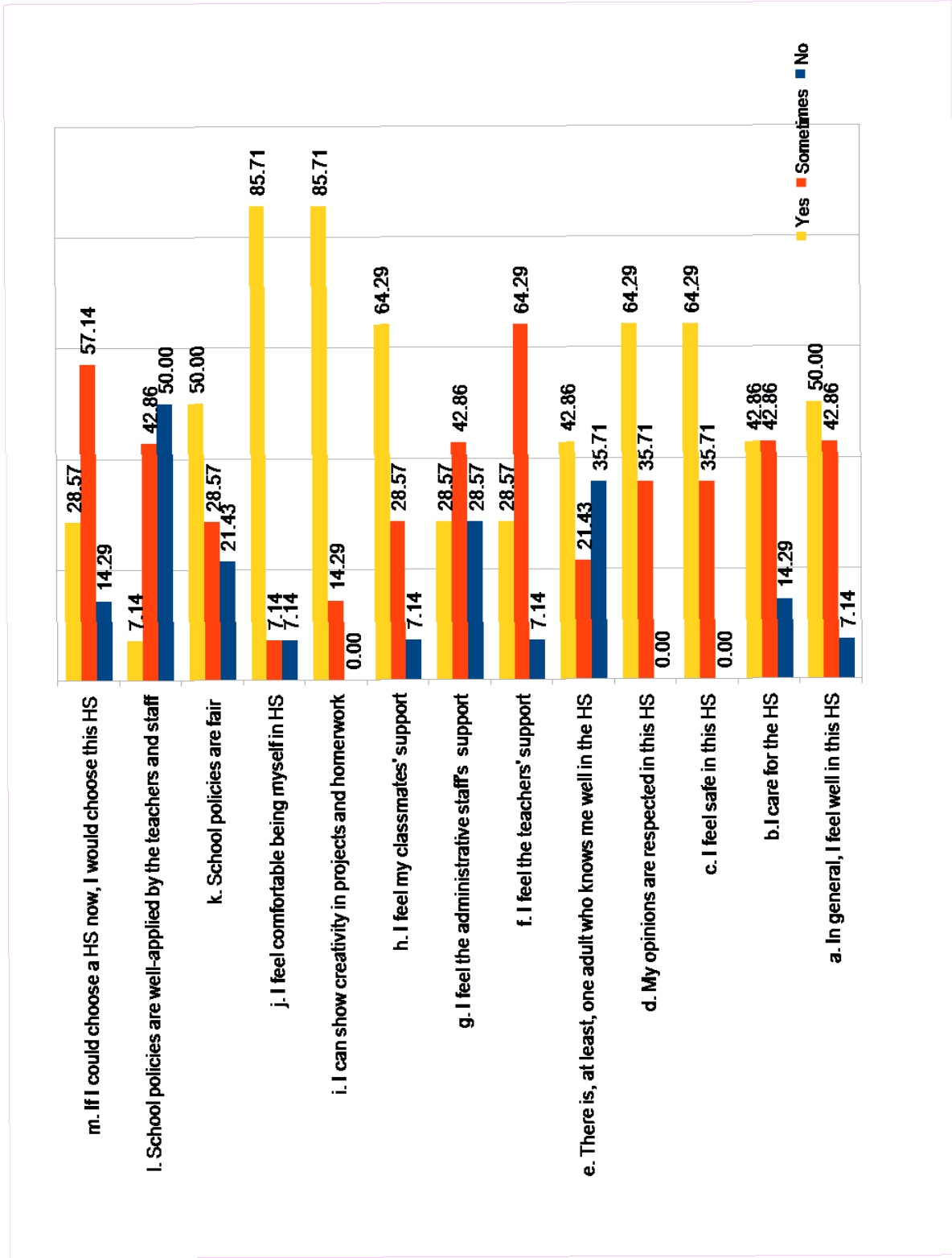
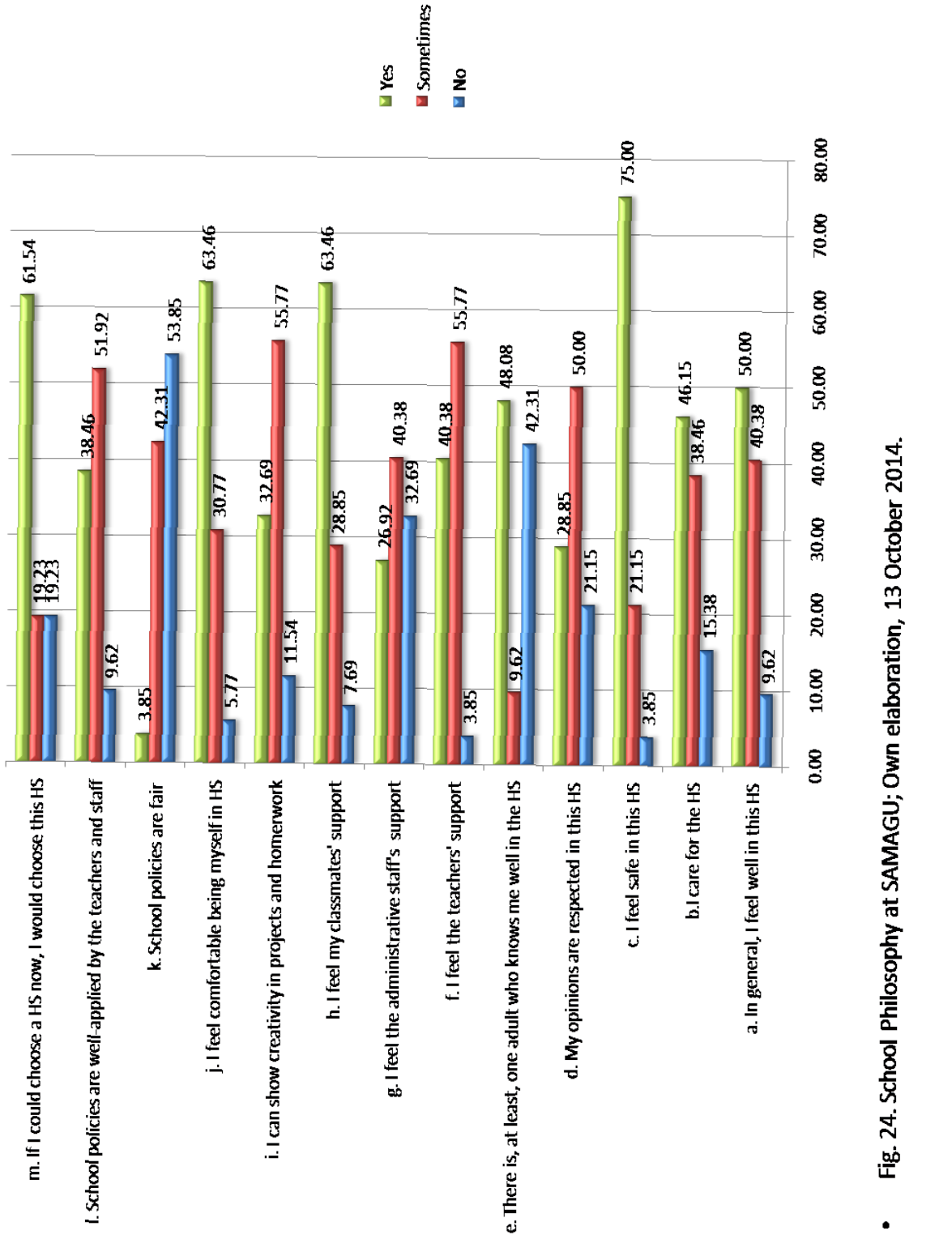


Fig.23. School Philosophy at CHC; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.



• Fig. 24. School Philosophy at SAMAGU; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.



On the other hand, it was also essential to know the perspective of the students in relation to the students, teachers, staff and the school in general. Through the questionnaire, students at CHC agreed with the fact that most of the teachers show accessibility in the relationship teacher-student and they are also friendly and helpful with the students. Moreover, almost half of the students consider that other students or classmates are friendly and supportive and the administrators and other school staff are also flexible, considerate, kind and helpful as well when they need it. More than a half of the students also consider that the services provided by the school are also flexible and helpful, so they can use it when they need it. As it can be seen in fig. 25 below, the statistics show that most of the students at CHC agree and express that there is a good relationship among the students, their peers and school staff, which can cause a positive impact in the enhancement of students' engagement to be part of this institution.

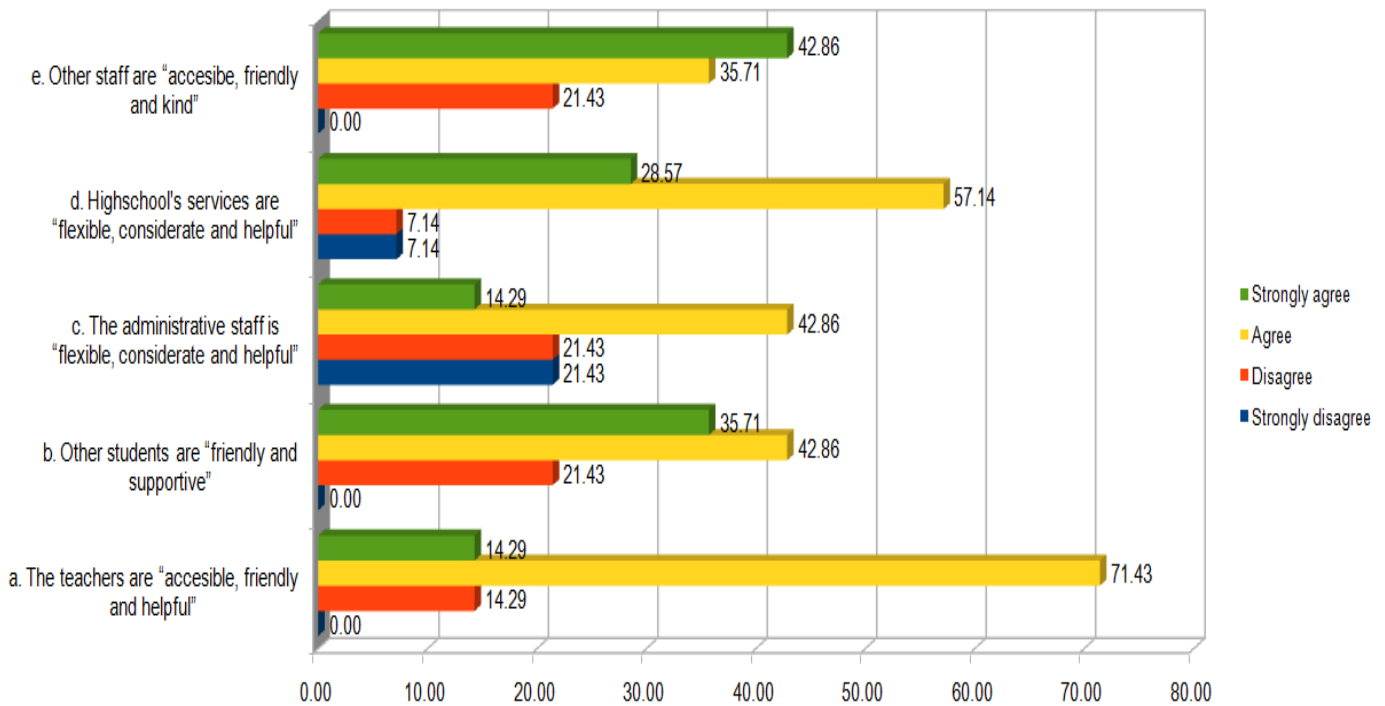


Fig 25. Students' perspective of CHC; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

In the case of the students at SAMAGU high school, the questionnaire given to the students

show that in this institution more than the 57% (see fig.26) of the participants agree with the fact that the teachers, the students or classmates are accessible, friendly and supportive; furthermore, the students also mention that the services provided by the institution are flexible, considerate and helpful. The 63% of the participants strongly agree that the rest of the high school staff is very accessible with them, they are friendly and kind too. On the contrary of the opinions of CHC's students, many of SAMAGU's students (44.19 %) consider that the administrative staff is flexible and helpful, while an important percentage of students (55,7 %) considers the opposite of this. The statistics of this information follows:

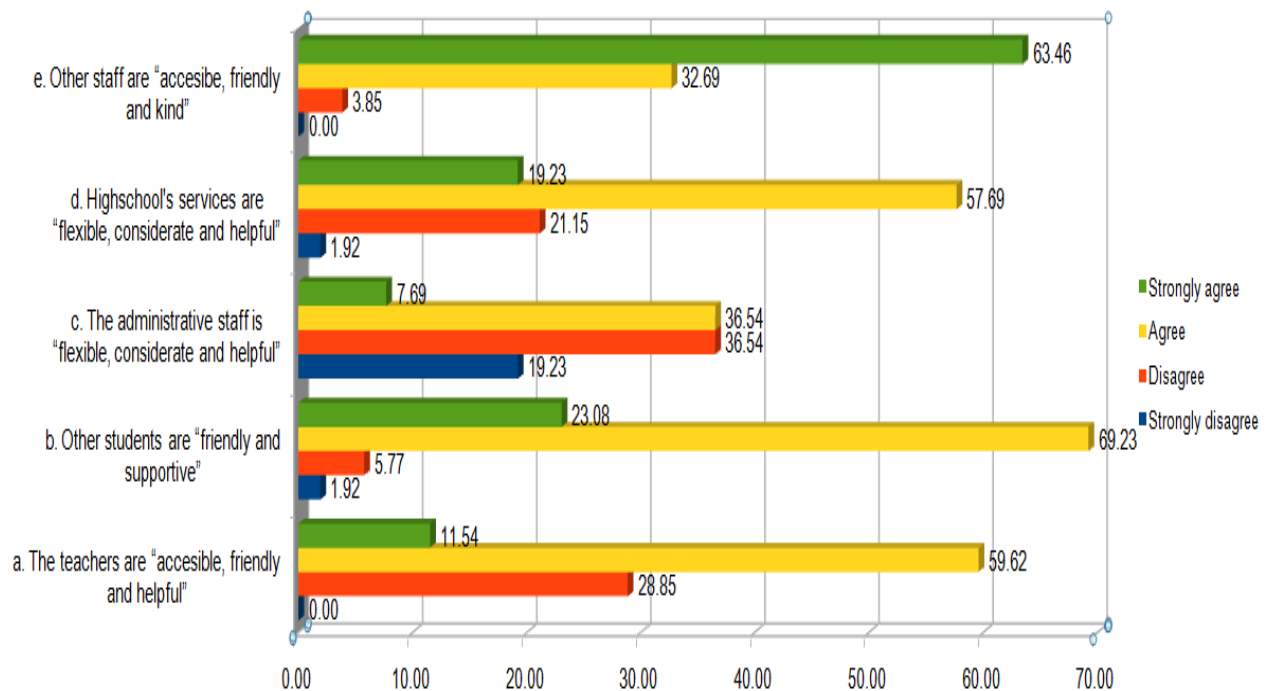


Fig 26. Students' perspective of SAMAGU; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

Such opinions could have been driven due to the fact the students do not have as much contact and confidence with the administrative staff as well as the policies that the administrative staff follow can be inflexible and even fall into bureaucracy.

In the interviews done to the participants, the researcher asked the students about their general opinion of the institutions. In the case of the pupils at CHC, one of the students mentioned:

*Bueno yo creo que es una alternativa diferente, abre puertas y a la vez te enseña no se, qué tal vez uno ignoraba en el colegio anterior porque siento que aquí las cosas se ven con más profundidad, igual yo siento que es un buen colegio a pesar del horario y de la carga académica uno aprende mucho y comparte aquí con varias personas* [Well, I think that the high school is a different choice that opens the doors and at the same time teaches things that we ignored on the previous school because here I feel that the things are seen deeper, so I think that it is a good high school in spite of the schedule and the academic demand one learns a lot and shares with a lot of people] (CHC's student 2).

In the case of SAMAGU students, one said: "*Si me gusta, si es como muy privilegiado estar acá* [I like the high school, it is a privilege to be here]" (SAMAGU's student 4). When asking to the students about the humanistic vision promoted by the corresponding institution, one student from SAMAGU added: "*... se nota que se preocupa por la parte humana no solo lo académico o lo cultural, también se enfoca mucho en eso.* [the high school takes care of the human aspects and not only the academic or the cultural part, but also it focuses a lot in this (humanism)]" (SAMAGU's student 4).

And one student from CHC expressed;

*Oh... diay... bueno por medio de digamos, el enfoque que se mantiene aquí. Digamos también como las diversas actividades o incluso en las mismas clases, en todas, indistintamente la clase que sea nosotros llevamos como es parte humanista, entonces yo siento que el colegio lo promueve desde las clases hasta las diversas actividades que se realizan.* [Oh...well...through the focus that is kept here. Let's say...in the diverse activities or even the classes, in all of them, no matter the class that we are taking we take that humanist part, so I think that the high school promotes it (humanist vision) from the classes to the activities that it performs] (CHC's student 3).

On the other hand, the researchers also wanted to know the opinion of the two participant teachers of both of the institutions in terms of the aspects that the high school encourages among the population of students. First, the teacher at CHC stated that the institution always encourages students

to use the resources that the institution has, such as the computers to make their academic work, since they spend significant amounts of time studying for the different subjects they have. Besides, the institution always encourages students to attend to the different events and activities that the school promotes in the different areas through the groups they have; the high school also helps students to cope with many of their non-academic responsibilities and encourages the contact among their students from different family or social backgrounds. CHC also, according to the teacher, always provides the support students need to help them succeed academically; nonetheless, the school never provides the students the support they need to socialize; conversely, they must do it by themselves. Fig. 27 shows the statistics of the teacher's opinion.

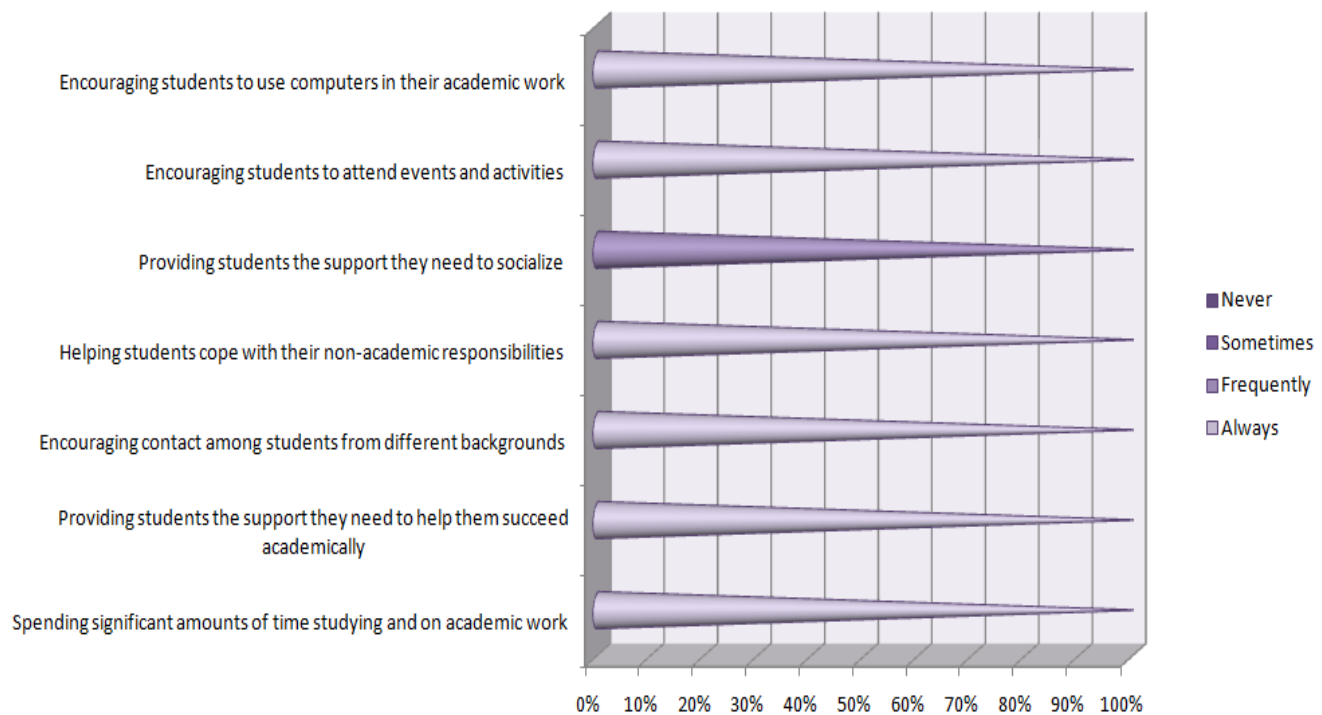


Fig. 27. Aspects that CHC encourages in their curriculum; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

The opinion given by the SAMAGU's teacher differed in some aspects from the ones given by CHC's teacher. For instance, this institution, according to the teacher's opinion, sometimes help students to cope with their non-academic responsibilities and encourages them to have contact with other students from different family or social backgrounds. However, the teacher mentions that frequently the high school encourages students to use computers and the resources they have to cope

with their academic work, to participate and attend to the events and activities that the institution promotes and provides to the students the support they need to socialize. Furthermore, as it is shown in fig. 28, the teacher mentions that SAMAGU high school always spends significant amounts of time studying to succeed in their academic work and that the students receive the support and help they need to succeed in their goals.

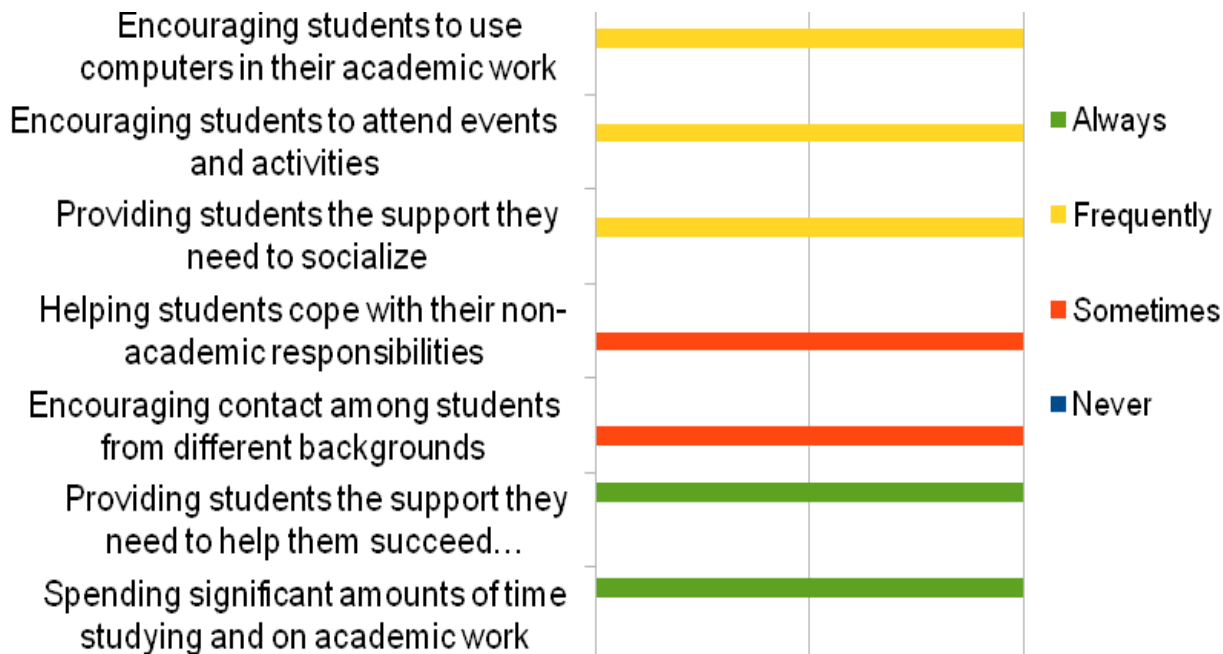


Fig 28. Aspects that SAMAGU encourages in their curriculum; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

Besides researching about the encouragement in the curriculum of the two institutions towards the students, the researcher also asked the teachers in the questionnaire about the frequency of participation of the pupils in the different activities that high schools promote and in the social or interpersonal dynamics provided. In relation to this, the teacher at CHC stated that students always attend to the physical and fitness activities done through the year by the institution and like to socialize or related to their partners inside and outside the classroom, and often, students attend to artistic performances, try to understand the different perspectives and viewpoints of others so this have made them change the way the address to an issue or concept in a different way from the preconceived idea they had before. Alternatively, in some occasions students explore how to apply what they have learned

in the school on those previous years and rarely think in their future plans, such as setting goals, look for their future jobs and careers or simply look for information or aspects related to their interests.

Fig.29 shows the data provided by the teacher at CHC.

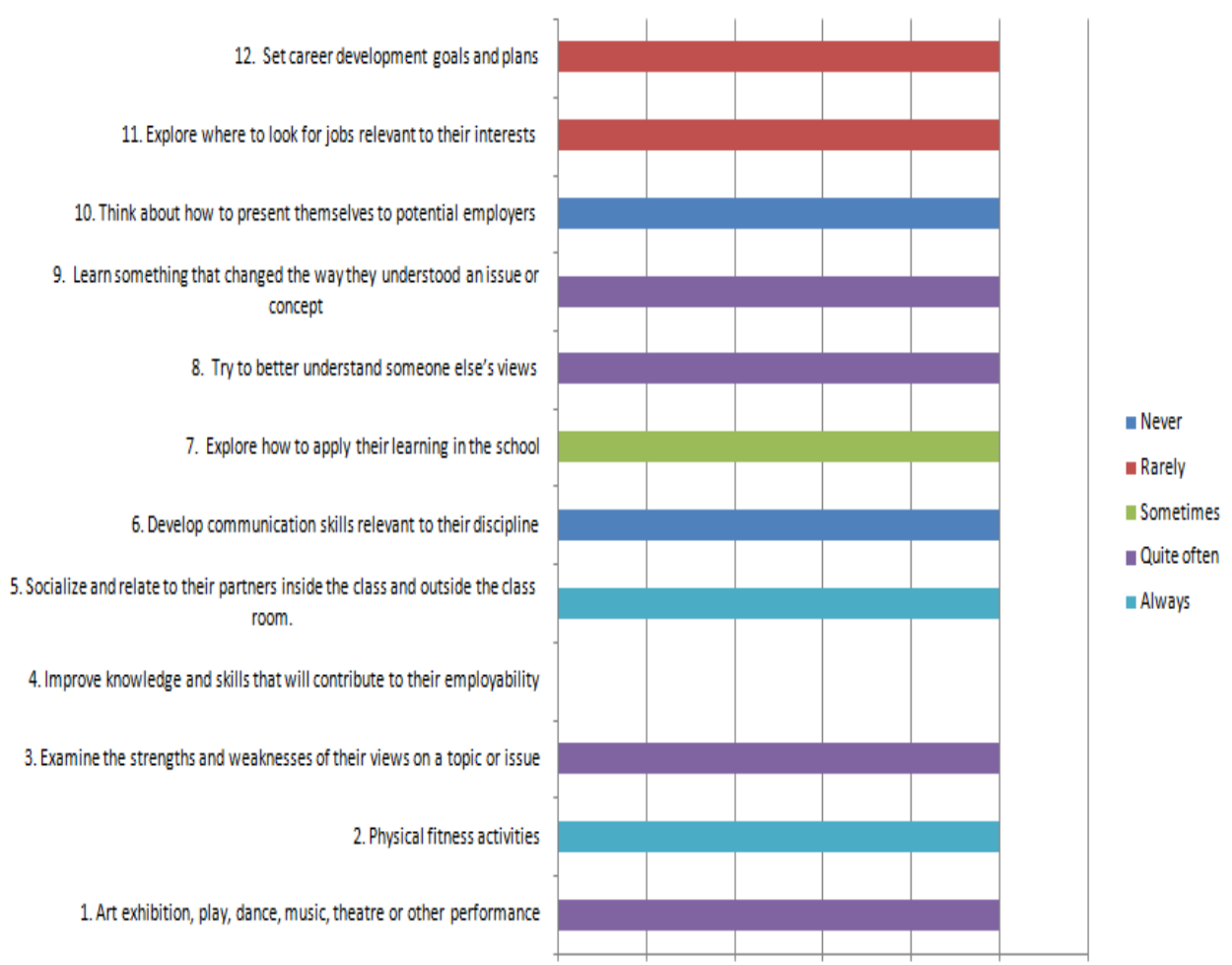


Fig 29. Frequency of students participation at CHC: Teacher's data ; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

The information gotten by the teacher related to the students' participation at Colegio Santa Maria de Guadalupe differs from the students of CHC; but the teacher agrees in the same fact that students have a very good attitude when socializing inside the institution as well as in extracurricular activities. Students at SAMAGU often explore how to apply what they have learned in the school and examine their strengths and weaknesses they have as students and human beings. The teacher states

also that in some occasions students develop communication skills and participate in fitness activities promoted by the school. Nevertheless, the students of SAMAGU have not shown enough importance to aspects such as attending artistic performances, setting future goals and plans related to careers or explore future jobs related to their interests (as well as CHC students) or understanding different points of view and perspectives that can change prior ideas and knowledge they had about certain topic. Data of the SAMAGU's teacher follows on fig. 30:

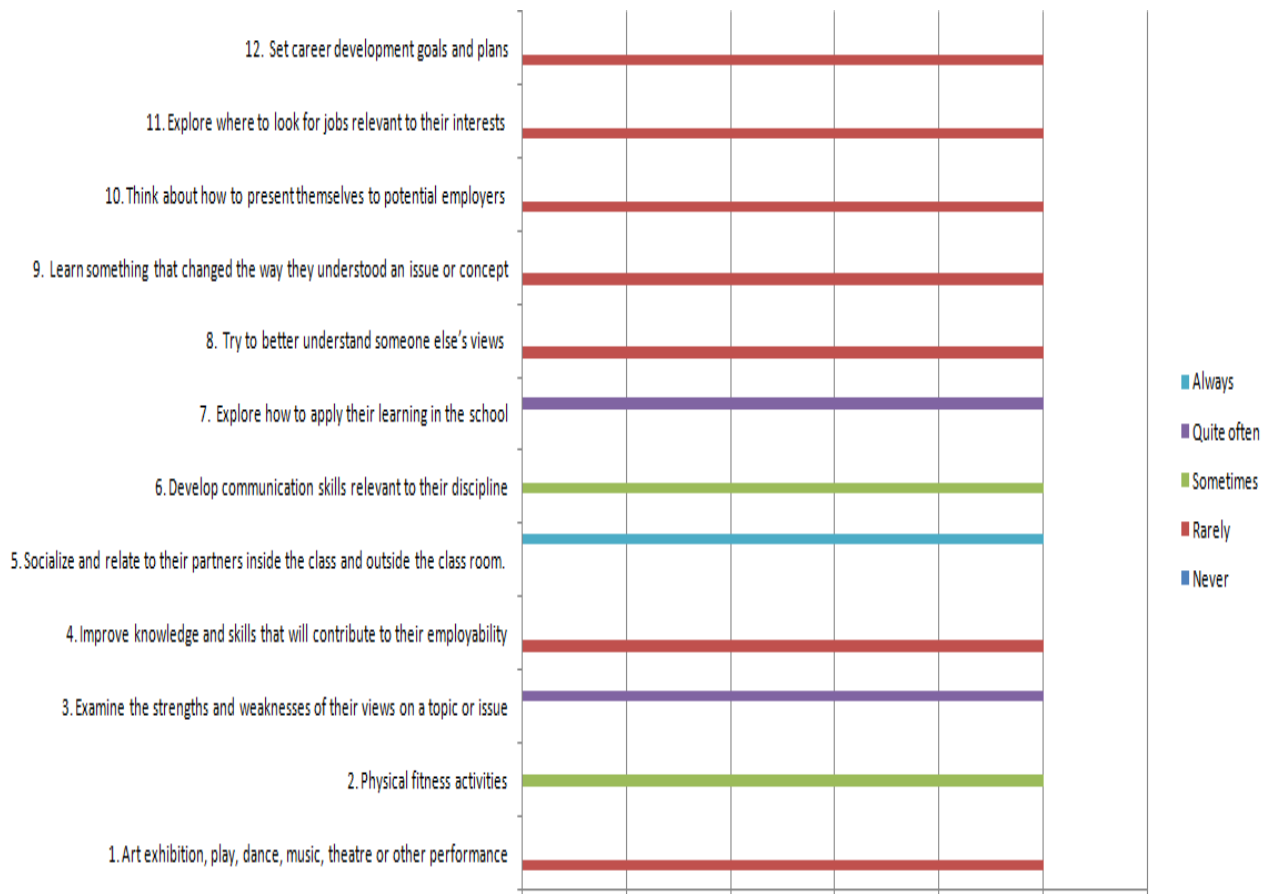


Fig 30. Frequency of students participation at SAMAGU: Teacher's data ; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

When interviewing the eleventh students about the activities they like the most, the students mentioned that the most engaging are the spiritual gatherings or welfare projects, the artistic or musical groups, the field trips and physical activity' festivals; all the extracurricular activities where they can develop their skills and socialize with their peers. By analyzing this data, the researchers also wanted to

compare what has been previously expressed by the teachers and students with what the institutions' principals think about the involvement of the students into the institution's curricular activities. CHC principal considers that the students in the institution always examine their strengths and weaknesses, improve their skills, learn many new concepts or ideas that have changed their preconceived ideas of the world and also they have developed very good social skills; but often, students think about their future careers and goals or attend to cultural or physical activities. For the CHC high school principal, students at this institution often are interested in exploring how to apply in other contexts what they have learned in class and almost never, think about their future goals or understand others' points of view.

For SAMAGU school's principal, the students of this institution always attend cultural activities and acquire new knowledge that changes the way they understand different issues or concepts, but quite often they are interested in other aspects such as socializing, improving their communication skills, understanding others, analyzing their strengths and weaknesses or think about their future life. Figures 31 and 32 represent in statistics the opinions given by the principals.

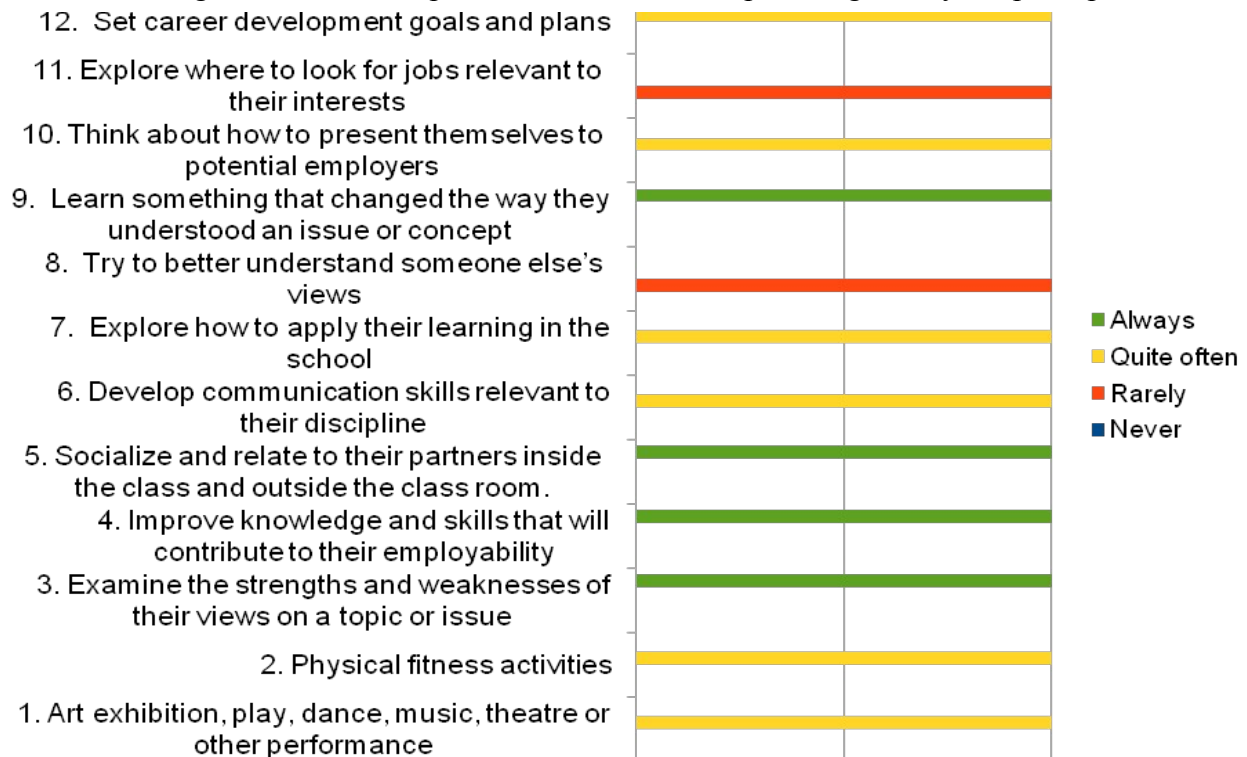


Fig. 31. Frequency of students' participation at CHC: Principal's data; October 2014



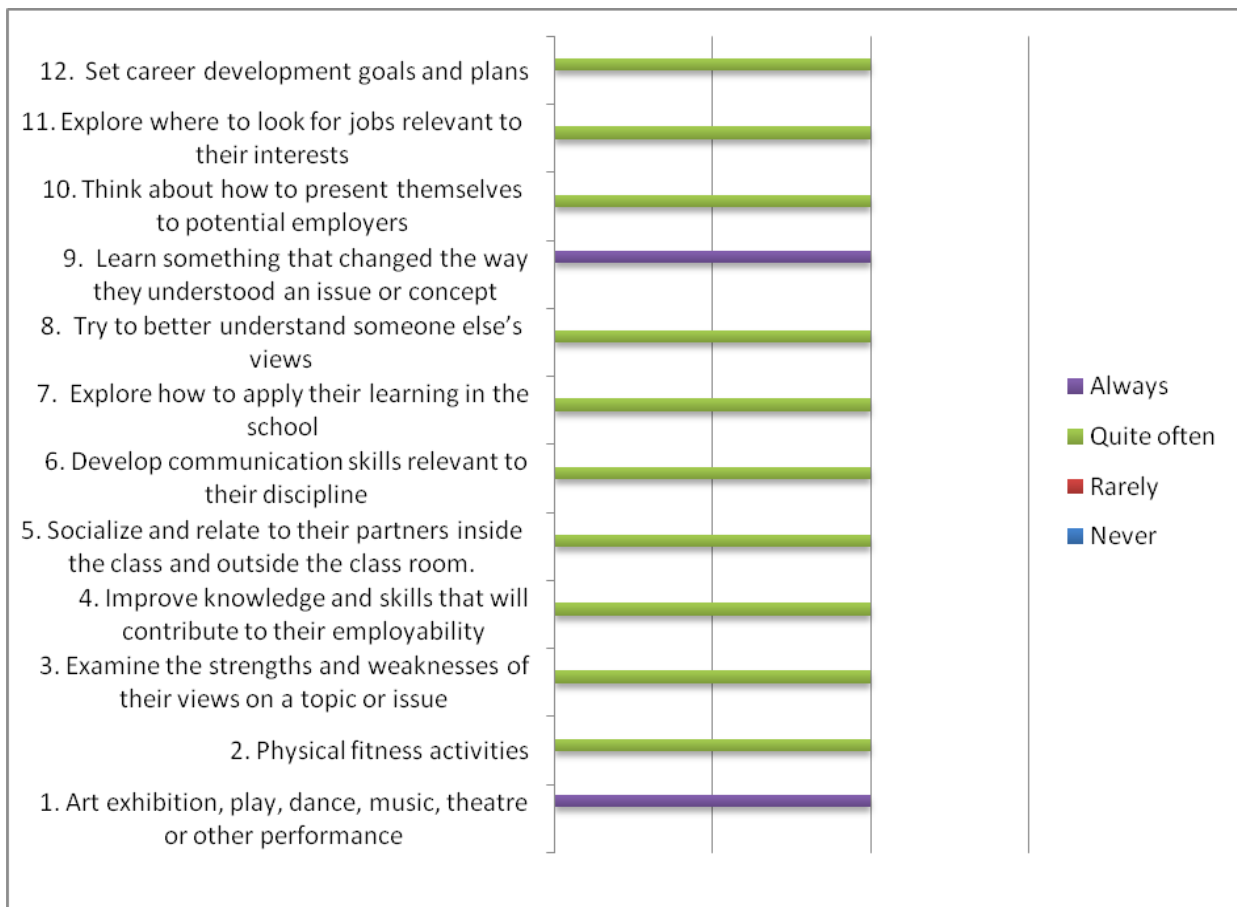


Fig 32. Frequency of students participation at SAMAGU: Principal's data ; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014

Although we have seen differences in the opinions of the teachers and principals, it can be seen that the four of them agree in two main aspects that are goals of the institution curriculum; first that students in those high schools have learned to socialize with their classmates either inside the classes or outside the institution and second, that they look for ways in which they can apply what they are learning in class. This is important since students are understanding that what is being taught to them is not only for approving a school year, but also that their academic goals are helping them in their everyday life situations.

In one of the interviews, one student at CHC mentioned:

...yo creo que más bien lo hacen a partir de las clases y de la forma en que nos enseñan la materia, digamos nos dan algo y a la vez nos dan el uso y la forma de aplicarlo, de ver que no solo es

un conocimiento que llega hacia nosotros a través del libro sino es algo que podemos poner en práctica y llevar a cabo al salir de aquí. [I think that they do it (apply the humanist vision) in the classes and in the way they teaches us the subject; for example, they give us something and at the same time the use and the way to apply it, to see that there is not only knowledge that come to us through the book but also something that we can put into practice and carry out when we graduate](CHC's student 2).

All the data showed previously may be a reason for considering the following data. Students were asked in their questionnaire if they have considered moving to another high school. More than the 64% (see fig. 33 and 34) of the participants stated that they have never considered moving to another institution.

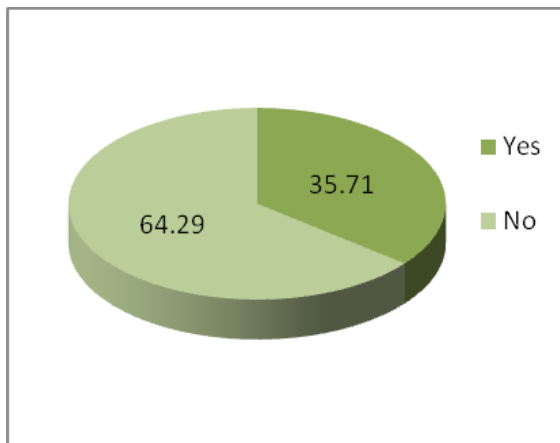


Fig. 33. Student transferring: CHC; Own elaboration, October 2014.

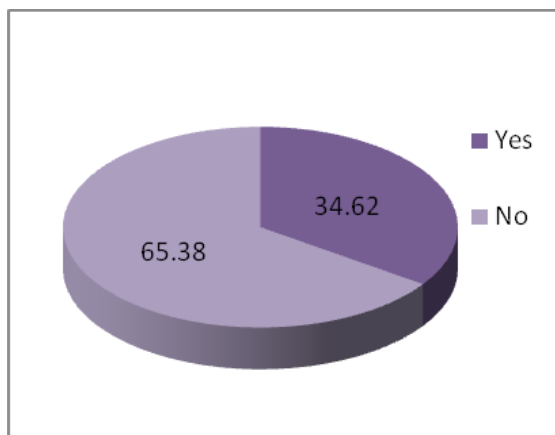


Fig. 34. Student transferring: SAMAGU; Own elaboration, October 2014.

#### 4.2.2. English Syllabus

As stated at the beginning of this research, the syllabus, in this case the English syllabus influences in the engagement of the students as the curriculum. In this study, the English syllabus was defined as the outline and summary of topics to be covered in an education or training course (Nunan 16) which have to provide opportunities to the students to create successful academic experiences. In order to know about the syllabus followed by the institutions, the principals were questioned about it and the objectives that a syllabus must reach. Fig.35 shows that the principal of the CHC considers that the syllabus used in this institution is a tool for a future professional growth; that it promotes the use of technology as a learning tool and that this syllabus promotes a healthy environment for socializing with the classmates. Besides, the principal mentions that the syllabus frequently helps the students to balance their responsibilities and provides the students with an optimal learning; however, the program used at CHC sometimes gives the students the opportunity to participate in exchange programs or other activities where they can practice the language.

In the case of the syllabus used at SAMAGU high school, the principal mentions that the program is a vital tool that will help the students in their future goals and that it promotes the use of technology and healthy environment for socializing with their peers in academic and extra curricular activities. The principal also stated that the English syllabus frequently helps the students to balance their responsibilities and that it provides the students with the necessary tools besides promoting activities such as exchange programs (see fig. 36).

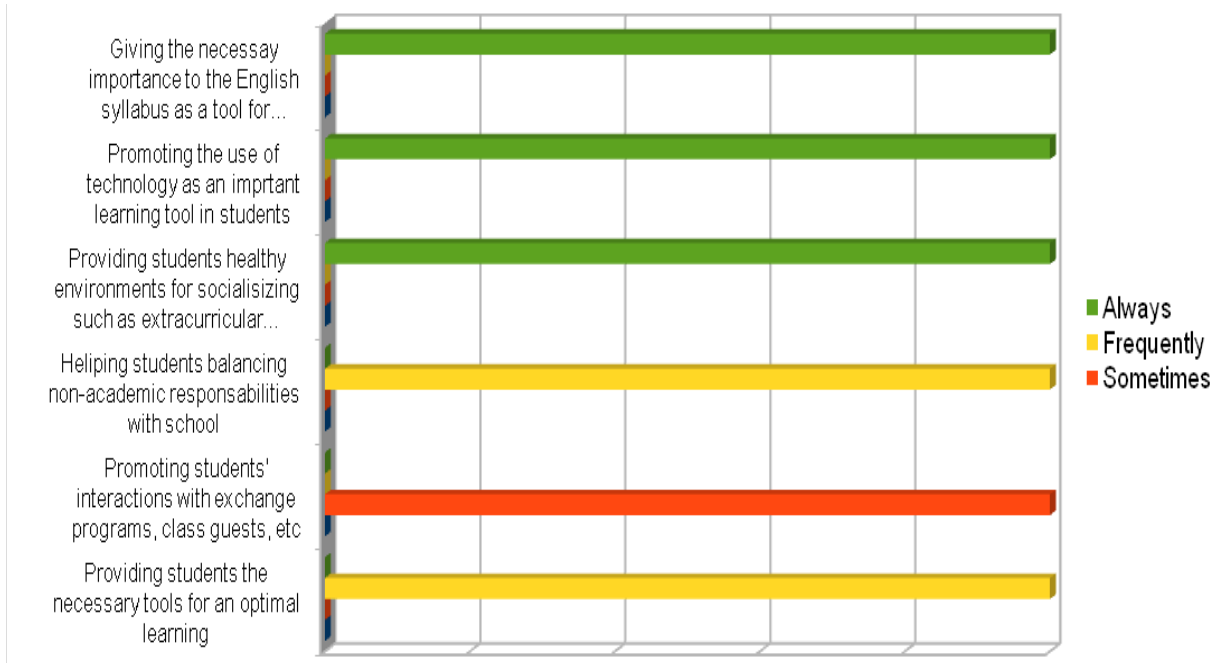


Fig 35. CHC's principal's opinion of English syllabus;; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014

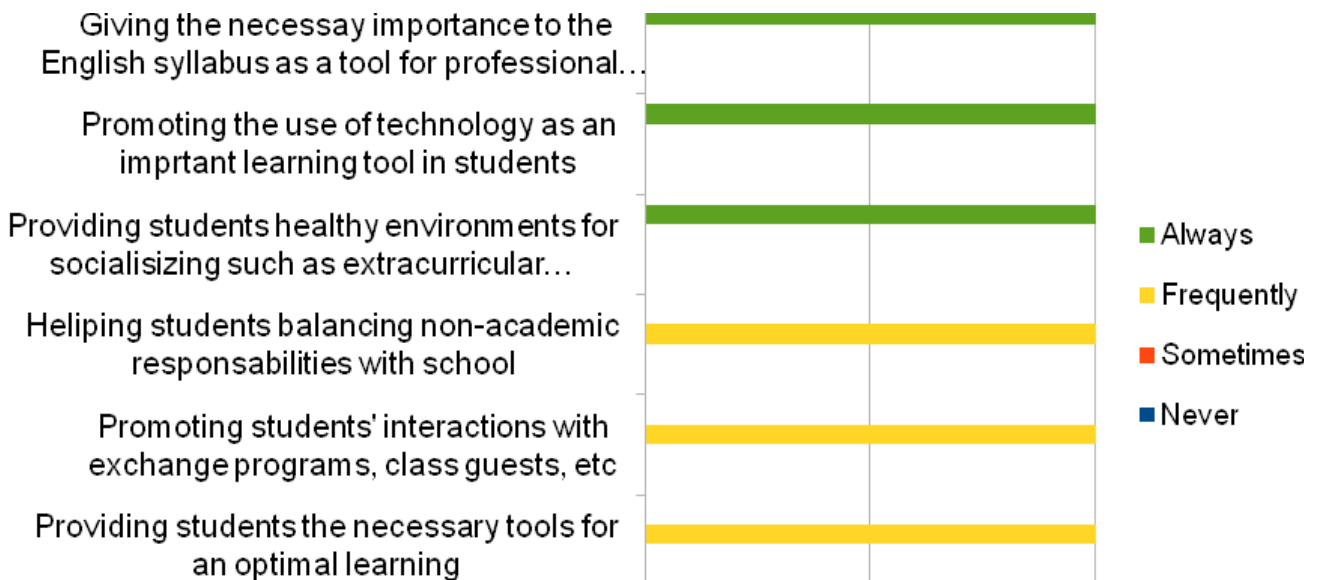


Fig 36. SAMAGU's principal's opinion of English syllabus; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014

The researchers also asked the students through the questionnaire about their opinions of the English syllabus used at the institutions. Stefani in relation to these aspects of the syllabus and curriculum, stated that “We also need to consider institutional factors that might mitigate against

engagement for some students, such as the social environment that is provided or promoted...” (11.4) So, first at CHC, students showed in their answers that they consider that the syllabus frequently provides the necessary tools for an optimal learning and gives them the necessary elements for their future professional growth; but that it always promotes the use of technology and gives them a healthy environment where they can socialize in the class and in extra-curricular activities. However, students at CHC consider that the syllabus does not help them neither to balance their responsibilities nor to promote activities where they can interact with native speakers such as exchange programs or inviting special guests. See fig. 37 below:

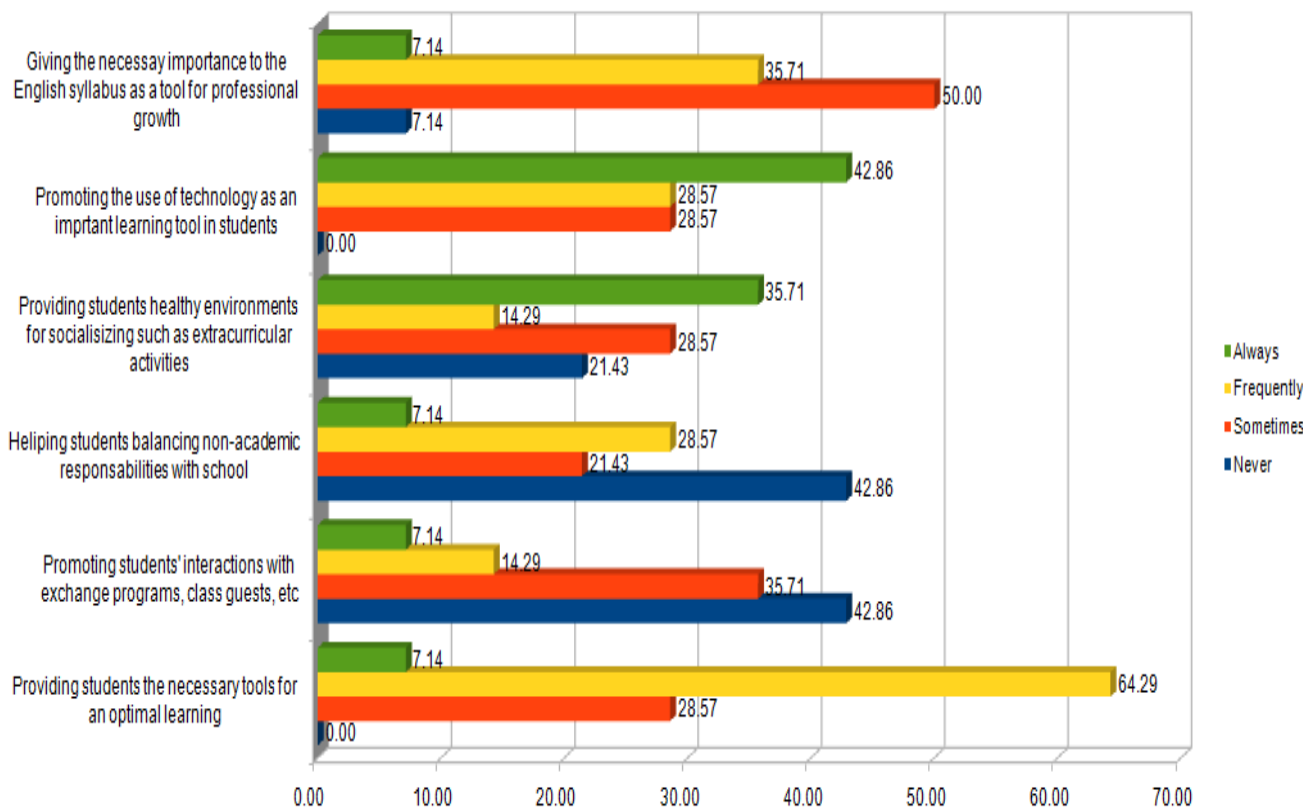


Fig 37. CHC's students' opinion of English syllabus; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014

When analyzing the same information with the opinion of SAMAGU's students, similar opinions to the CHC students were found. Students also agreed with the facts that the syllabus does not help them to balance their non academic responsibilities, but that the English syllabus being

implemented at SAMAGU is giving them the optimal tools for an optimal learning as well as working as a tool to acquire the basic elements they need for a future professional growth (see fig. 38). Besides, the syllabus in occasions promoted the use of technology and gives them the opportunity to socialize in healthy learning environments as well as participating in different opportunities for language interaction such as exchange programs. This results are important for our investigation because as Smith stated, in order to engage students the syllabus and the curriculum of an institution must have a supportive environment and provide enriching educational experiences that cause an optimal learning as well as representing a challenge (2), so that students can understand that what is being taught will have an impact on their future lives.

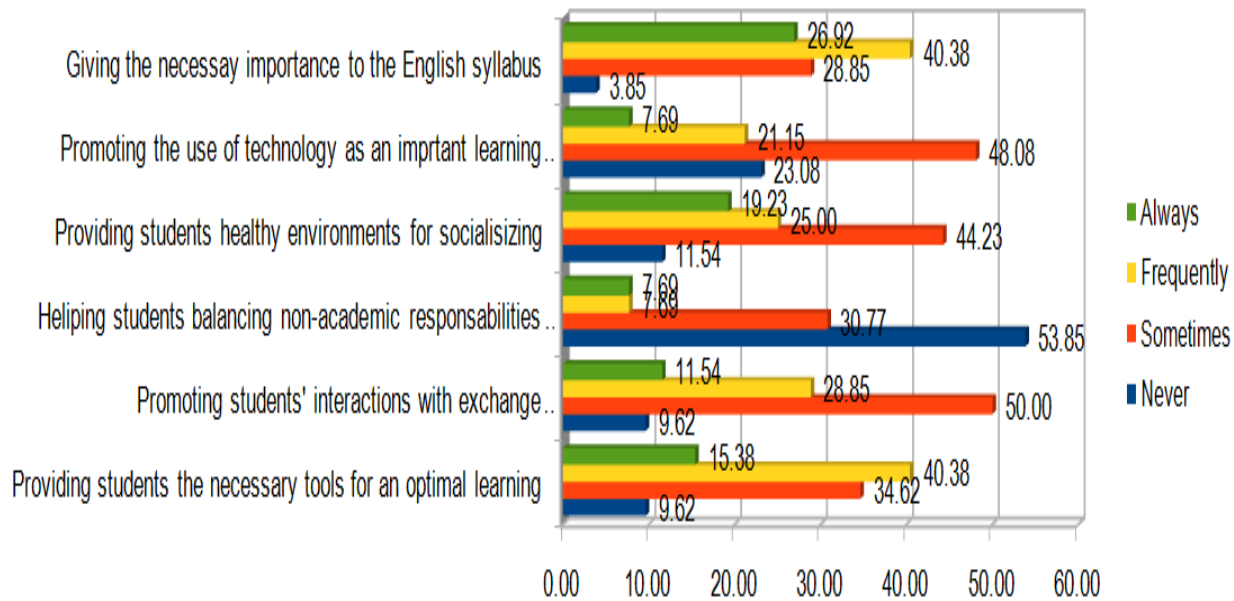


Fig 38. SAMAGU's students' opinion of English syllabus; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014

Finally, in the interviews done to the students, two of them referred to the syllabus of their institutions as something that is helping them to be prepared for their future lives. The questions asked was: Do you consider that the high school influences you in your motivation to learn English? For instance, one student at SAMAGU mentioned:

*Si a la hora...es que depende mucho, no se puede caer en el error de como muchas materias usted estudia para pasar el año y estudia para pasar la materia y listo, entonces depende mucho del*

*profesor en si que usted lo motive para hablar y para trabajar y para lo que usted va a la vida, no para hacer un examen.* [Yes when...it depends...it (the high school) cannot make the mistake of the other subjects where you study to pass the year and the subject and that's it...so it depends a lot on the teacher that can motivate you to speak and work for your future life, not to do an exam] (SAMAGU's student 4)

And at CHC one interviewee said:

*Al menos para mí, mi motivación ha sido externa al colegio, ha sido la misma sociedad que te dice que ya el ingles es un idioma universal que necesitas para trabajar incluso para interactuar con otras personas porque digamos que quieres conocer a alguien de otro país o obtener una beca para estudiar en el extranjero algo básico que debes de tener es el ingles y el colegio trata de hacérselo saber pero uno ya lo conoce con anterioridad entonces creo que ya el deseo viene de forma personal.* [At least for me, my motivation has been external to the high school, it is society that tells you that English is an universal language that you need for work or even to interact with people because if you want to know someone or get a scholarship to study abroad you need to have English and the high school tries to tell you that although you already know it since the motivation is personal]. (student interview 2)

### **4.3. Teachers' Qualities**

In relation to the data gathered in this section of teacher's' qualities, the study included information collected also through the observations, questionnaires and interviews applied to all the participants. About teachers' qualities, as it was mentioned in our framework, authors like Heflin; Goldspink, Winter and Foster explained the value of analyzing how teachers' qualities can influence students' engagement. This part of the study refers to the attributes an educator should possess in order

to boost engagement such as experience, a good teacher-student relationship and classroom management (7).

### 4.3.1. Teachers' Experience

First of all, it is essential to remember that the two teachers were selected by the researchers because of their experience, academic level and success they have shown to have with the students they have taught as an English teacher. CHC teacher has been working for 10 years in the teaching of English as a foreign language, while SAMAGU teacher has been working for 19 years in the same field. In terms of academic experience, both teachers, as we can see in fig. 39, have a master's diploma, but the CHC teacher besides the postgraduate studies, has also taken an ESP diploma.

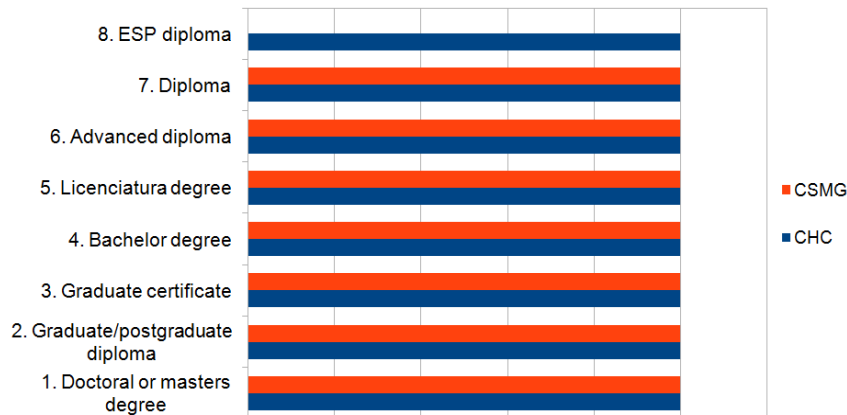


Fig. 39. CHC and SAMAGU teachers' academic grade; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

Furthermore, both of the participant teachers have also received other educational trainings along their experience as EFL instructors. Fig. 40 shows the training that those teachers have attended to.



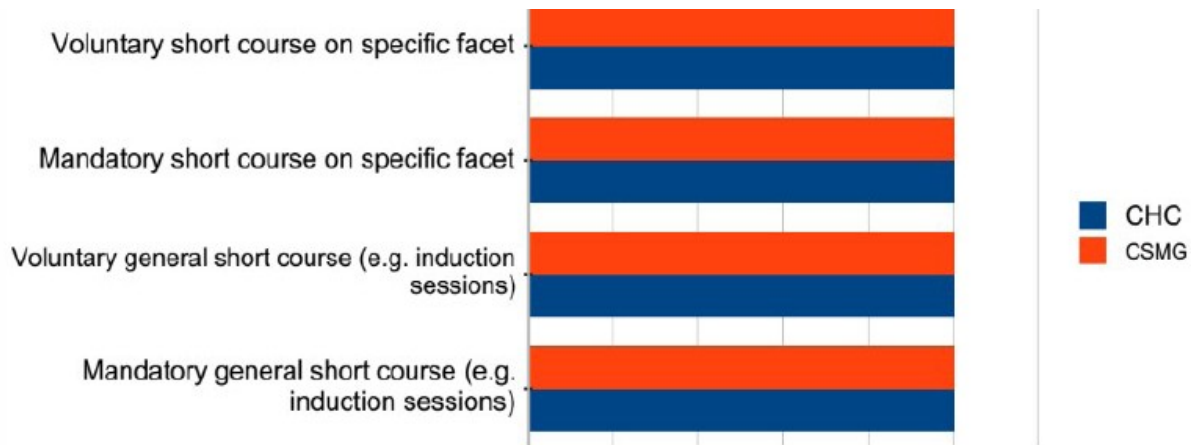


Fig. 40. CHC and SAMAGU teachers' trainings; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

As demonstrated in the above figure, CHC and SAMAGU teachers have taken mandatory and voluntary courses, both short or long, which have enriched their professional career. Goldspink, Winter and Foster explained that effective learning is given when the teacher is proficient with the content and engages with the learners in the process of learning” (255). Besides, the teacher's experience is related to the years of teaching, certifications and trainings an educator might possess.

Besides, the teachers were asked to mention where they mainly have received informal advice or support. Both of them have received help from professional networks and academic staff, but the CHC teacher has received more support from education staff, teaching advisers, postgraduate students, and administrative staff. Fig. 41 shows the information cited above.

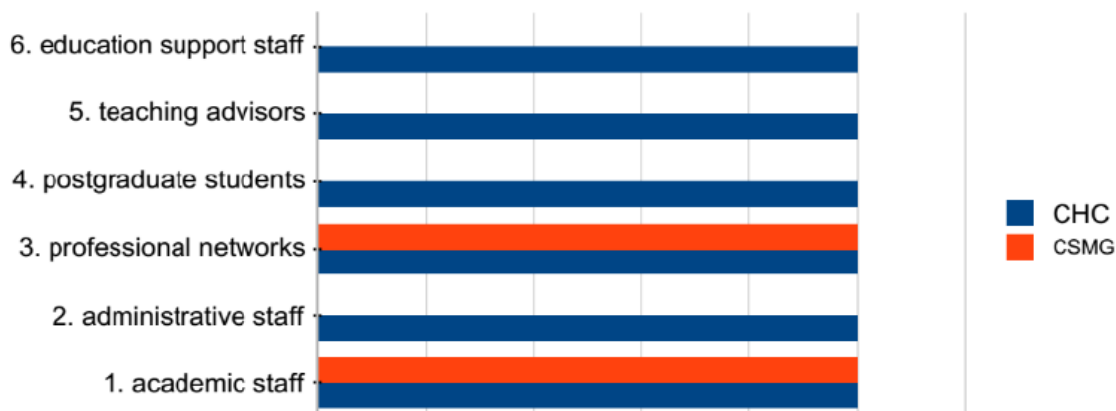


Fig. 41. Teachers' advisers and support; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

In the interviews applied to the participants, the researchers also asked the students if they

considered that the experience that the teacher had can influence in the way the class is taught. The question asked was: *¿Consideraría usted que la experiencia que su profesor(a) tiene como docente influye en la manera de explicar y en las actividades que se ejecutan en clase?* [Do you consider that the experience that your teacher has influences in the way of explaining and in the activities performed in class?]

Some of the students' opinions were the following:

*Realmente si porque todos los años que él lleva tanto de la carrera como de haber estudiado y la práctica de de ser profesional realmente si influye bastante en el hecho de como lo va a transmitir.* [It does, because of all the years that he has not only of his career but also in the teaching praxis really influences in the fact of how he is going to transmit it]. (CHC's student 1)

*Si...porque digamos di seguro por la carrera que ya uno tiene y la experiencia le permite al desarrollar mejor las lecciones.* [Yes because the experience allows him to develop better the classes]. (CHC's student 3)

And at SAMAGU, the students mentioned:

*Si claro es muy diferente a cuando un profe sabe, el acento y todo es como uno lo está aprendiendo.* [yes of course, it is different when a teacher knows; the accent and everything is the way we are learning]. (SAMAGU's student 4)

*Si porque ya ellos saben como tienen que hacer las cosas.* [yes because they know how to do it (teach)]. (SAMAGU's student 5)

So, as it can be seen, students acknowledge the fact that the experience that the teacher has helps them to develop better classes and students can trust them; and this may promote engagement in the class because as Stronge and Par affirm, effective teachers who possess experience which is noted in the way they teach and in the management of the classroom (106). Park also claimed that teacher's experience as well as the teacher's education are two transcendental variables to promote student

engagement and, thus, students' academic achievement.

### 4.3.2. Teacher-Student Interaction

The second important aspect of the teachers' qualities besides the experience is the interaction among the teacher and the students. Nunan explained that the teacher has three main roles in the communicative classroom; to be a facilitator of the communicative process, to act as a participant and as an observer and learner (87). In the observations carried out by the researchers, it was observed that, in the case of the teacher at CHC, in five of the eight observations, the teacher praised the pupils by giving compliments to them when they actively participated in class, or did a good job on the tasks that were taking place in the class. On the other three observations, there was no praise from the teacher to the students (see figure 42).

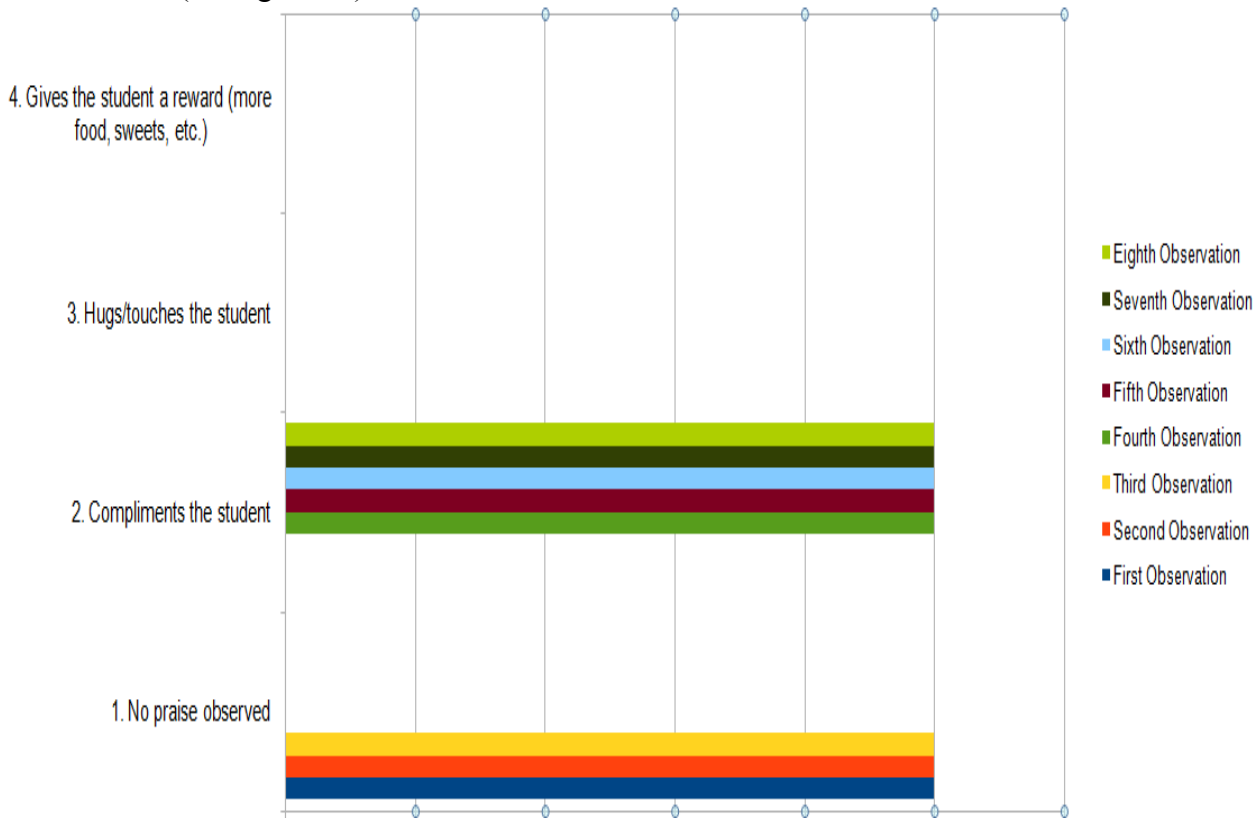


Fig. 42. Techniques used to praise students at CHC; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

On the other hand, as seen in fig. 43, at SAMAGU high school the teacher showed two different

ways to praise students. The most common, as well as in CHC, was to give compliments to the students when praising them; this was shown in the six observations held to the teacher. In one of the observations, the teacher besides giving a compliment, gave students a reward for doing a good job in the class.

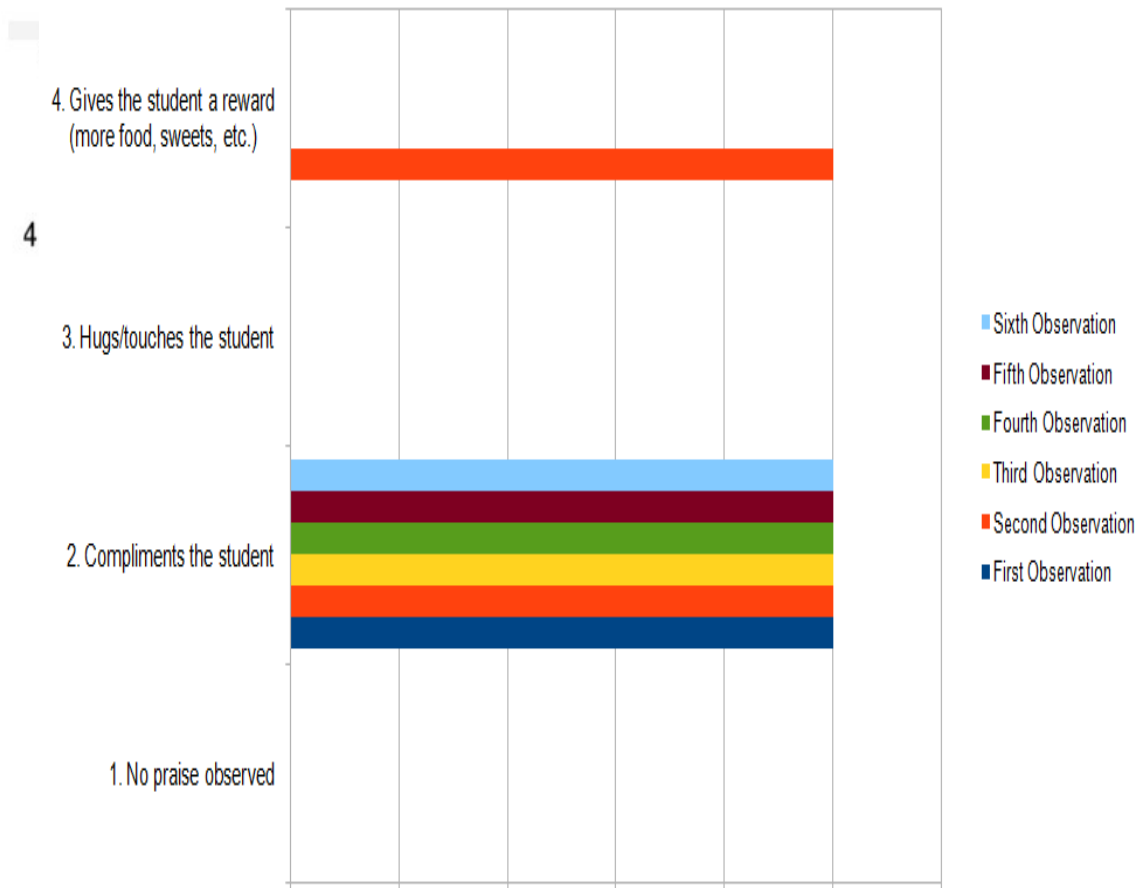


Fig. 43. Techniques used to praise students at SAMAGU; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

On this same issue, the teachers were also asked to mention which of the praising techniques they prefer to use. Both of the teachers mentioned that they prefer to give compliments to the students and give rewards such as food or sweets to engage their students and motivate them to do the best in their classes. The teacher of the CHC expressed that another option to praise students is to talk about the interests of the students while the teacher from SAMAGU high school prefers to give good comments about the students' improvement (see fig.44) On fig. 45, we can see that the principals of the

institutions also gave their opinions towards praising; SAMAGU's principal says that he finds more useful to prepare dynamic activities while CHC believes that it is more useful to communicate with students. Goldspink, Winter and Foster stated that a strong connection was demonstrated between educators' pedagogy and the relationships they establish with children, and children's engagement in learning (6).

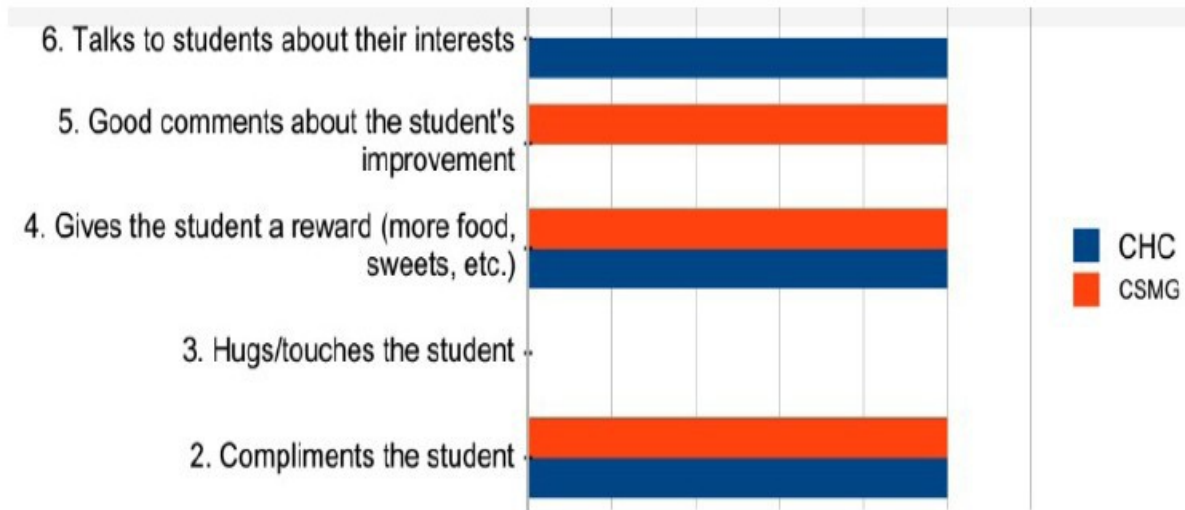


Fig. 44 Techniques chosen by teachers to praise students; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

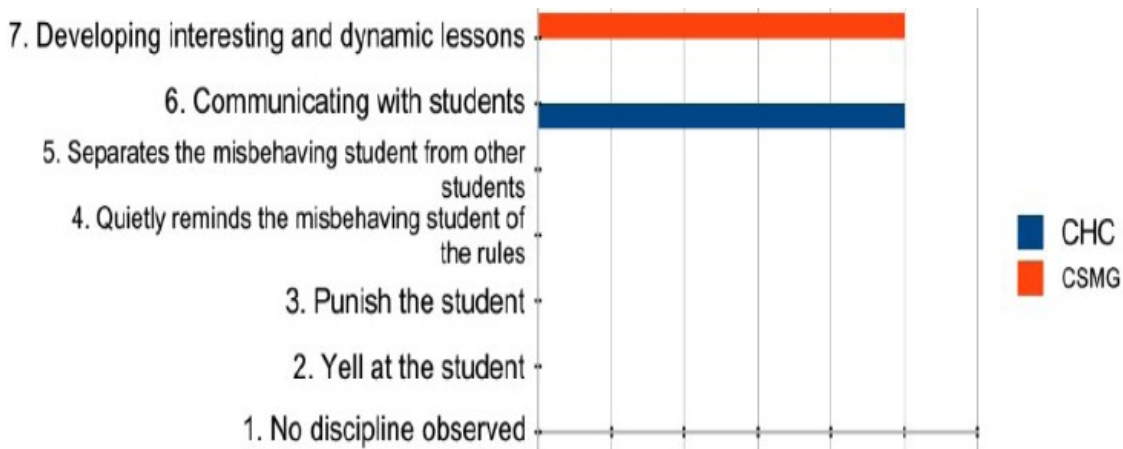


Fig. 45. Techniques chosen by principals to praise students; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

The students, through the questionnaire applied, also gave their opinions about the qualities they consider that their English teachers have. First, by analyzing the data providing by the CHC students in fig. 46, we can see that among the qualities, the 100% of the pupils mentioned that the teacher

demonstrates knowledge on the subject being taught as well as a good English level at the time of teaching the class. Besides, 92% of the surveyed students mentioned that the teacher uses virtual tools when teaching, and around the 64% agreed that the teacher demonstrates the ability to incorporate didactic innovations in the lessons, promote a bounding of cultures in the classes and that the lessons given show relationship with the level of English being taught in class. On the other hand, 57% of the students expressed that the teacher presents in a clear way the objectives of the activities being done in class; 42% mentioned that the activities done in class give the students the opportunity to discuss topics and produce in the target language. Finally, 42.8% of the students expressed that the teacher uses other resources to explain in order to avoid Spanish; 85.4% that the teacher sometimes communicates only in English and only 7.1% say that the teacher has communicated in English with them out of the school hours.

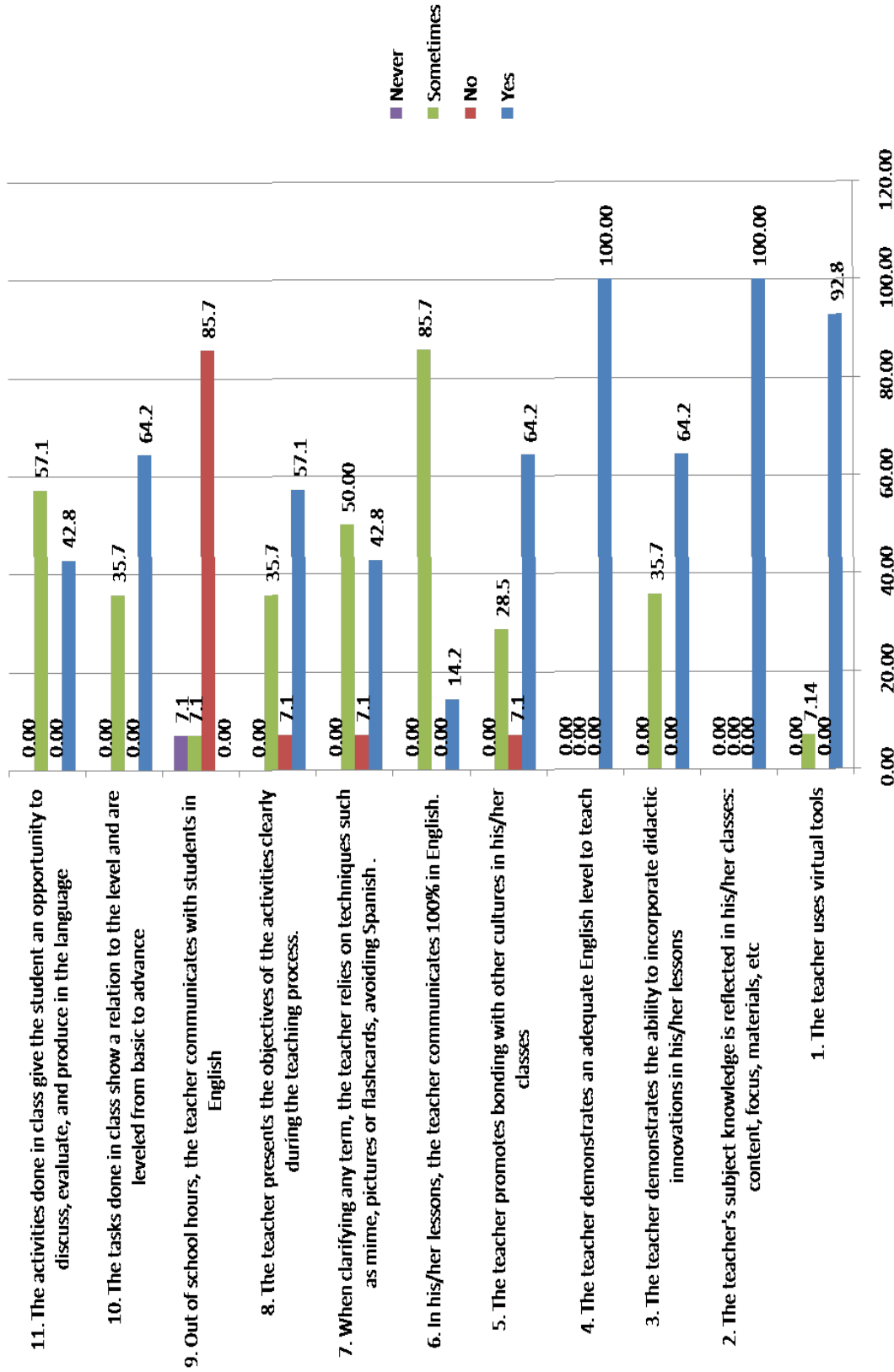


Fig.46. Opinion of CHC students of their teacher; Own elaboration. 13 October 2014.

Interestingly, less than half of the students (42.8%) affirm that the teacher uses the methodology necessary for them to produce in the language which is the goal of EFL teaching. Although it does not affect students' engagement, further research may be appropriate in order to see if the goals of EFL teaching are being accomplished in the institution.

In the case of SAMAGU students, the statistics show similarities in relation to the results gotten from the CHC students' opinion. At SAMAGU, 88% of the students expressed that the teacher demonstrates an adequate level of English when teaching; 84% that the knowledge on the subject that the teacher has is reflected on their classes and content being taught; 70% that the activities done in class have a relation with the level of English taught; 58% of the participants conclude that the activities provided by the teacher give the students the opportunity to produce in the target language and that the teacher communicates in English in the class. Then, 50% said that the teacher presents in a clear way the objectives of the activities during the teaching process and a 41% agreed that the teacher promotes the bounding of cultures within the class. Conversely to these high percentages, 39% of the students informed that the teacher uses body language or visual supports to explain rather than using Spanish and only 13.7% mentioned that the teacher communicates in English outside the class (see fig.47). In such way, the fact that 41,1% of students agreed that the professor does not communicate in English outside the class can be related to the fact that teachers are focusing on other skills rather than the oral skill which is the goal of the communicative approach. Likewise, further research needs to be carried out in order to evaluate if both institutions and teachers are directing their EFL teaching-learning process towards the communicative approach goals.



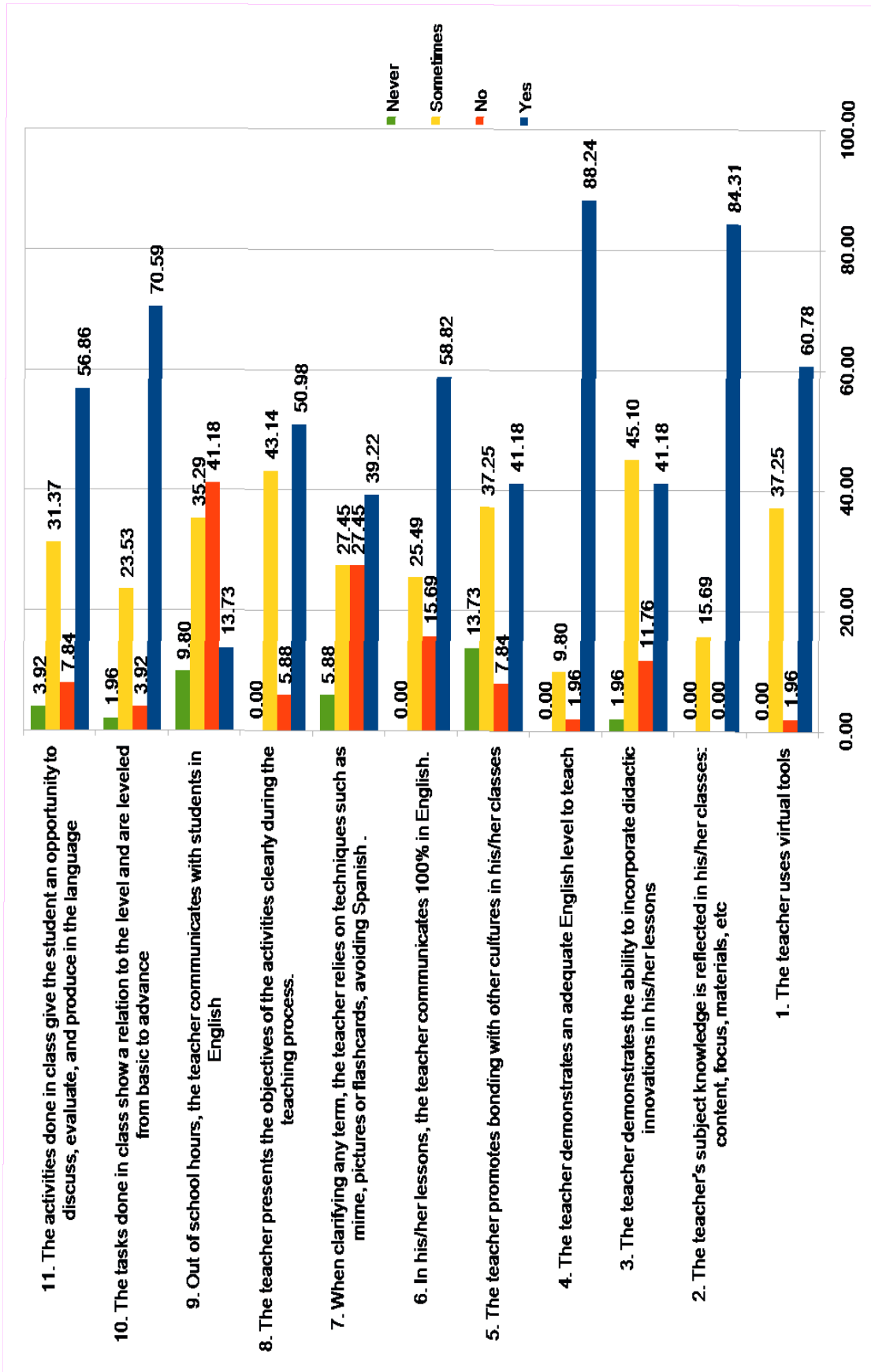


Fig. 47. Opinion of SAMAGU students of their teacher; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

In the observations held by the researchers, the use of English by the teachers was also observed to see if the teachers used more the target language rather than their native one. First, let's take a look on the following charts:

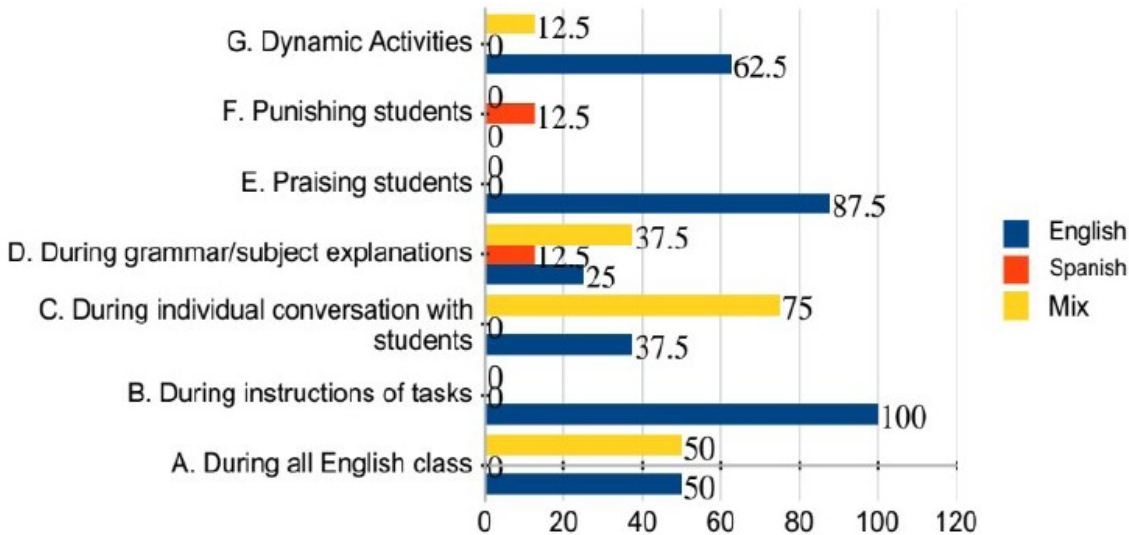


Fig. 48. Language use by CHC teacher; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

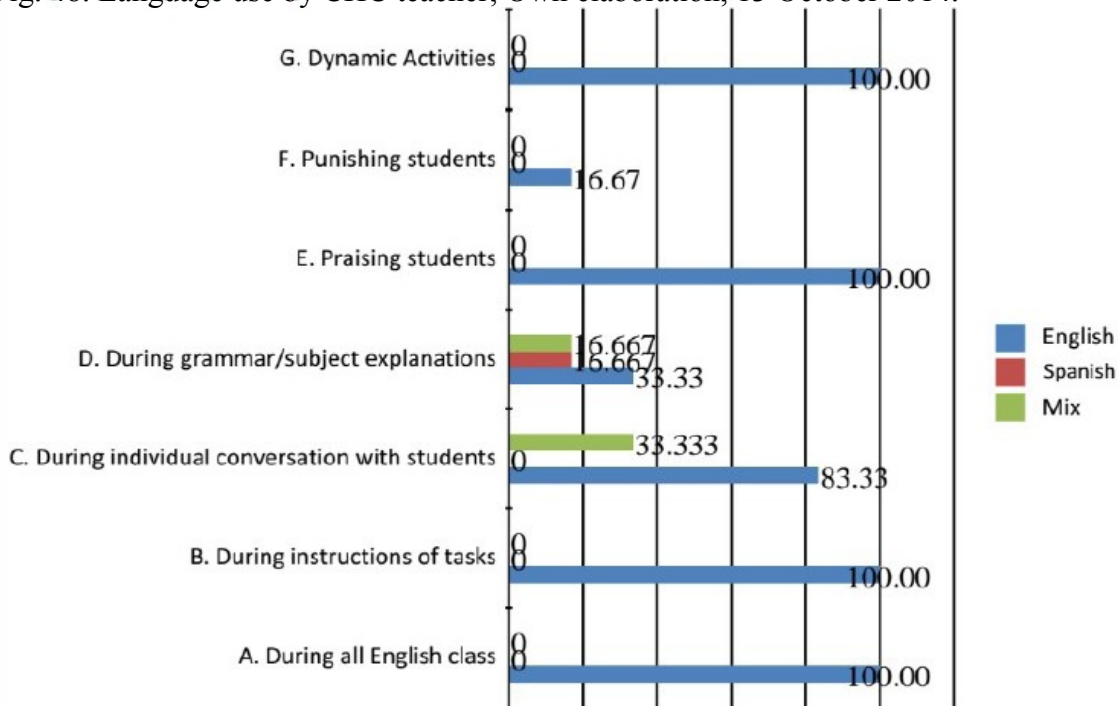


Fig. 49. Language use by SAMAGU teacher; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

Students at CHC show that the teacher always uses English in class when giving instructions of the tasks to be done and frequently when praising students and during the dynamic activities. The half the classes are mainly given in English or using a mixture of Spanish/English and when giving grammar explanations both Spanish and English are used by the teacher. Usually, when having

individual conversations with the students, the teacher tends to switch languages and when punishing students Spanish is used too. At SAMAGU's classes, a 100% of the students confirmed that the teacher uses English during the classes, when giving instructions of tasks, when praising students and during the dynamic activities; the teacher switches languages or uses Spanish on a few occasions during the grammar explanations or in the individual conversations with the students.

#### **4.3.3. Classroom management**

Finally, when researching about classroom management, the researchers took into account the main aspect which is the control of the group that the teacher possesses. Richards stated that classroom management refers to the ways in which student behavior, movement, and interaction during a lesson are organized and controlled by the teacher to enable teaching to take place most effectively. In four of the observations carried out at CHC, no discipline techniques were observed since the students did not misbehave in class while on other four observations what the teacher did was to remind the misbehaving students the rules of the class by either, telling it individually to the students or by saying it out loud (fig. 50). On the other hand, at SAMAGU high school misbehaving students were noted in the eight observations, so the teacher had to apply disciplinary measures to the students who were misbehaving in class. In this case, the teacher usually reminded the students the rules of the class and school in general but also, in one occasion, the teacher had to separate the misbehaving student from the classmates he was talking to. Fig. 51 shows the statistics of the results described previously.

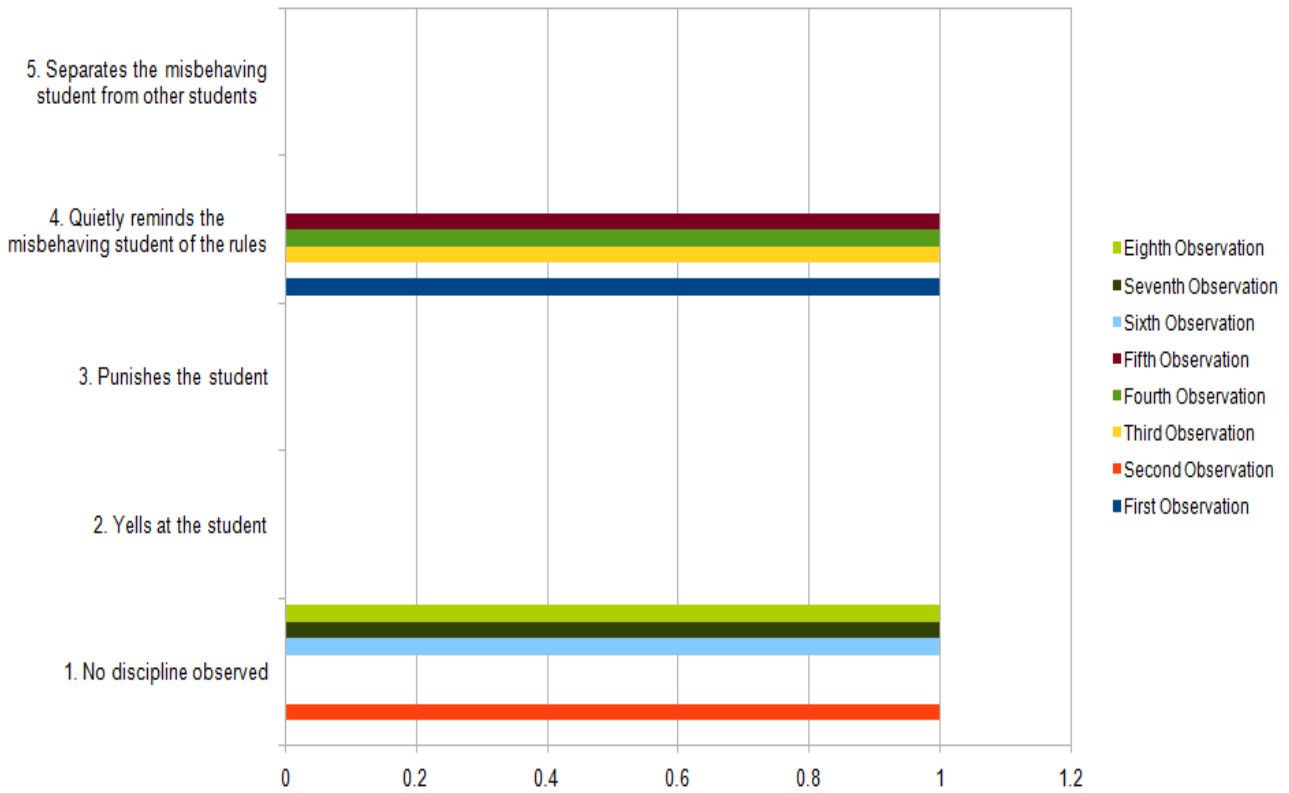


Fig. 50. Discipline techniques by CHC teacher; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

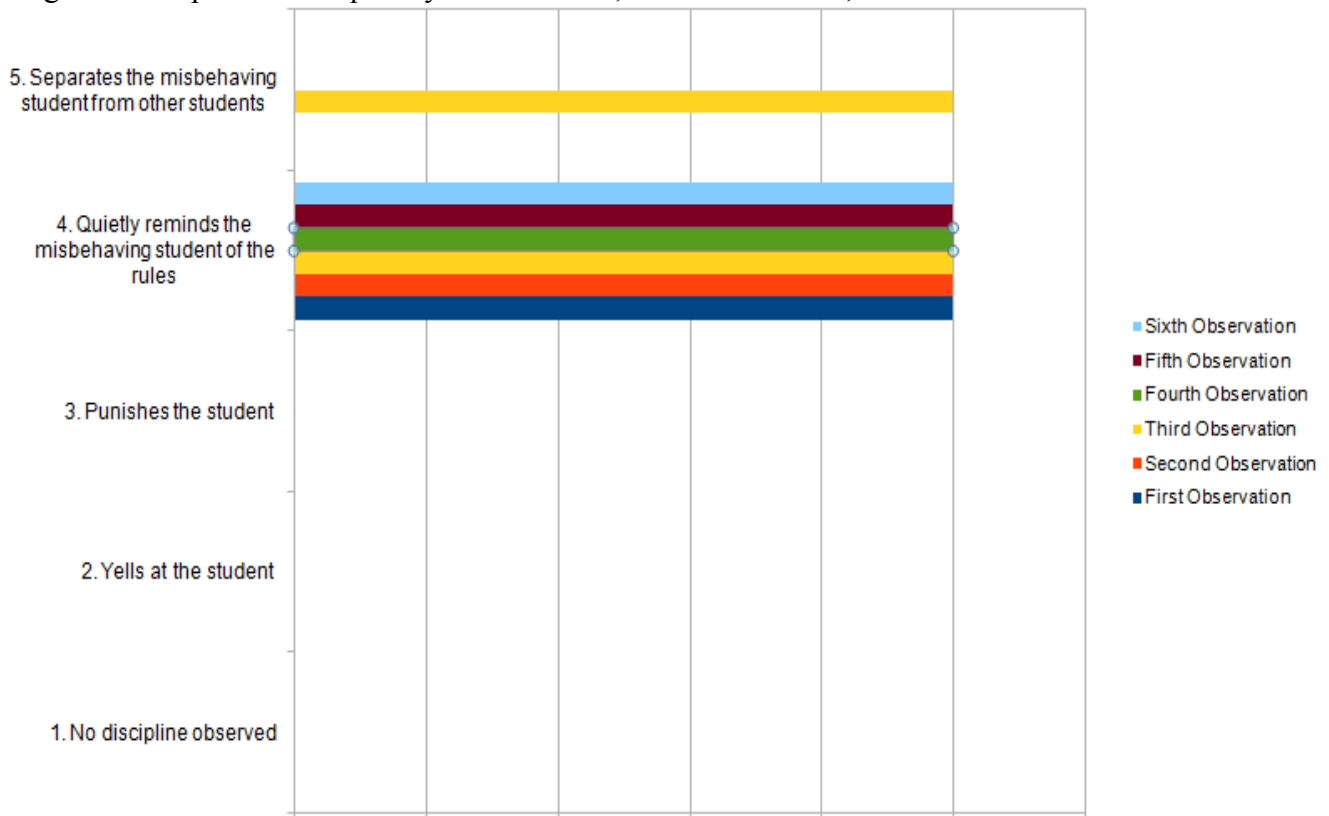


Fig. 51. Discipline techniques by SAMAGU teacher; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

Moreover, the principals of the high schools also gave their opinion about class management in the questionnaire given to them. Both of the principals agree that to control the group and attend the disrespectful behaviors of certain students, the teachers should first quietly remind the rules to the misbehaving students or asking them for common sense. SAMAGU'S principal considers that calling the student's name firmly or separating students from the other misbehaving students could help to manage the case, so a respectful environment that can take place and lead to classroom engagement. The principals' opinions are reflected in the following figure.

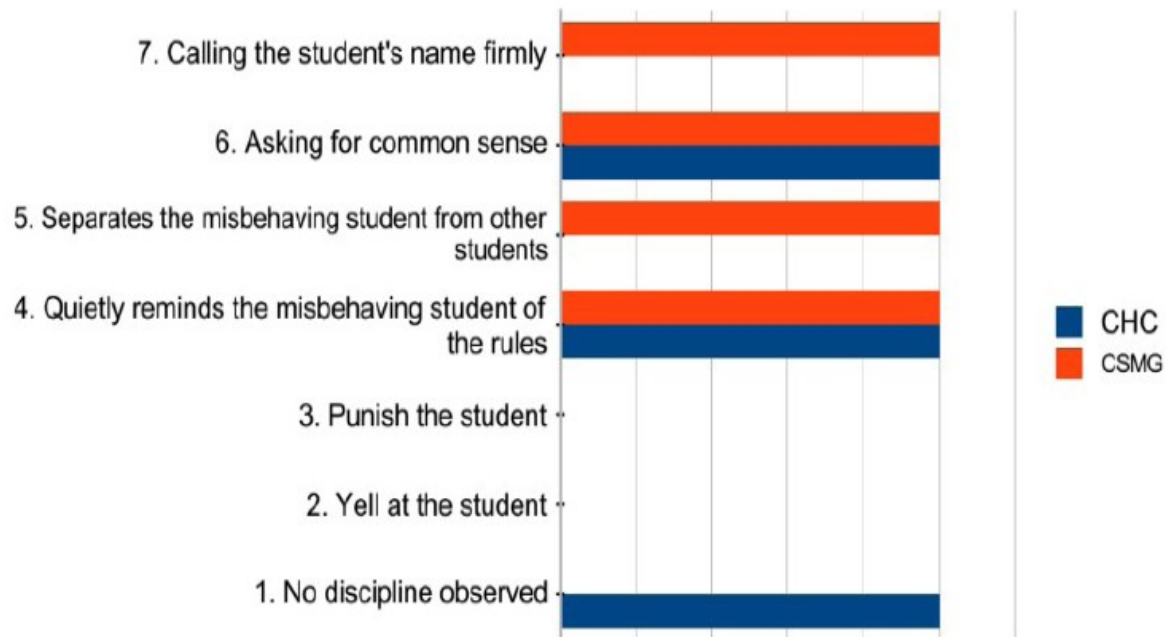


Fig. 52. Discipline techniques recommended by the principals; Own elaboration, 13 October 2014.

On the other hand, in relation to this issue of class management, the researcher also asked about this in the interviews done to some of the participants students where they mentioned that the teacher promotes the discipline in the class, and so it is easier for them to have management of the group. Some of the answers were:

*Sí. [yes](CHC's student 1)*

*Sí claro que si, el se molesta cuando no estamos poniendo atención entonces nos pide*

*que lo hagamos porque después de todo el está explicando.* [Of course, he gets mad when we are not paying attention so he asks to do it, mainly because he is explaining]" (CHC's student 2).

*Sí.* [yes](CHC's and SAMAGU's student 3, 1 and 2, respectively)

It is necessary to mention what the role of classroom management is, and that it is not only related to their way that discipline is controlled in the classroom. For the purpose of this study basically only this concept was taken into a count, but the best lesson and accurate control of classroom management is a little use of temper and more of managing the process of teaching.

Finally, in regards with two fundamentals aspects that take part in class management such as routines and transitions, it is noticed that CHC's teacher usually programs class routines within 30 minutes; however, if students are focused on individual activities or listening activities such as movies the routines could last up to 2 hours (see fig. 53). Furthermore, SAMAGU's teacher usually program 30-minute activities with the exception of listening activities or book work that can last up to one hour (see fig. 54). Although the theory about transitions and routines does not give an exact time or lapse of time for teachers to carry out the different tasks, the principle that the theory explains is that tasks' time should be long enough for students to accomplish the goal and short enough for students not to get bored. In this case, such transitions and routines will vary according to the students who both teachers know about due to the fact that in most of the tasks done students were not disengaged.

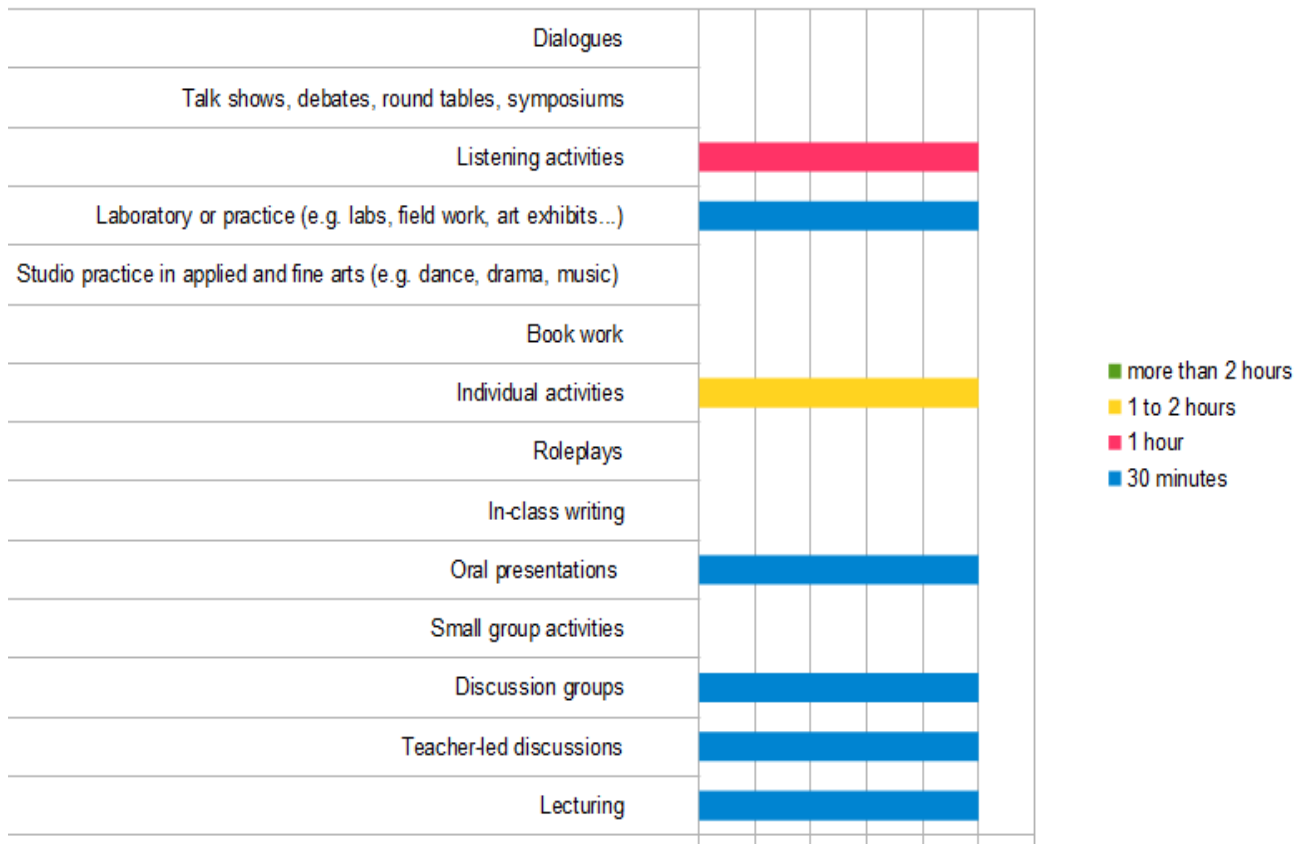


Fig. 53. CHC: Amount of time spent in each activity; Own elaboration, October 2014.

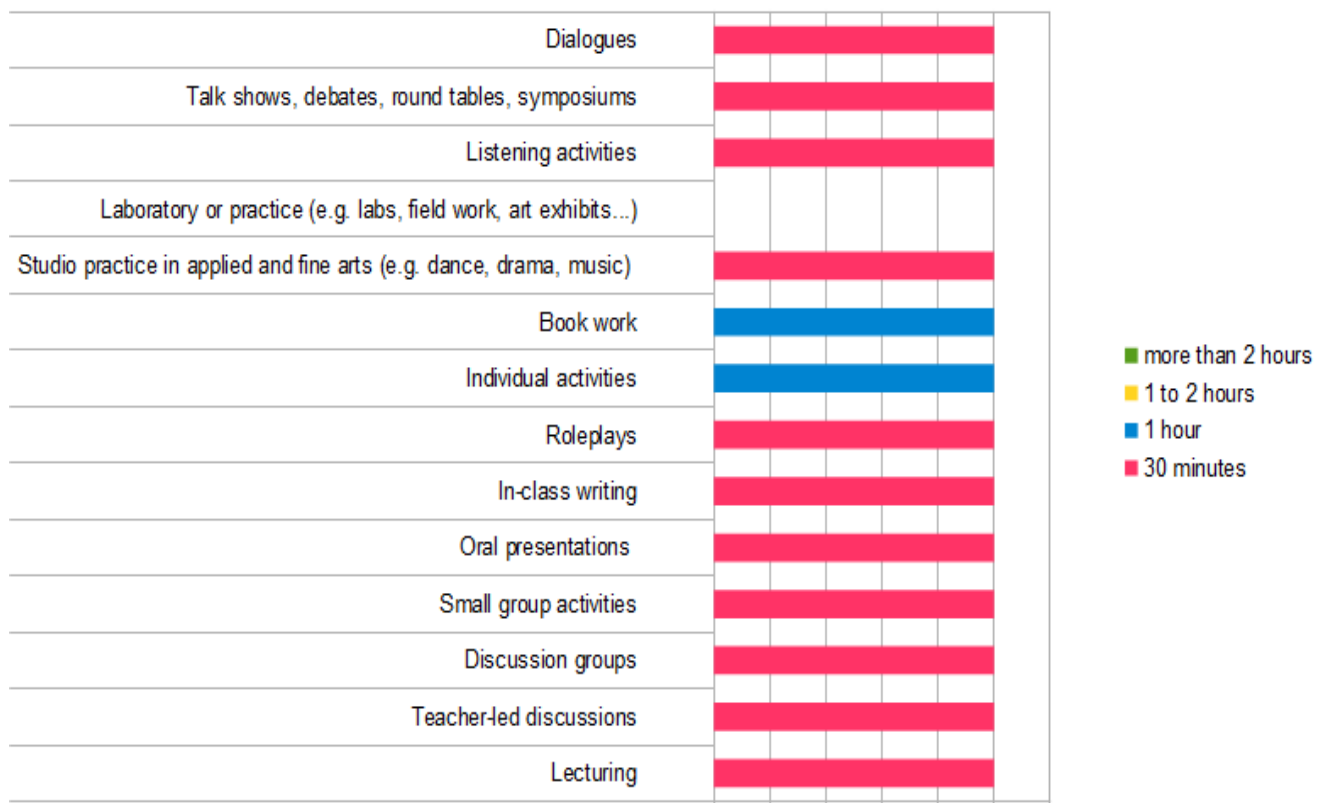


Fig. 54. SAMAGU: Amount of time spent in each activity; Own elaboration; October 2014.

Additionally, CHC's teacher affirmed that he gives students an agenda at the beginning of the class, and each student should measure their own time in order to complete the agenda. Whereas SAMAGU's teacher affirmed in the interview that she gives no more than fifteen minutes from activity to activity.

#### **4.4. Pedagogical Mediation**

Authors like Smith, Becket, Schletley, and Diamond claim that an engaging pedagogical mediation should involve features like critical thinking, challenging tasks, an active learning and enriching educational experiences. In that sense, classroom arrangement, teaching approach, techniques and materials used in class become a key aspect in engaging students and promoting meaningful learning.

##### **4.4.1. Classroom Arrangement**

Many times, teachers omit or are not conscious of students display and the class arrangement in their teaching processes; however, according to Stronge class arrangement is fundamental tool in promoting engagement by facilitating the classroom to run itself and ease teacher-students interactions. In fact, Stronge states that an engaging classroom arrangement should have instructional organizers, such as rules, posted on walls and a good use of space (39-52).

According to instructional organizers, both CHC's and SAMAGU's classroom had a monthly calendar fill with students activities, due tests, homework, etc. However, CHC's classroom and laboratory (because several sessions observed students were working on the labs) were simple and plain with only a calendar and an important advice posted on the walls. While SAMAGU's class was full of students' productions about around-the-world celebrations, a generational tree filled with



students' photos and cards to their teacher, and motivational phrases written by students. Nevertheless, students from SAMAGU as well as from CHC were clear about the rules of the class:

*Bueno al menos nosotros no recibimos mucho lo que es aquí sino en el aula de informática, entonces seguimos las reglas básicas del aula de informática que son no comer, no levantarse, no salir a cada rato, actuar moderadamente y respetuosamente ante el profesor y los compañeros y poner atención* [Well, we don't usually take classes here (referring to the classroom) but in the computer lab, so we follow the basic rules from the lab: don't eat in class, don't stand up without permission, don't go out often, acting moderately and respectfully towards the teacher and classmates and pay attention] (CHC student).

In the same way, a SAMAGU student when interviewed was clear of the rules of the class, which are: *“Hablar solo en inglés aunque es difícil de controlar, no comer en clase, levantar la mano para hablar, pedir permiso para levantarse e ir al baño.* [Only talk in English although it is difficult to control, do not eat in class, raise your hand to talk, ask permission to stand up or go to bathroom]”. In both cases, the rules of the class are not visible in the walls of the class but are acquired by the students from both institutions.

Another fundamental feature of class arrangement is the usage of space; that is, the arrangement of desks in the class. It is important here, that being the classes in CHC and SAMAGU large classes (classes with more than 15 students), 24 in CHC and 26 in SAMAGU, problems can arise. Lorraine affirms that large classes and heavy workloads blunt student engagement. That is why, teachers were asked to draw the class arrangement they usually work with (see fig. 53 and 54).

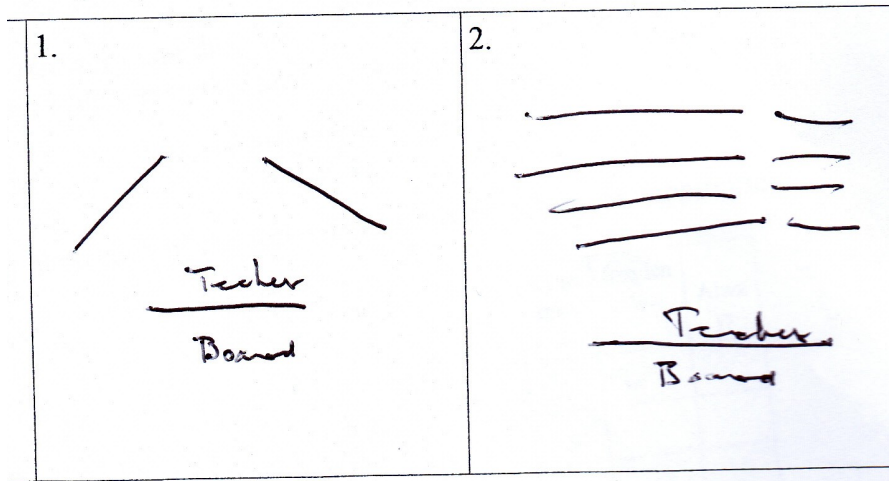


Fig. 55. CHC's teacher usually used class arrangements; Own elaboration; October 2014.

This working class setting was confirmed by the observations done were in all them, the teacher used this type of arrangement with students, especially when working in the computer lab (see fig. 54).

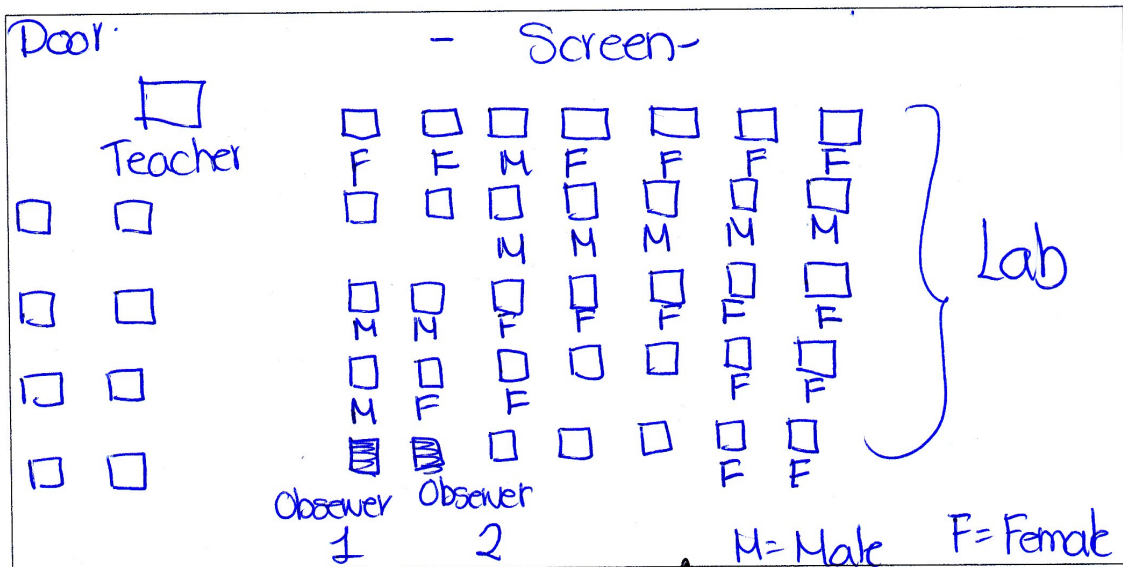


Fig. 56. CHC's teacher observed class arrangements; Own elaboration; October 2014.

The teacher justifies the usage of such arrangements “Because of the topics work on, I prefer working those two [arrangements]. Nonetheless, class is somewhat prearranged and is rarely changed, as in #2” (CHC's teacher). Indeed, many of CHC's students agreed with the usage of arrangement in picture #2, by saying that seats were prearranged, but that they like the arrangement.

Likewise, SAMAGU's teacher prefers three types of settings, horseshoe, in pairs and leaving

enough space in front of the class (see fig. 55).

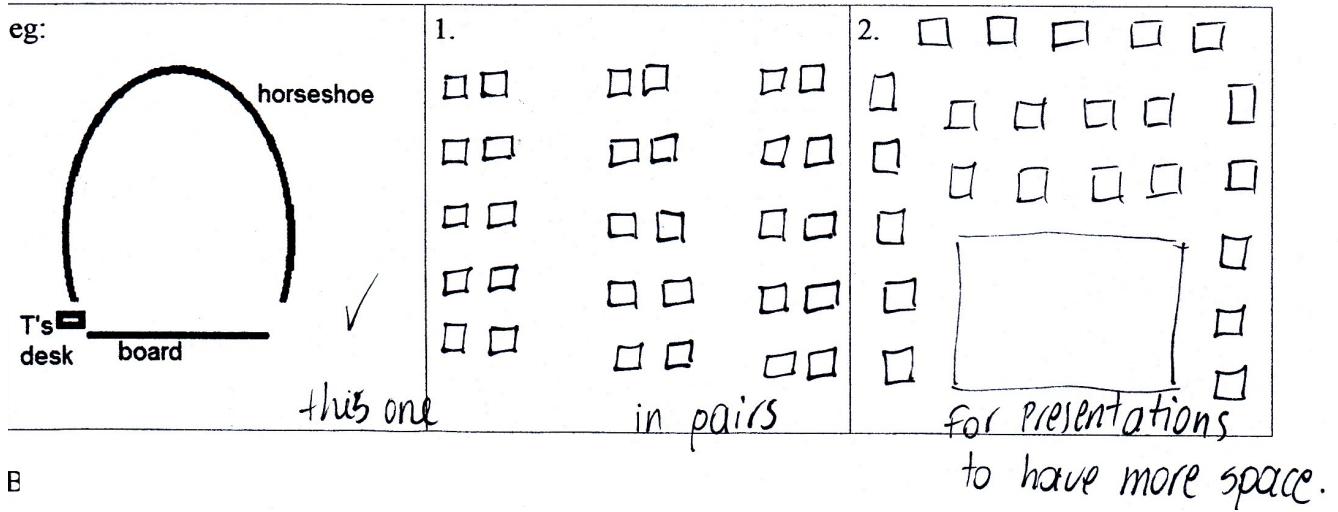


Fig. 57. SAMAGU's teacher usually used class arrangements; Own elaboration; October 2014.

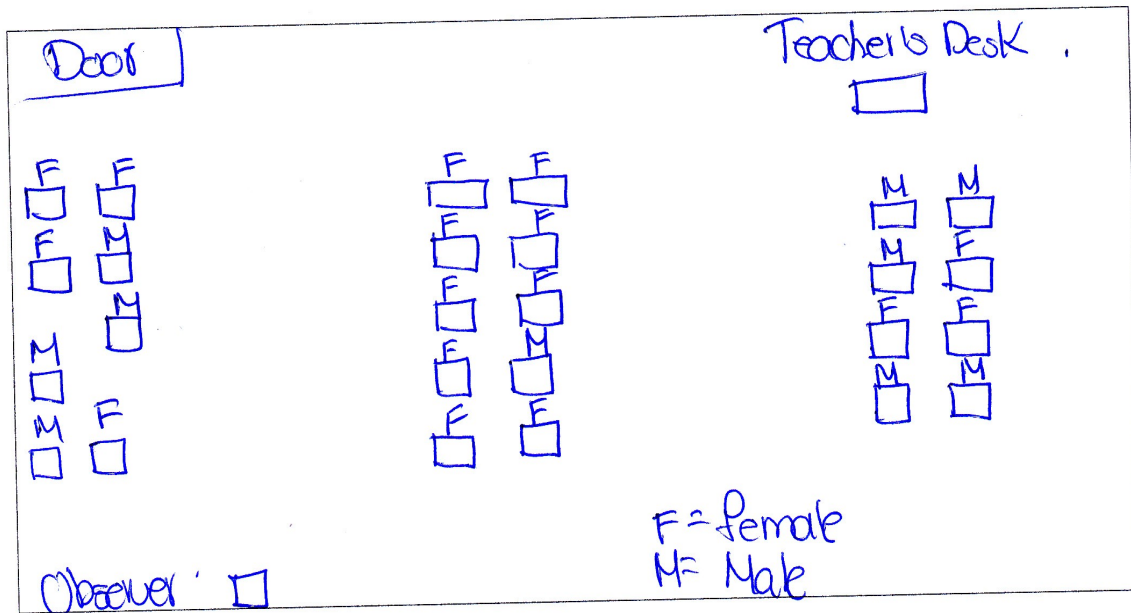


Fig. 58. SAMAGU's teacher observed class arrangements; Own elaboration; October 2014.

However, throughout the observations only setting #1 was observed (see fig. 56). According to SAMAGU's teacher:

[Setting #1] It's a way students can be constantly interacting and sharing ideas, as well as helping each other. The second example because the audience can easily appreciate

what's going on in front, as well as being part of the presentation. I rarely use individual arrangement.

When interviewed, SAMAGU's students claimed that they prefer the observed setting better because it helps them when they participate in some tasks, to ask for help to classmates and to interact with classmates. *“Ah , a mi me gusta mucho que lo arregla en parejas porque uno puede, a la hora de participar, hablar con la persona. [I really like that she arranges the class in pairs because one can talk to the other person when participating in class]”*. Consequently, both arrangements used in CHC and SAMAGU are related to students interests avoiding frustrations and negative attitudes in students which can help to enhance engaging and meaningful learning.

#### **4.4.2. Teaching approach, methods, techniques and activities**

When talking about the teaching approach, it refers to the principles for learning and teaching, in this case by being both public or semi-public academic high school according to MEP the communicative and constructivist approaches is the one to be implemented in the syllabus. Thus, some goals related to both approaches need to be developed in each which are students need to be able to communicate in English within a broader social-economic context in and outside Costa Rica, understand English as a tool to directly access scientific, technological and humanistic information, and in this way expand their knowledge of the world, develop the ability to communicate in English for practical purposes, analyze the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth, and considering its components using English, synthesize and organize ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships in oral and written forms, make judgments about the value of information, arguments or methods, such as examining how others gather and interpret data and assessing the soundness of his or her conclusions in oral and written forms, apply theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations in oral and

written forms, and offer insights and encourage positive attitudes into the culture and civilization of English speaking countries in oral and written form.

According to CHC's teacher, CHC eleventh graders have attained most of the skills listed above regularly, except that they are seldom able to communicate in English within a broader social-economic context, develop the ability to communicate in English and synthesize and organize ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships in oral and written forms. Consequently, CHC's students' weaknesses are related to the oral production in the language (see fig. 59). Whereas SAMAGU's students according to their teacher perspective offer insights or positive attitude into the English speaking culture, understand the importance of English and are able to communicate in English in a broader context (see fig. 60). In this part, it is noticed that the results obtained from the part of teacher qualities, where students portray that CHC's teacher seldom communicates in English outside the classroom and offers students communicative tasks, are related to the skills perceived by the teachers in regards to the students. Although, the teacher is portraying an engaging methodology, the oral production in his classes is being underacted; in fact, other skills such as writing or reading are being more emphasized in class so the students mostly communicate in written form.



Fig. 59. CHC's teacher's perspective about eleventh graders' skills developed; Own elaboration, October 2014.

■ Never ■ Seldom ■ Fairly often ■ Regularly

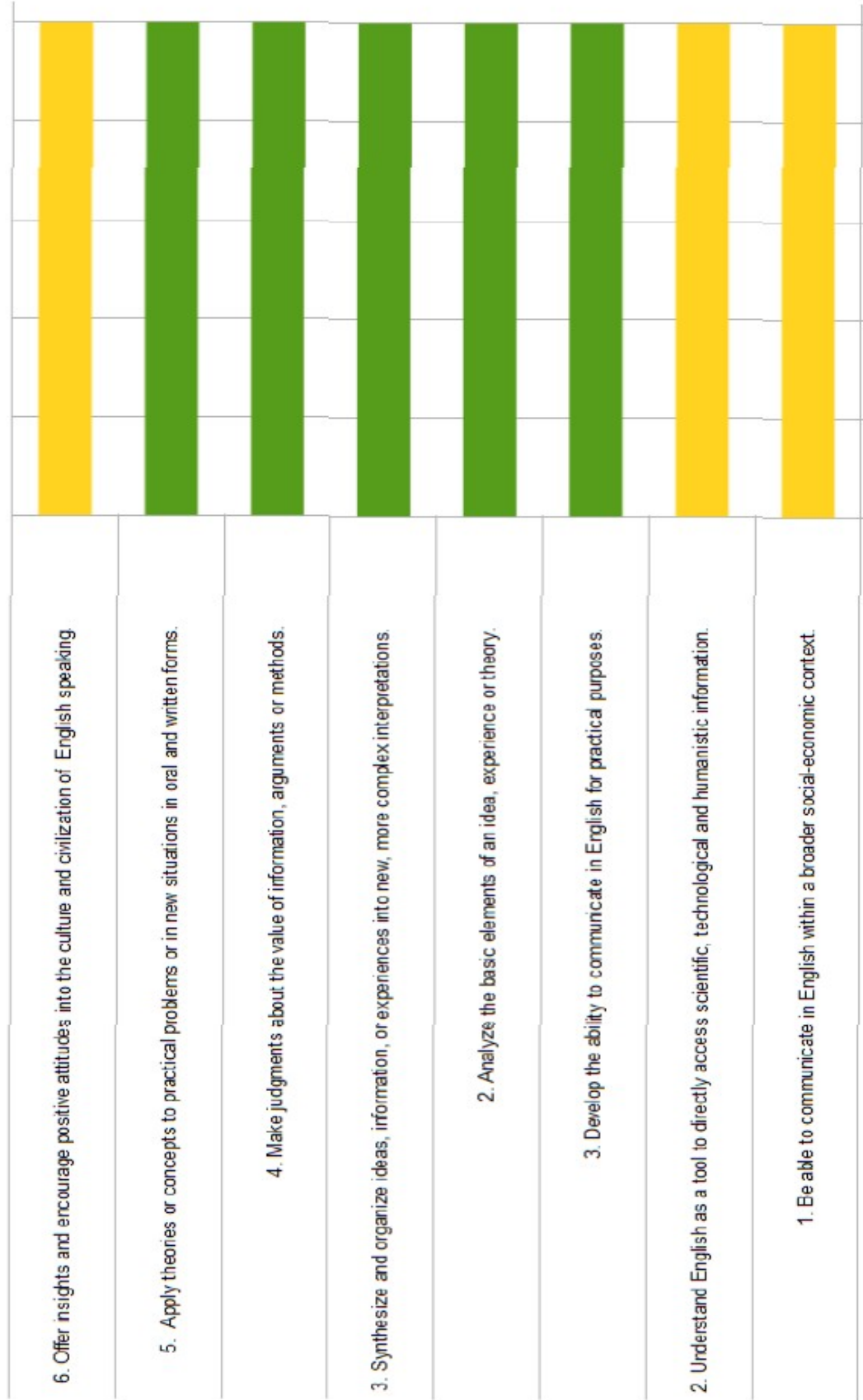


Fig. 60. SAMAGU's teacher's perspective about eleventh graders' skills developed; Own elaboration, October 2014.

As observed in fig. 59 and 60, teachers' point of view about the skills developed on eleventh graders lesson their oral performance in the language. In fact, the observations denote the same frequency their teachers grasp, eleventh graders are not producing orally as much as they can (see fig. 61 and 62). In CHC, students usually used English solely when solving exercises, answering direct questions asked by the teachers, and presenting orally. However, Spanish was used most of the time when working in groups or interacting with others, asking for permission and asking for clarification.

On the other hand, SAMAGU students could produce orally in more tasks such as solving exercises, answering questions, presenting orally and asking for permission. Besides, they mostly mixed Spanish and English when working in groups or interacting with others and asking for clarification. Indeed, questions like “Teacher, how can get this thing started, *es que no se prende* [it doesn't turn on]?” arise throughout the class.

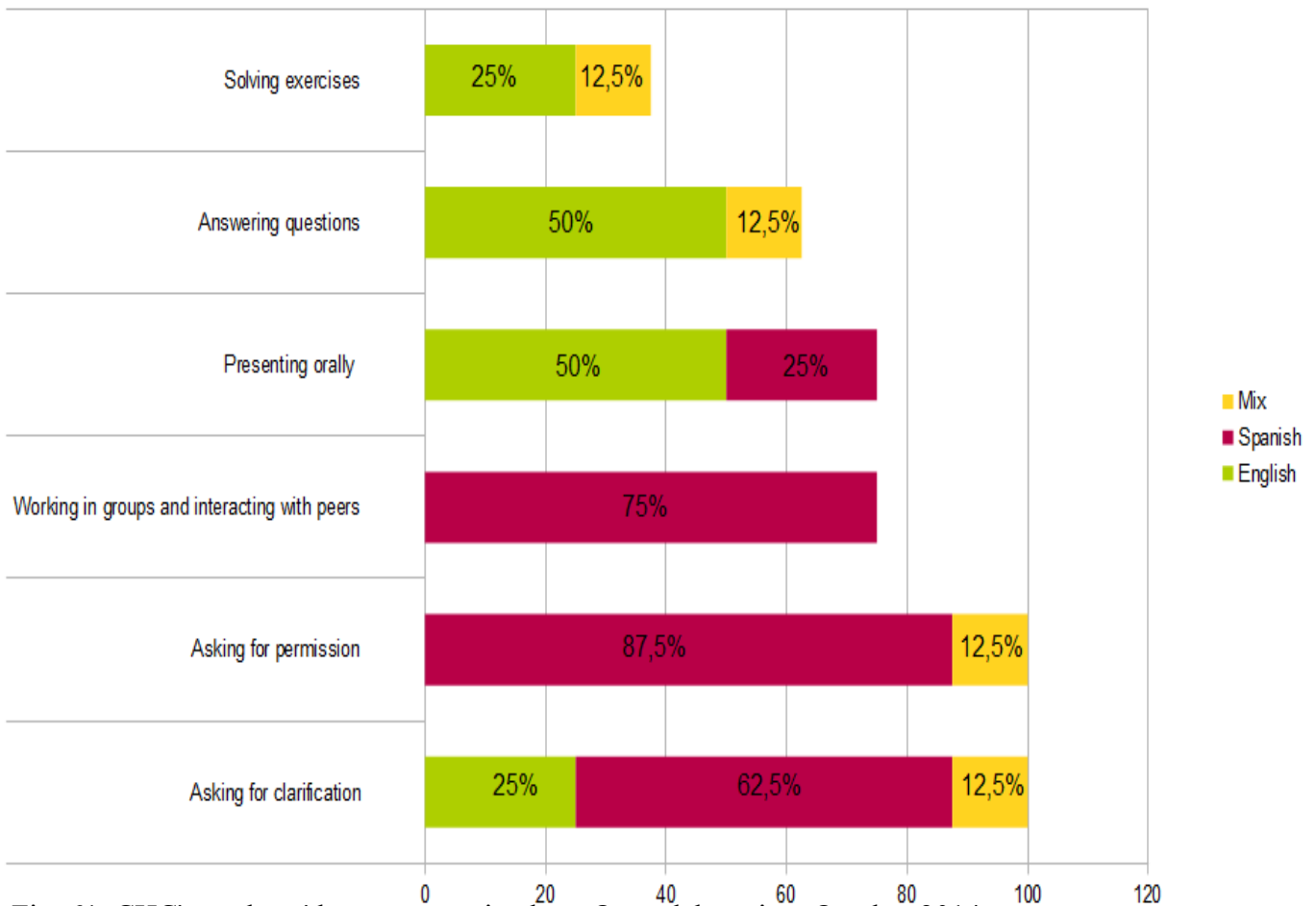


Fig. 61. CHC's students' language use in class; Own elaboration, October 2014.



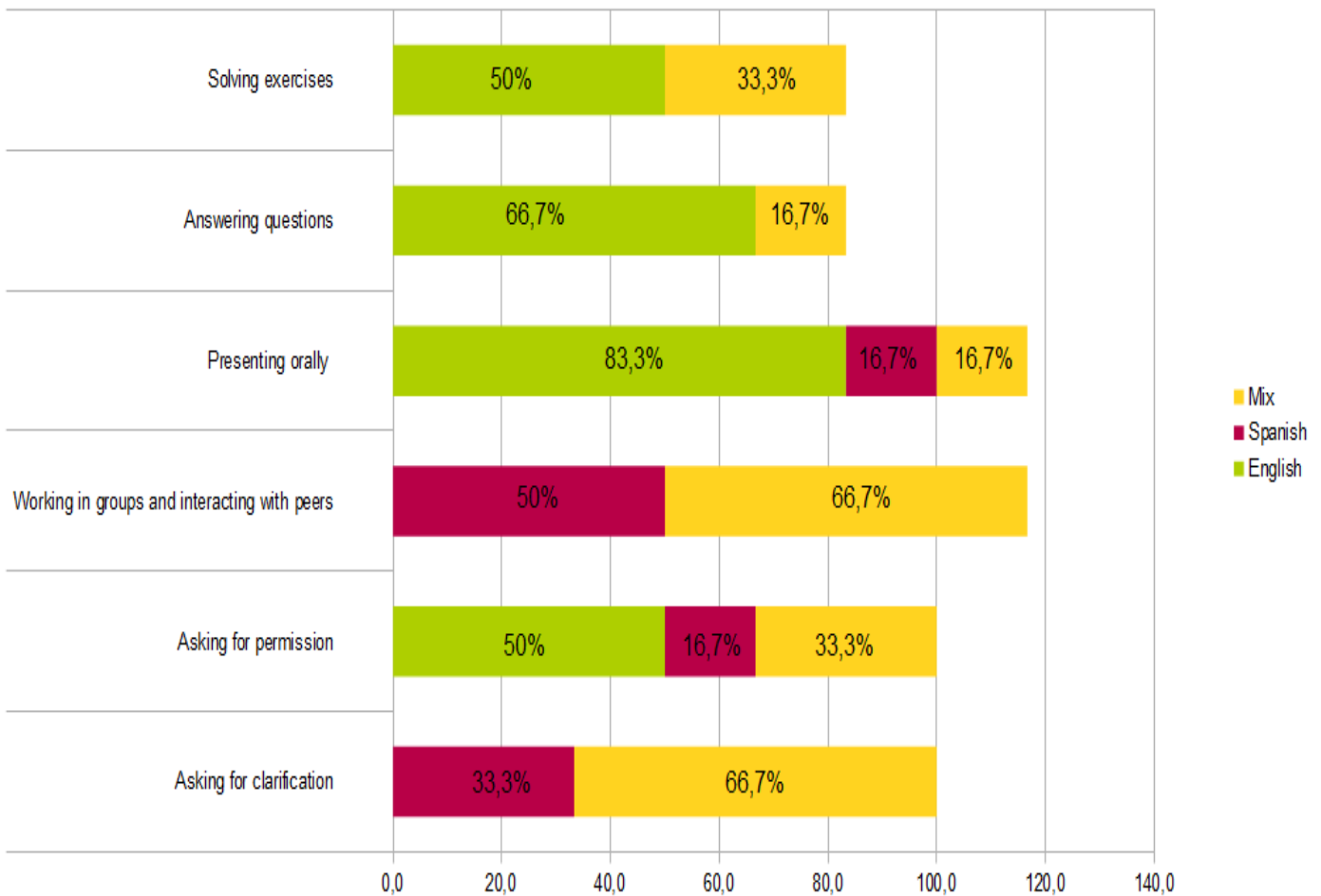


Fig. 62. SAMAGU's students' language use in class; Own elaboration, October 2014.

Furthermore, the teaching methods which are related to class participation, demonstration, recitation, or memorization depend largely on the teaching approaches (in this case communicative and constructivist). For that reason, the methods chosen affect largely the engagement promoted in class and so meaningful learning. Throughout the observations done in class, the researches could notice that the CHC's teacher used less variety of methods as the SAMAGU's teacher did. Nonetheless, both teachers' methods and activities were engaging to students (see fig. 63 and 64).

■ First Observation  
 ■ Second Observation  
 ■ Third Observation  
 ■ Fourth Observation  
■ Fifth Observation  
 ■ Sixth Observation  
 ■ Seventh Observation  
 ■ Eighth Observation

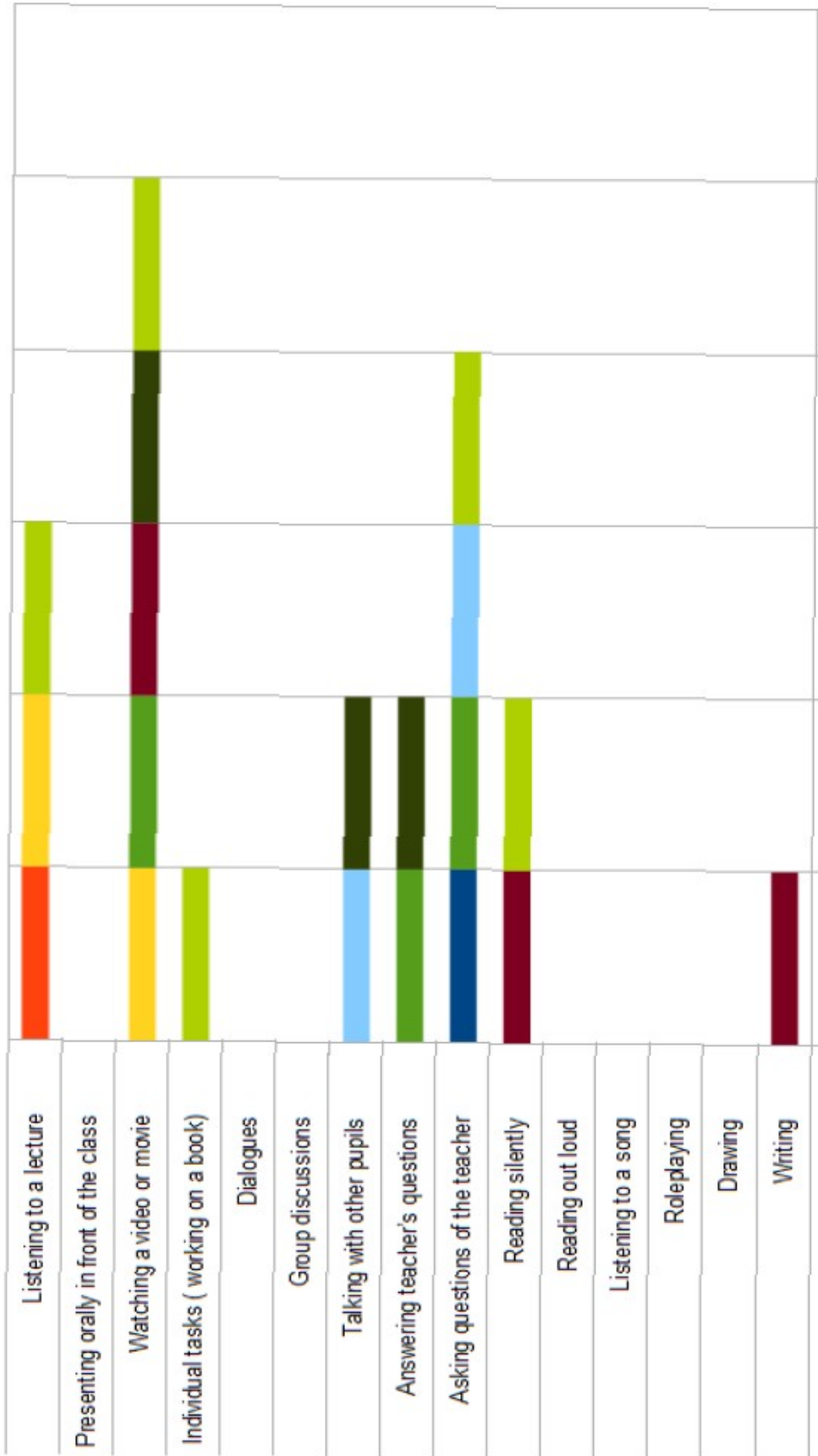


Fig. 63. CHC's activities/tasks used in each observation; Own elaboration, October 2014.

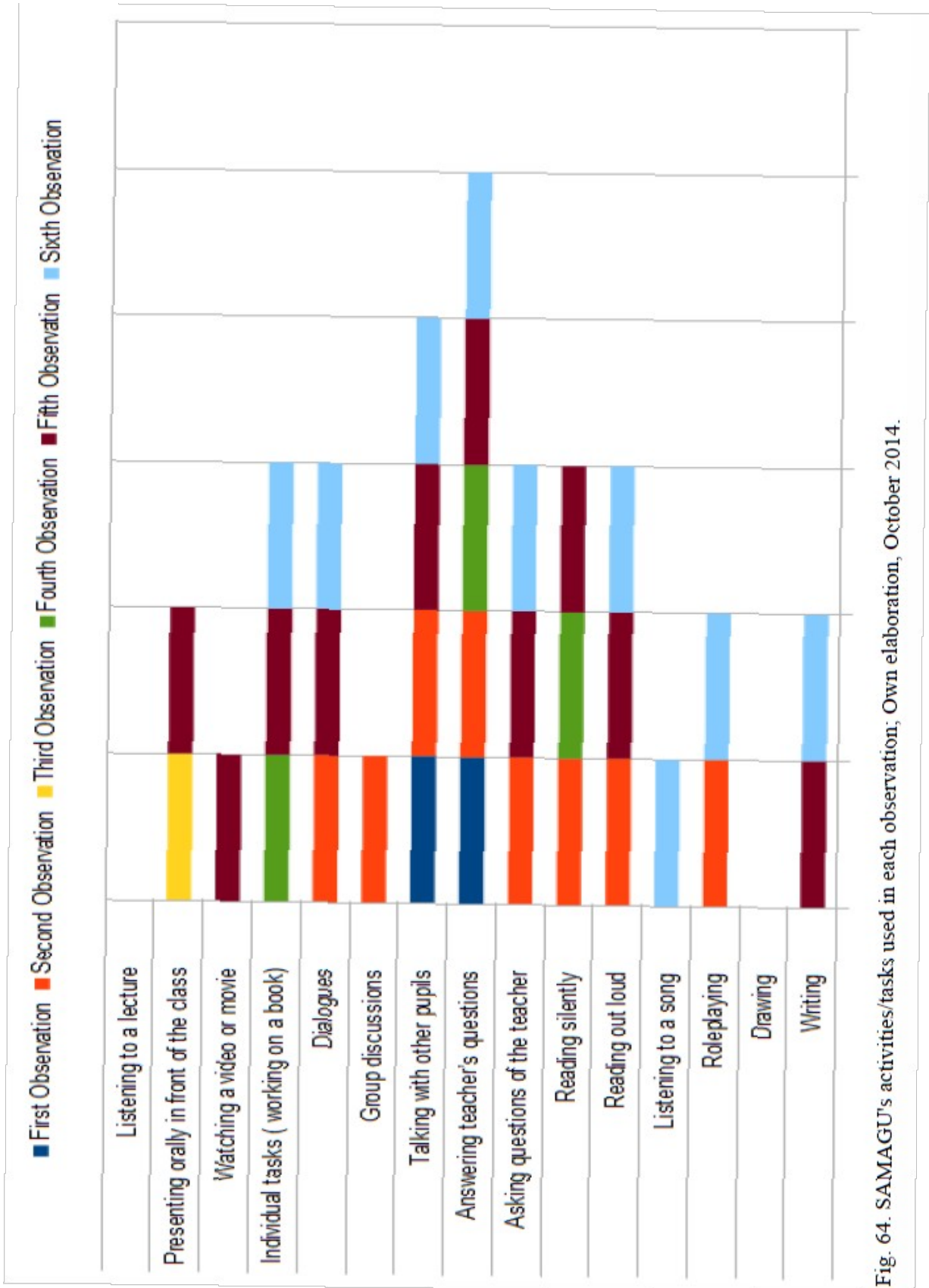


Fig. 64. SAMAGU's activities/tasks used in each observation; Own elaboration, October 2014.

In fact, when interviewed about how the teacher engages students in classes a student from CHC answered:

*Siento que en la misma forma de desarrollar las clases, no es como que él nos diga 'bueno, en inglés...', y sí porque es un amor que él tiene por la lengua y uno lo ha desarrollado, y a uno le gusta simplemente por la forma en que el la da, practica y da a conocer los temas.* [I feel that in the same way of developing the classes, it's not because he says we should be engaged; it's the love that he has for the language and that one has developed, and one likes it simply because of the way he teaches the classes, practices and presents the topics].

Likewise, students from SAMAGU affirm that they like the methods used in class, especially those that allow students to produce orally or practice listening in the language:

*[Me gustan] Las exposiciones y las presentaciones donde usted puede ver un tema ya sea libre o asignado hablar sobre el tema de la manera que usted quiera.* [I like the speeches or presentations where you can go over a topic whether it is free or about a specified topic that you can speak about]. (SAMAGU's student 1)

*Bueno, ver películas. No por vaga sino porque, bueno en mi caso, uno ve una palabra y con los subtítulos uno ve que es o como se dice y así, también la letra de la música y el vocabulario.* [Well, watching movies. Not because I am lazy, but because in my case, when one sees a word with the subtitles one catches how it is written and pronounced, as well as the music lyrics and the vocabulary]. (SAMAGU's student 2)

Shernoff et al claim in their study's result that students seem to be more engaged during individual work while listening to a lecture, watching TV or taking a test which contrasts what other authors have claimed that group interactive activities promote more engagement in students (172). Fascinatingly, in CHC and SAMAGU, we perceived both of the contexts discussed by Shernoff et al where some students like individual work as much as others like group work.

These activities observed could be compared to the students' opinion about the frequency of activities in classes (see fig. 65 and 66). As it is seen in figures 65 and 66, students' opinions are closely related to what was observed.

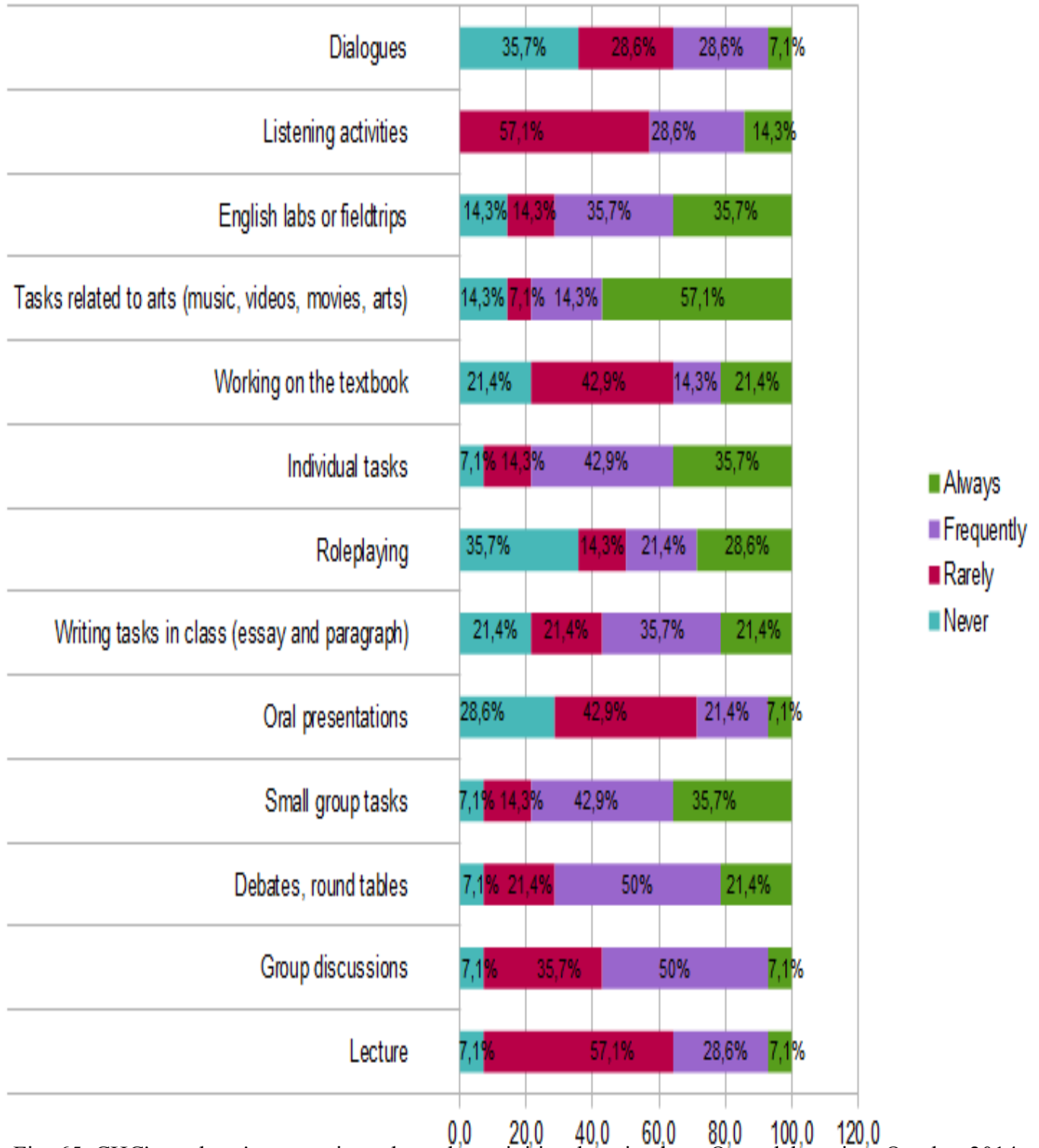


Fig. 65. CHC's students' perspectives about the activities done in class; Own elaboration, October 2014.

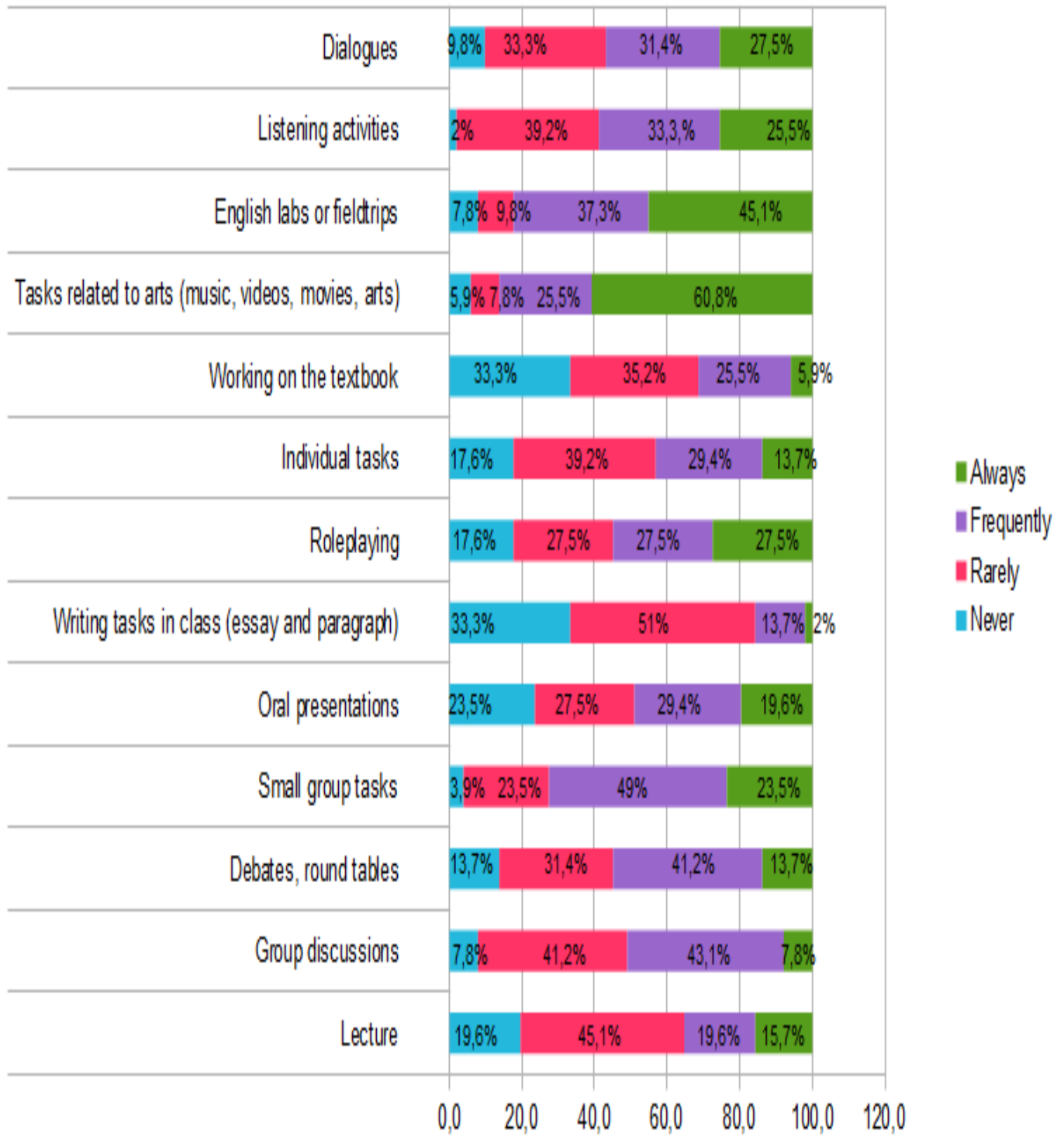


Fig. 66. SAMAGU's students' perspectives about the activities done in class; Own elaboration, October 2014.

In CHC, the most frequent activities done in class are those related to arts such as movies, music or fine arts; besides, the teacher frequently used group discussions and debates or round tables.

Interestingly, students perceived that the teacher rarely used lecturing in class which contrasts with the observed classes where he used lecturing in three of the eight observations done. As well as CHC, most of the SAMAGU's students perceived that the teacher always employs the usage of tasks related to arts; and frequently are engaged in tasks such as group discussions, debates, round tables and small group activities. Finally, most of them affirmed that they rarely do writing activities which is confirmed later on (see fig. 71).

Additionally, the teacher's opinion about usage of the different activities agrees with the students' perceptions and the observations (see fig. 67 and 68). CHC's teacher (see fig. 67), he always uses individual activities and explanations, he frequently or sometimes uses dialogues, talk shows, listening activities, role plays, in-class writing, oral presentations, small group activities, and discussions groups; but never does tasks related to fine arts or book work (given the fact that they do not use book for that course). Whereas, SAMAGU's (see fig. 68) teacher claims to use always all of the activities listed; except for tasks related to fine arts that she sometimes applies them and she never uses the laboratory (taken into account that SAMAGU does not have a language lab and the computer lab is not accessible for the English department).

In such sense, most of the activities done in class have the communicative and constructivist component, described by Nunan, by letting student to solve problems through social interaction, to discuss topics of interests through the exchange of information, to search for specific information for some given purpose, to listen or read information, and to give information in spoken or written form (67). By doing this, teachers boost engagement in classes and heighten students' achievements in the target language.

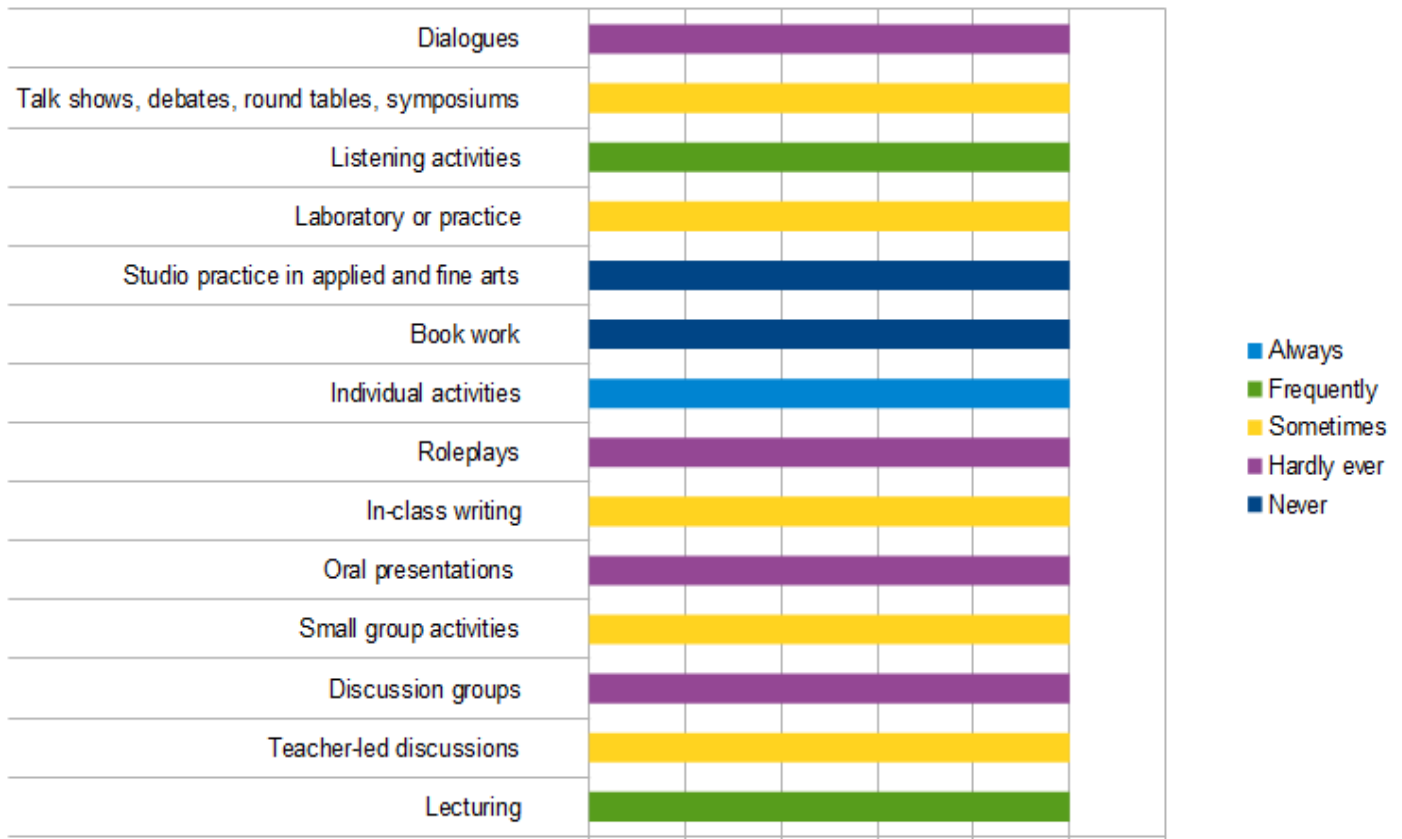


Fig. 67. CHC's teacher's perspectives about the activities done in class; October 2014.

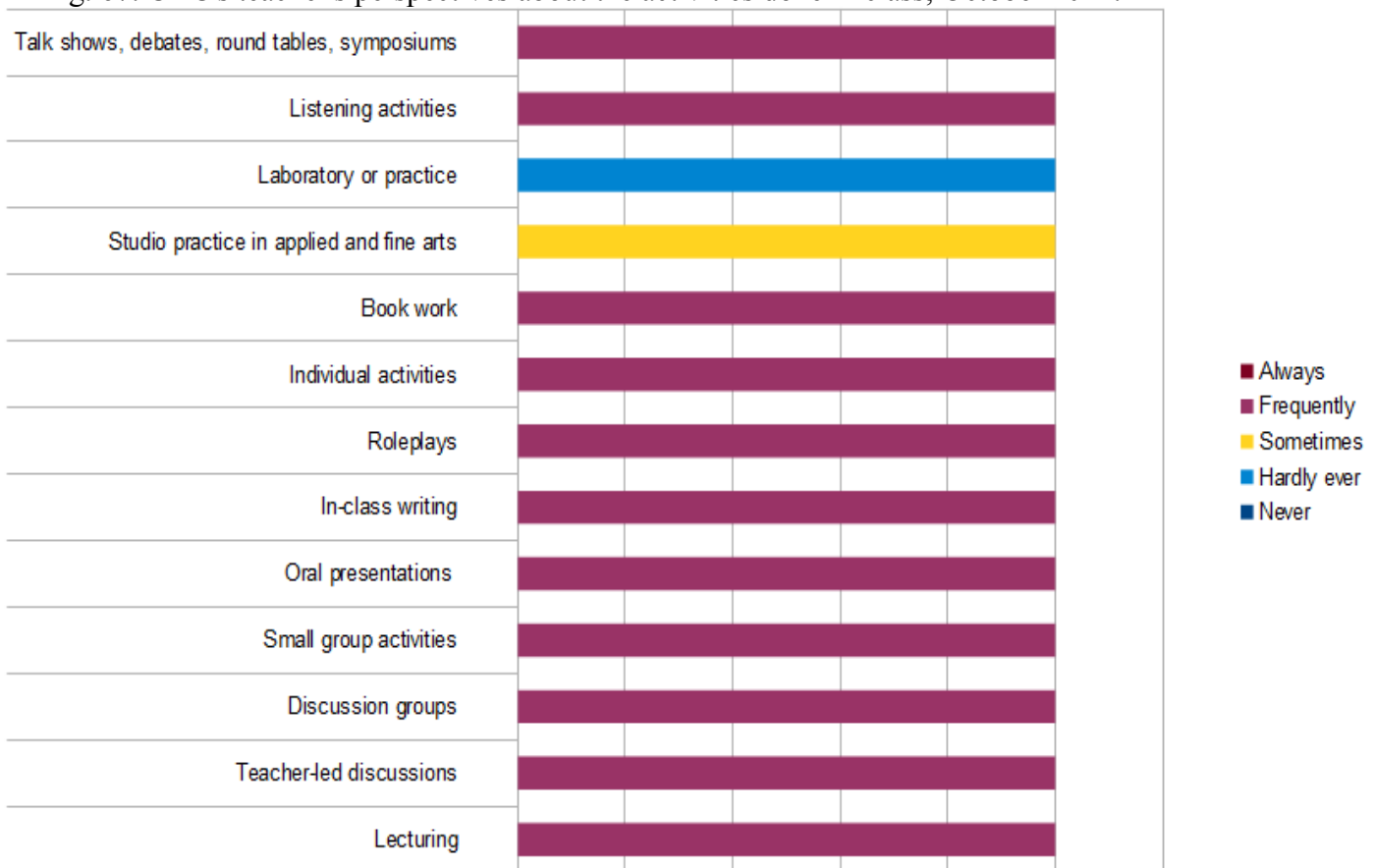


Fig. 68. SAMAGU's teacher's perspectives about the activities done in class; October 2014.



Furthermore, materials used in the foreign language classroom can affect students input in real-life situations, as well as, as their output. From the observation, it was seen that both teachers from CHC and SAMAGU prefer the usage of technology in their classes (see fig. 69 and 70) such as the video-beams, TV, DVD, computers, power point presentations, music, etc. However, SAMAGU's teacher used more diverse materials such as charts, reading materials, games, and textbooks.

According to Park the use of authentic instructional work challenges students and so enhances engagement (88). In such way, students agree with the usage of technology as to be the most influential form of promoting engagement in regards to pedagogical mediation. In fact, students from both CHC and SAMAGU answered about their preference in materials:

*El uso de la computadora.* [The usage of the computer] (CHC's student 1)

*Este año hemos visto varias películas, realmente creo que eso me gusta porque a la vez de que uno se divierte y se entretiene porque es una película, uno aprende porque uno está escuchando y se guía en inglés, tal vez con subtítulos en inglés entonces uno va viendo vocabulario. Siento que es una buena forma de aprender.* [This year, we have watched many movies, I really think I like that because while one has fun and entertains oneself because it is a movie, one can learn by listening; and it is like a guide to English, and maybe with the subtitles in English we can watch and learn vocabulary. I feel it is a good way to learn]. (CHC's student 2)

*Bueno este año no hemos utilizado mucho material pero el año pasado utilizamos un libro que traía los fonemas y eso es muy chiva porque es pronunciación y traen discos entonces nosotros buscábamos la pronunciación* [Well, this year we haven't used as much materials as last year where we used a book that had the phonemes and that's pretty cool because it is pronunciation, and it brought cds so we looked for the pronunciation]. (CHC's student 3)

*Los libros de lecturas en realidad.* [Reading books, actually].(SAMAGU's student 1)

*Películas. [Movies]. (SAMAGU's student 2)*

*Me gusta mucho el Reading Explorer, en realidad se aprende bastante y es súper interesante; y las películas o videos o a veces cuando la profe trae canciones. [I really like the Reading Explorer, actually you can learn a lot and it is very interesting and the movies or videos or sometimes when the teacher brings songs]. (SAMAGU's student 3)*

Finally, it was observed as well as confirmed with students that the materials used by the teachers in class, make classes more fun and interesting.

■ First Observation ■ Second Observation ■ Third Observation ■ Fourth Observation ■ Fifth Observation ■ Sixth Observation ■ Seventh Observation ■ Eighth Observation

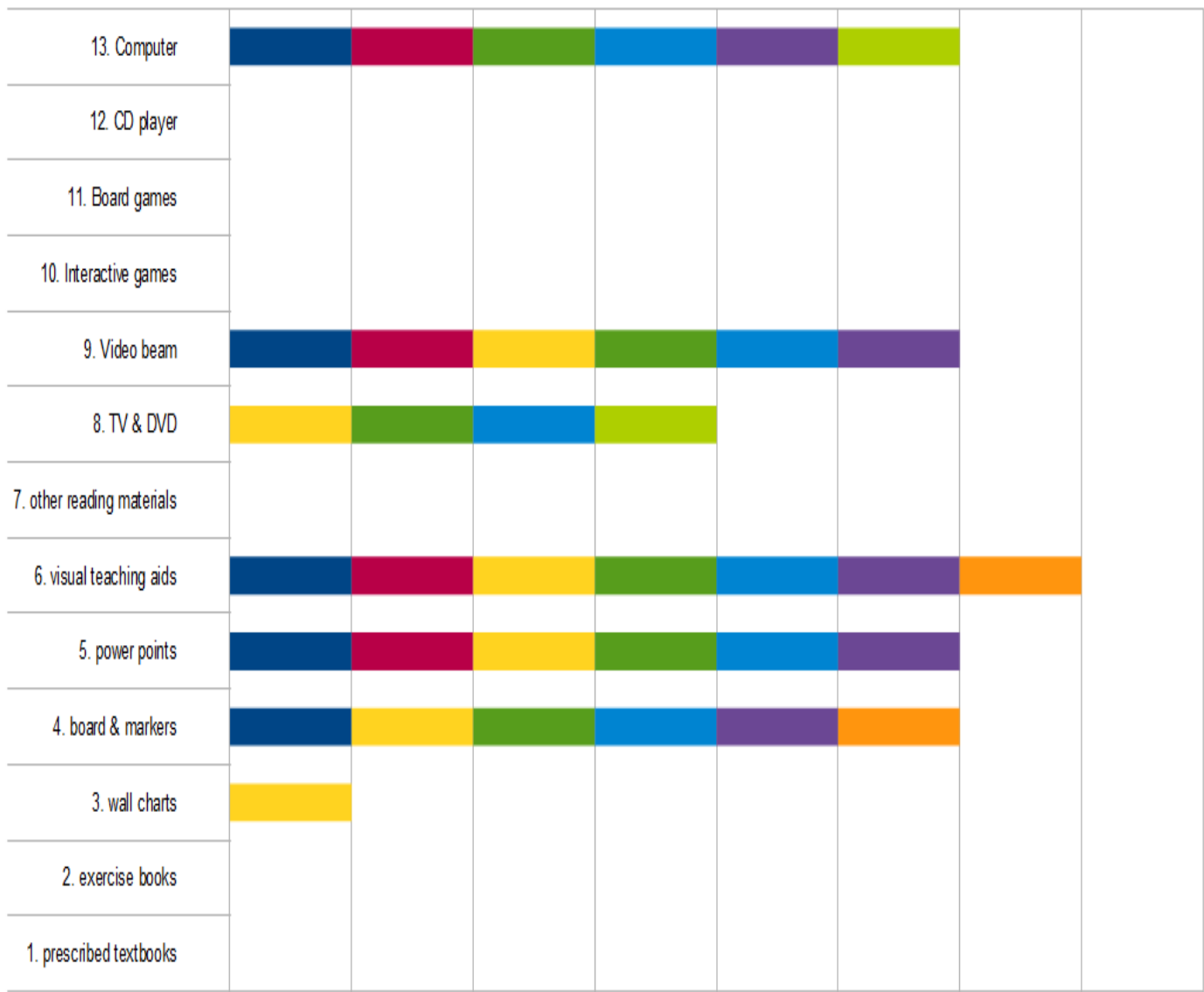


Fig. 69. Classroom resources used in each observation in CHC; Own elaboration, October 2014.

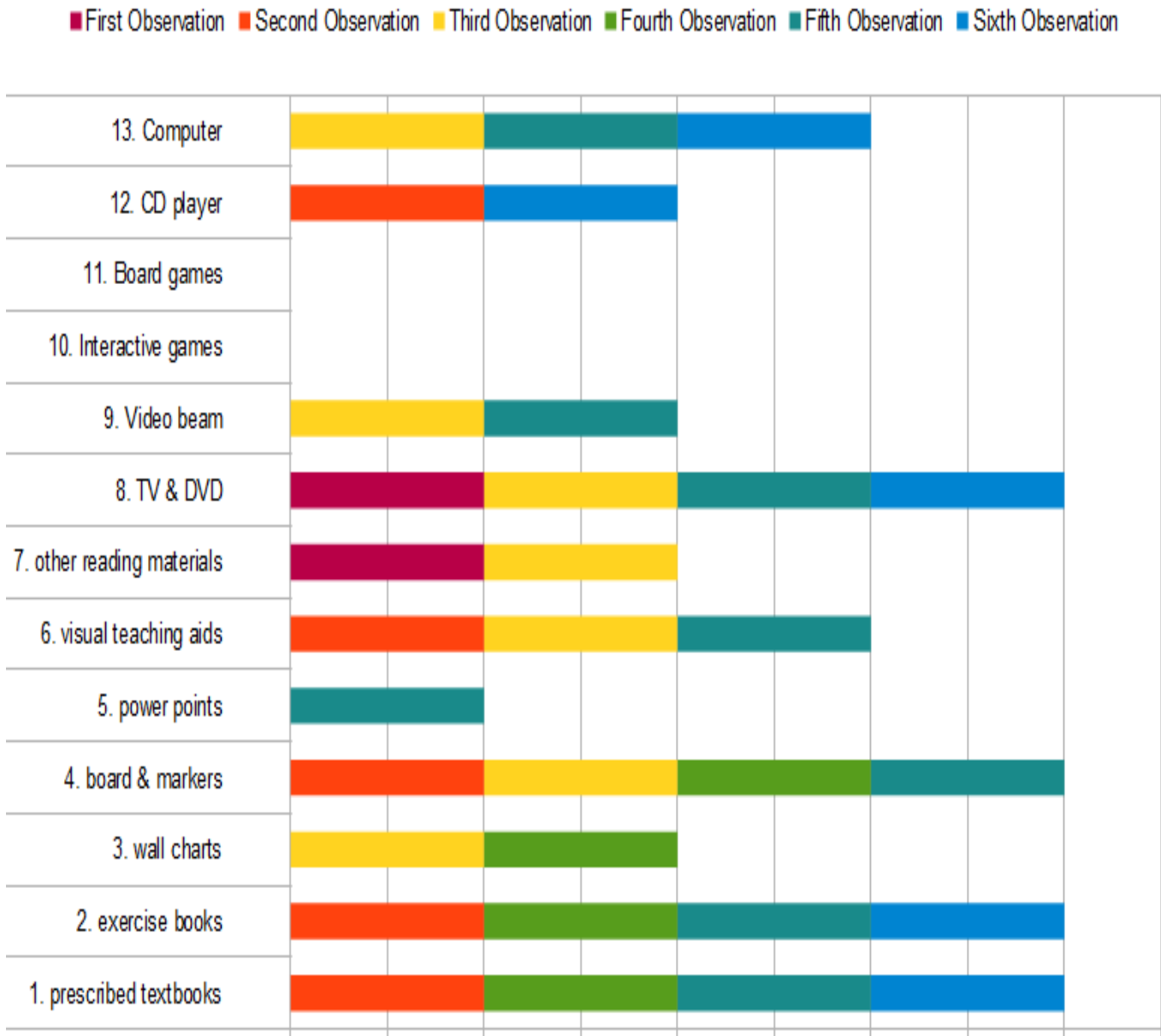


Fig. 70. Classroom resources used in each observation in SAMAGU; Own elaboration, October 2014.

Finally, assessment is a fundamental part of pedagogical mediation which has to be analyzed as well. In figures 71 and 72, it is observed the usage of assessment in the different skills used by the teachers in each observation in both institutions. As we could observe, CHC's teacher assesses reading and listening more often than speaking or writing (see fig. 71). While SAMAGU's teacher always assessed oral production, often reading and listening and never assessed writing (see fig. 72).

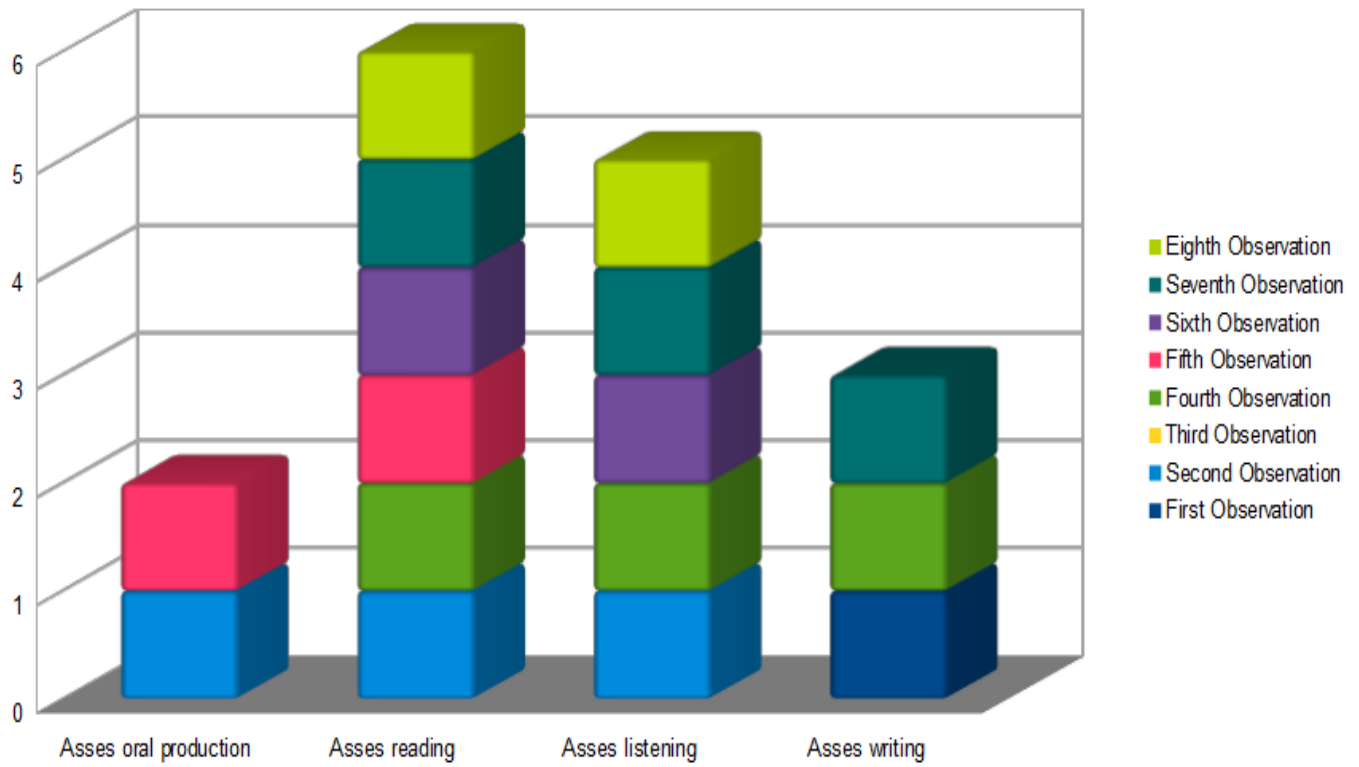


Fig. 71. Assessment done in each observation in CHC; Own elaboration, October 2014.

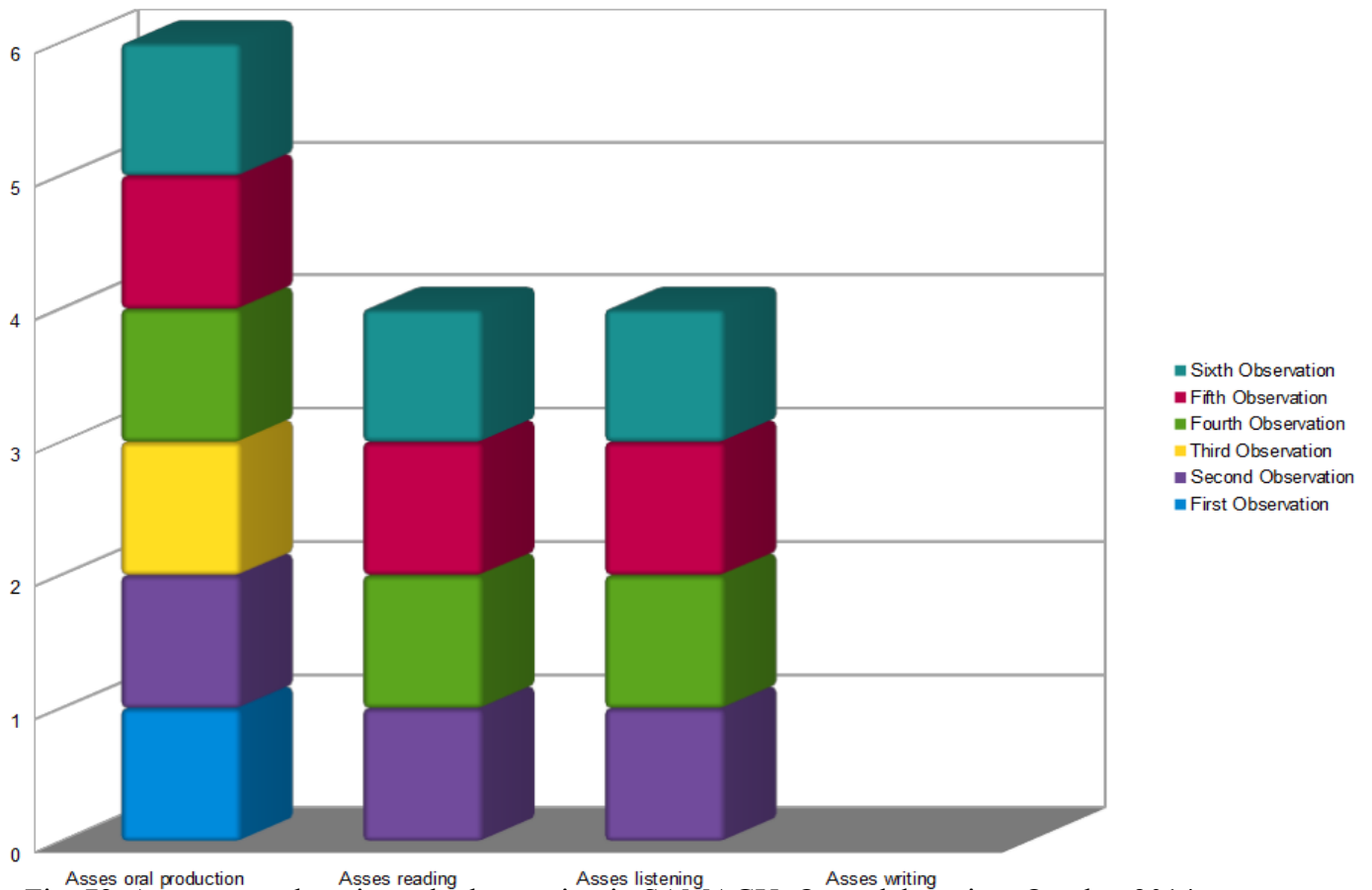


Fig. 72. Assessment done in each observation in SAMAGU; Own elaboration, October 2014.

In fact, CHC's teacher assesses reading by asking comprehension questions during class, by writing a reaction of what has been read and by asking students to read aloud individually; moreover, he assessed listening by doing an analysis of the movies or videos which serves along to assessed writing as well. On the other hand, SAMAGU's teacher assessed oral productions in oral presentations, role-playing dialogues, doing oral calls to students and answering direct questions; and reading and listening were assessed by completing the activities from the books or worksheets, and by asking students random questions to evaluate understanding.

## V. Conclusions

### 5.1. Engagement

Firstly, the observations denoted that there were more engaged students per class in each observation than disengaged students. In fact, the data collected from the observations, the teachers' surveys and the students' opinion showed that an engaged student always pays attention to the teacher, is attentive, focuses on the task being done, invests time to complete the task, demonstrates a positive attitude towards learning. Nonetheless, looking for teacher assistance and finding meaning in new knowledge is not a common characteristic shown by engaged students in both institutions.

People usually tend to related disengaged students with undisciplined students; however, that data collected from the observations showed that disengaged eleventh graders at CHC and SAMAGU were not undisciplined because they asked questions, they had positive attitudes and they even let others work but they showed no commitment to class by paying attention or participating. According to the students' perspectives, an external factor that could affect their engagement is the schedule the class is on; nevertheless, further research is needed.

Additionally, when questioned about engaging tasks in class, most of CHC's and SAMAGU's students agreed that tasks that involve careers/occupations-related activities are strictly necessary. Nonetheless, eleventh graders in CHC have a varied opinion on tasks that allow socializing with peers whereas the majority of SAMAGU's students consider them to be engaging. This situation can be related to the high school vision due to the fact that CHC promotes a university-like environment whereas SAMAGU's environment is more traditional.

Furthermore, the theory stated that an engaged student uses technology to communicate with the teacher; indeed, CHC's students, as affirmed by the teacher, always use technology to communicate with him. Whereas, SAMAGU's students never communicate with their professor using technology.

Nonetheless, SAMAGU's students portray levels of engagement when tutoring other students and working in projects with their peers. Additionally, students from both institutions agreed that tasks that promote international exchanges, use dynamic materials and have oral production boost their engagement.

Teachers and principals from both high schools agreed that activities that challenge students to learn (such as projects), have active learning practices (like dynamic and interactive tasks such as teaching pronunciation), have interaction with peers (in exchanges, role plays, etc), include enriching educational experiences (such as trips and exchanges), support learning and development, include hands-on forms of learning (by doing oral tests or presentations), develop higher-order thinking (when working on leveled English classes), develop general learning outcomes (by working on oral production), promote student retention, and enhance a feeling of overall satisfaction with the entire learning experience are important when boosting students' engagement.

Finally, it is concluded that engagement has a strict relation with meaningful learning and achievement. The statistic showed that both SAMAGU's and CHC's students have a good academic achievement over 70; none of the students researched had a grade below 59 and only a seven percent or less have a grade between 60 to 69. In such sense, the relation between academic achievement and engagement is related; nonetheless, further research is needed to see if the academic achievement is related to the communicative competence acquired.

## **5.2. School Curriculum**

Being school curriculum the second variable to be studied, the researchers conclude from this variable that many aspects related to the school's philosophy and the English syllabus from the two institutions being researched can contribute to enhance engagement in an EFL class. First of all, when working under a humanistic vision, one of the principles of this approach is that the environment of the

school must have indoor and outdoor settings that are engaging for students. At CHC and SAMAGU high schools, there are the necessary learning areas where the students can develop their interests, so that the education can be integrated and can motivate them to feel engaged with the institution they attend.

By having a humanistic philosophy, the institutions care about the well-being of their students and this was reflected in the data provided by all the participants of the study. A humanistic approach makes the students feel safe, comfortable, supported by their classmates or other students and the teachers as well. Since a humanistic vision in teaching deals with the whole person, it is essential that teachers and institutions staff do not separate the cognitive and the affective domains. Students from CHC and SAMAGU expressed that they feel the support of their teachers, classmates and even some adults working in the institutions, where they can create their own learning and be respected for their opinions. All these elements give more quality to the pedagogy being used which causes a positive impact and effect in the learning process, hence engagement.

Another conclusion is that students consider the services that the institutions provide are flexible and helpful, that the students who attend school tend to be friendly and supportive, that the teachers, who, according to the data gotten from the students' opinions, show accessibility and demonstrate that they help the students when they need it. Nevertheless, they have not found the same support and flexibility in the administrative staff. All of these aspects promote students' feeling of involvement and well-being in high school which according to the authors researched are two important aspects that a school's philosophy should have.

On the other hand, from the teachers' opinion, we can conclude that they agree with the fact that schools must provide students with the support they need to succeed and do activities that can contribute with the integrative education of the students. SAMAGU and CHC; for instance, develop different activities such as cultural activities, spiritual gatherings, field trips, artistic groups where students can develop their talents, can grow spiritually, can develop cultural identity, can bond with



their classmates, can practice a sport and at the same time promote the importance of the exercise for a healthy life. But besides, the institutions need the support of the teachers to encourage the pupils to attend these extracurricular activities and let them know that they are important for their well-being, for knowing, socializing and learning to respect people from different backgrounds and mainly, for their personal growth. The principals of the two institutions also agreed that all these activities have helped the students to feel engaged in the high schools and participate from the activities done all along the academic year. All the aspects mentioned above such as the academic life, social capacities and artistic or practical skills encompass the "whole person" stated in the humanistic philosophy; and according to the results gotten from the data, we can conclude that SAMAGU and CHC are providing all these necessary aspects to engage students in the humanistic education they provide.

In regards with the English syllabus, the researchers can conclude that the syllabus being used in the institutions with the eleventh graders is a tool for the professional growth of their pupils. The syllabus promotes among their students the use of technology as a learning tool and the necessary means for an optimal learning. Mainly eleventh grade students, teachers and principals, in both CHC and SAMAGU, agreed that the syllabus is providing a healthy environment where they can socialize in their English class. At the same time, students understand and acknowledge that the English classes are giving them all the necessary elements to have an optimal learning; nevertheless, they recognize that the motivation is both, extrinsic and intrinsic; that either, the society or the high school lets them know the importance of English for their future professional life.

### **5.3. Teachers' qualities**

From the variable: teachers' qualities, eleventh graders at CHC and SAMAGU high schools conclude that the academic preparation of the teachers is considered important for a good teaching praxis. The two teachers have a postgraduate diploma and they have attended several trainings that

have nurtured them with more knowledge of English teaching as a foreign language. Students have mentioned that the experience of their teachers have an effect in the way they teach the class; besides, the academic preparation and experience is perceived in the way the teachers convey knowledge, develop the classes, know what they teach and how to do it. Experienced teachers in this research have made students feel confident in the learning they are receiving from their instructors.

Related to teacher-student interaction, the researchers could determine through the observations and questionnaires that the two teachers being researched are considered helpful and accessible by the learners and that they have put into practice techniques to make them feel engaged in class: one of this being praising them. The teachers use with their eleventh graders compliments or rewards to praise them for the good job they do in class. Additionally, the principals of the institutions also consider that besides these techniques, the teachers can talk to the students or give good comments when they are succeeding in their everyday academic challenges.

Moreover, for engaging students, CHC's and SAMAGU's teachers use virtual tools, demonstrate a good command of the subject, a good level of English and communicate in the target language with the students by speaking and explaining in English during the whole lessons. Furthermore, the teachers handle discipline in the class and when having misbehaved students, the teachers use techniques such as reminding the class rules to their pupils instead of punishing them.

Finally, when analyzing class management the researchers conclude that by using different methods such as handling in a class agenda as it is the case of CHC or by keeping in track students tasks as in SAMAGU, teachers defined in their own way routines that students can follow to complete the goal which helped to boost engagement. Besides, the use of transitions helps the teacher to have engaged students and avoid class dispersion.

#### 5.4. Pedagogical Mediation

It is known that pedagogical mediation is closely related to promoting engagement, in this way the researchers concluded that both SAMAGU's students and CHC's students feel comfortable in the class with the setting; although CHC's decorations is more university-like while SAMAGU's decoration is filled with students projects and colorful quotes. Besides, students and teachers agreed that their class setting (CHC's students sitting around the class facing the screen/board and SAMAGU's students sitting in pairs) allow them to be engaged in class whether if it was by feeling free as is the case of CHC or by having the support of their peers as SAMAGU.

CHC's eleventh graders are not producing orally as much as they can according to both teacher's opinion about the skills developed and throughout the observations when English was solely used for solving exercises, answering direct questions asked by the teachers, and presenting orally. On the other hand, SAMAGU's students could produce orally in more tasks such as solving exercises, answering questions, presenting orally and asking for permission; while they used more mix of languages (Spanish and English) when working in groups, interacting with others and asking for clarification.

Such situations can be related to the methods chosen which affect largely the student engagement. The CHC's teacher used less variety of methods as the SAMAGU's teacher did; nonetheless, both teachers' methods and activities were engaging to students in relation to the different contexts. That is, CHC's students liked more the activities done in class such as lecturing and watching movies while SAMAGU's students like dynamic and interactive activities more such as oral presentations and role plays. Indeed both teachers are reflecting in their methods and activities the context where they teach.

Nowadays, the world advances and life spin around technology, so students are well-in-tune to technology and by including it in the classes, it really boosts engagement. CHC's students opinion and the observations carried on noticed that there was student engagement when the teacher used

technology such as video-beam and power points to explain topics and when they analyzed movies and videos which was often. As well as SAMAGU's students agreed to like technology in classes when the teacher plays videos, movies and music plus the reading book used in class, which is the Reading Explorer that is full of articles of National Geographic which according to them are interesting and entertaining.

Finally, CHC's teacher assessed less oral production which can be related to the amount of oral performance in classes; he focused on students written performance where students can be creative and portray their opinion, thus be engaged. Whereas, SAMAGU's teacher assessed more oral production which is reflected on the usage of English in class by the students; however, the written skill is left aside due to the amount of students she has which round up to 260 students.

To sum up, the main aspects that engaged students in class can be concise in Table 5, where the researches summarize the important aspects concluded for each variable.

Table 5

Variables and results

<b>Aspects</b>	<b>Results</b>
<i>Engagement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⤴ There were more engaged students in class than disengaged.</li> <li>⤴ Paying attention, completing the tasks and having a positive attitude are the most common aspects found in engaged students.</li> <li>⤴ Disengagement is not related with undisciplined</li> <li>⤴ Schedule can be a detriment aspect for engagement</li> <li>⤴ High academic achievement can be related to engagement</li> </ul>
<i>School philosophy</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⤴ Within the humanistic view of student personalization, both high schools provide the appropriate learning commodities to enhance engagement.</li> <li>⤴ SAMAGU and CHC promote cultural activities, spiritual</li> </ul>

	<p>gatherings, field trips, artistic groups to promote the principle of the 'whole person' of the humanistic approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⤴ According to well-being, students feel that they have the support of their teachers and classmates and they can be respected for their opinions.</li> <li>⤴ However, administrative staff does not show the same accessibility or flexibility.</li> </ul>
<i>English syllabus</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⤴ The syllabus being used in the institutions with the eleventh graders is a tool for the professional growth</li> <li>⤴ The syllabus promotes the use of technology and a healthy environment to socialize.</li> <li>⤴ Most of the times the objectives are clearly stated in the class.</li> </ul>
<i>Teaching experience</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⤴ Both teachers are academically prepared and trained to teach since it is reflected in their practice.</li> <li>⤴ Students acknowledge that experienced teachers enhance engagement in class.</li> </ul>
<i>Class management</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⤴ The teachers use techniques such as reminding the class rules to their pupils instead of punishing them.</li> <li>⤴ Routines used enhance engagement whether it was handing in a class agenda as it is the case of CHC or by keeping in track students tasks as in SAMAGU.</li> </ul>
<i>Teacher-student interaction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⤴ Both teachers are considered helpful and accessible by the pupils</li> <li>⤴ The teachers use compliments or rewards to praise students.</li> </ul>
<i>Class arrangement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⤴ Both types of class arrangement eases interaction flow by feeling free as is the case of CHC or by having the support of their peers as SAMAGU</li> <li>⤴ Both class decoration promotes focus in class although CHC's decorations is more university-like while SAMAGU's decoration is filled with students projects and colorful quotes.</li> </ul>
<i>Teaching approach</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⤴ CHC's eleventh graders are not producing orally as much as they can according to both teacher's opinion about the skills developed and throughout the observations.</li> <li>⤴ SAMAGU's students could produce orally in more tasks.</li> </ul>
<i>Teaching techniques or activities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⤴ The CHC's teacher used less variety of methods as the SAMAGU's teacher did; nonetheless, both teachers' methods and activities enhance class participation and</li> </ul>

	<p>combine demonstration, recitation, memorization.</p> <p>⤴ CHC's students liked more lecturing and watching movies while SAMAGU's students like dynamic and interactive activities.</p>
<i>Teaching materials</i>	<p>⤴ Use of technology helps the teacher to engage students in class.</p> <p>⤴ SAMAGU's resources Reading Explorer is seem as interesting and entertaining</p>
<i>Assessment</i>	<p>⤴ Assessment is closely related to students' performance: CHC's teacher assessed less oral production and more written performance whereas, SAMAGU's teacher assessed more oral production and no written performance.</p>

Source: Own elaboration; October 2014

### **5.5. Coaching Proposal**

In this sense, the following coaching proposal presents the reader and the CHC's and SAMAGU's teachers a set of pedagogical techniques encompassed in the constructivist and humanistic approach in order to boost students' engagement in EFL classes.



**Universidad Nacional**  
**Facultad de Filosofía y Letras**  
**Escuela de Letras y Ciencias del Lenguaje**  
**Sistema de Posgrados**  
**Master on Second Languages and Cultures**



**Facilitators: B.A. Cynthia A. Miranda Chacón**

**Lic. Natalia M. Murillo Pereira**

**Duration: 40 hours**

**Proposal for enhancing EFL class engagement through a humanist and constructivist approach**

The following coaching proposal is an innovative didactic project supported in the theories of engagement, humanism and constructivism encompassed in the EFL teaching-learning process. The main goal of this proposal is to provide the participants (EFL teachers) with a dynamic workshop where they can be trained in including the principles of the humanistic and constructivist approaches in an engaging pedagogical mediation.

This workshop pretends for the participants to create and share with their partners: plans, tasks, activities and materials that enhance student engagement in English; at the end, they should be able to determine and apply engaging principles in their daily planing. The principles of the following workshop are based on the results gotten from the investigation “How the Learning Environment in EFL Classes Can Improve the Learning Process by Enhancing Student Engagement of Eleventh Graders at Colegio Santa María De Guadalupe and Colegio Humanístico Costarricense: A Qualitative and Quantitative Study” carried out by the facilitators of the course.

This workshop is designed to be developed in eight sessions, one session for week in order to accomplish a step-by-step procedure where the participants will develop different projects each directed to a big goal, which is an engaging pedagogy. In such case, each week is focused on an specific principle related with the humanistic and constructivist approaches such as students' involvement, students' well-being, respect of opinions and feelings, hands-on learning, creation of own knowledge, use of meaningful activities and authentic materials.

## **II. Proposal Objectives**

### 2.1. General Objective

- △ To provide pedagogical techniques that help teachers enhance classroom engagement and make learning meaningful throughout a constructivist and humanistic pedagogical workshop for high school English teachers.

### 2.2. Specific Objectives

- To apply the principle of student well-being in the learning process in order to boost engagement.
- To demonstrate the effectiveness of student involvement in the learning process in order to raise engagement.
- To promote the respect of student's opinions and feelings among the tasks or activities carried out in class to enhance engagement.
- To encourage social relations among students in the activities or tasks carried out in class to engage students.
- To apply the principle of hands-on learning in the activities carried out in class to heighten student's engagement.
- To promote activities or tasks where students are able to create their own knowledge in order to acquire meaningful learning.
- To create meaningful tasks where students can replicate them in natural and real-world environments to enhance engagement.
- To develop authentic materials that can be meaningful for students' learning.

## **III. Constructs**

- 3.1. Humanistic approach
- 3.2. Constructivist approach
- 3.3. Engagement
- 3.4. Student involvement
- 3.5. Student well-being
- 3.6. Respect of opinions and feelings
- 3.7. Social relations



- 3.8. Hands-on learning
- 3.9. Create own knowledge
- 3.10. Meaningful activities
- 3.11. Authentic materials

#### IV. Evaluation

Assessment Criteria	%
2 Forum	20 %
1 Collaborative activity	10 %
3 Applied tasks	30 %
2 Lessons plans	40 %
TOTAL	100%

#### V. Chronogram

Session	Objective	Content	Activity	Assessment Instrument
Week 1: 5 hours	To apply the principle of student well-being in the learning process in order to boost engagement.	Introductions Course program Introduction to the principles of humanistic and constructivist approach and student well-being	Introductory Forum	First Forum 10%
Week 2: 5 hours	To demonstrate the principle of student involvement in the learning process in order to raise engagement.	Student involvement	Applied task	First applied task 10%
Week 3 and 4: 10 hours	To promote the respect of student's opinions and feelings among the tasks or activities carried out in class to enhance engagement.	Respect of students' opinions and feelings.	Lesson plan	First lesson plan 20%

	To encourage social relations among students in the activities or tasks carried out in class to engage students.	Social relations		
Week 5: 5 hours	To apply the principle of hands-on learning in the activities carried out in class to heighten student's engagement	Hands-on learning	Applied task	Second applied task 10%
Week 6: 5 hours	To promote activities or tasks where students are able to create their own knowledge in order to acquire meaningful learning.	Create own knowledge	Lesson plan	Second lesson plan 20%
Week 7: 5 hours	To create meaningful tasks where students can replicate them in natural and real-world environments to enhance engagement	Meaningful tasks	Collaborative task	Collaborative task 10%
Week 8: 5 hours	To develop authentic materials that can be meaningful for students' learning.	Authentic materials	End-of-course forum	Second forum 10%

## VI. Tasks Descriptions

### Week 1

Task: Introductory Forum 10%

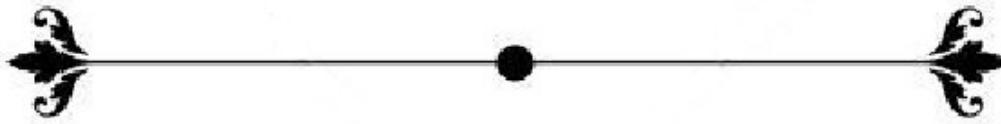
Objective: To apply the principle of student well-being in the learning process in order to boost engagement.

Time: 5 hours

Description:

1. The facilitator is going to introduce the program and the chronogram.
2. The participants are given the principles of humanistic and constructivist approach and the aspects of student well-being to promote engagement to analyze.
3. The participants are going to be divided in six subgroups, each group will be in charge of a topic (humanistic, constructivism or student well-being) and discuss the aspects that can enhance engagement in their high school.

4. Finally, the groups are going to be joined in two big groups and they are going to share the aspects discussed with the whole group.
5. At the end, the participants are going to create a pedagogical proposal that includes the three aspects in EFL teaching-learning process.



### **Week 2**

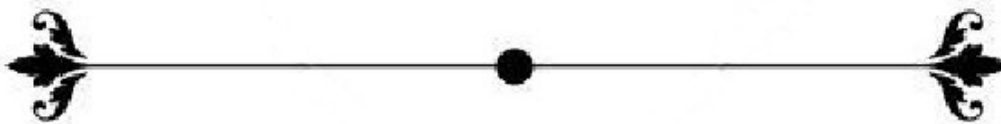
Task: Applied task 10%

Objective: To demonstrate the principle of student student involvement in the learning process in order to raise engagement.

Time: 5 hours

Description:

1. The participants are given the aspects encompass in student involvement to promote engagement.
2. Each participant is going to plan an extracurricular activity related to the English learning (i.e. English day, spelling bee, thanksgiving celebration, etc).
3. At the end, they will share orally their creations.



### **Week 3 and Week 4**

Task: Lesson plan 20%

Objectives:

To promote the respect of student's opinions and feelings among the tasks or activities carried out in class to enhance engagement.

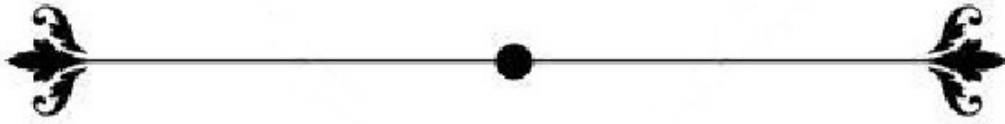
To encourage social relations among students in the activities or tasks carried out in class to engage students.

Time: 10 hours

Description:

1. The participants are going to create a lesson plan where the activities carried in class respect students' opinions and encourage social relations in pairs.
2. Each pair is going to co-teach the lesson plan created the previous week.

3. Each lesson plan should include: objective, content, time, activity, assessment. The participants can choose between a task-based or practice presentation production plan. It should be a skills-integrated plan.



**Week 5**

Task: Applied task 10%

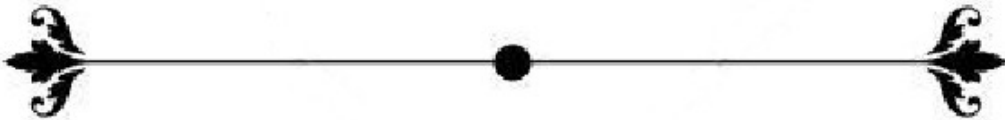
Objectives:

To apply the principle of hands-on learning in the activities carried out in class to heighten student's engagement.

Time: 5 hours

Description:

1. The participants are going to be divided in trios.
2. Each trio will be given a topic and a hands-on learning task to be carried out.
3. At the end, they will reflect on the tasks they carried out in relation to their students possible reactions.



**Week 6**

Task: Lesson plan 20%

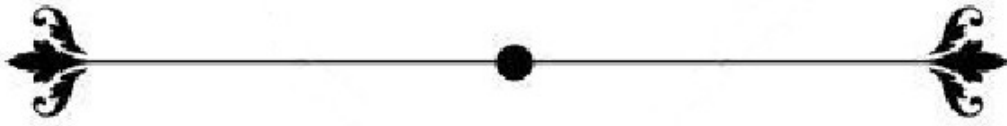
Objectives:

To create meaningful tasks where students can replicate them in natural and real-world environments to enhance engagement.

Time: 5 hours

Description:

1. The participants are going to create a lesson plan where students are able to create their own knowledge by producing in the language whether orally or written (i.e. debates, round table, discussions, reactions, etc.) and applied it in their classes.
2. The next session the participants will discuss their results.
3. Each lesson plan should include: objective, content, time, activity, assessment. The participants can choose between a task-based or practice presentation production plan. It should be a skills-integrated plan.



**Week 7**

Task: Collaborative task 20%

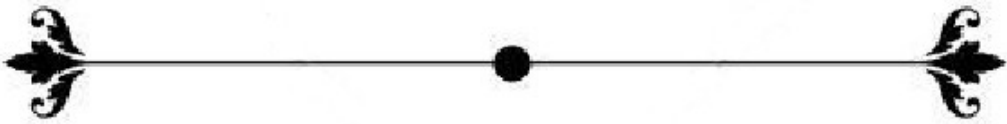
Objectives:

To promote activities or tasks where students are able to create their own knowledge in order to acquire meaningful learning.

Time: 5 hours

Description:

1. The participants are going to choose a topic and create 'real-world' situations for their students to solve them.
2. Then, the participants are going to peer assess their partners to give appropriate feedback.



**Week 8**

Task: End-of-course forum 20%

Objectives:

To develop authentic materials that can be meaningful for students' learning.

Time: 5 hours

Description:

1. The participants are going to choose a topic and they are going to bring materials in order to create authentic materials related to the topic.
2. Then, the participants are going to peer assess their partners to give appropriate feedback.

The course is approved with a grade above 70.

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## **VI. Recommendations**

### **6.1. For high schools**

Although, it is implied in their vision and mission, both CHC and SAMAGU should consider the humanistic approach in all the aspects of the learning process, even in the administrative staff's accessibility and flexibility. Likewise, the rules and policies of the high schools should be discussed in a collaborative manner with students at the beginning of the year, in order for them to know what the school is looking for in them and what they can expect from the school.

Besides, it is important that high schools provide a safe environment where students can feel well-being and involvement. In such a way, high schools should promote among the staff in general the support needed for the student to succeed in the learning process. Moreover, they should involve students in an integral education where they can develop their skills, have career-related tasks, field trips, and promote international exchange programs as part as the improvement of the English syllabus and the cultural experiences in the language.

### **6.2. For teachers**

A teacher is an important part of the learning process, but that it is a two-way process where students and teachers interact should not be forgotten. For that reason, teachers should respect students' opinion when interacting with them in every part of the process. Besides, the usage of meaningful resources that are updated can be reflected in students' engagement in class, especially the inclusion of technology that can make students show positive attitudes towards the language which is why teachers should include those resources in their planning.

Moreover, student can show engagement whenever the teacher recognizes students' advances in

the language, so they should include praise as a tool that boosts engagement, hence meaningful learning. Furthermore, tasks/activities where students can socialize should be included in the teaching practice as it is a powerful feature that enhances engagement in class and towards the subject. Finally, it is necessary for the teachers to know the context and the audience they are teaching in order to identify their preferences, likes and dislikes due to the fact of the different opinion students have in regards to engaging tasks.

### **6.3. For future researchers**

It is important to take into account that this study shows the results given in relation to three variables involved in the learning environment; it would be recommendable to research about engagement in relation to other variables such as students' background, the affective filter, students' perceptions of the language and more. Indeed, this study was carried on two institutions with specific characteristics such as SAMAGU and CHC, future researchers could carry this research on different urban public academic, rural public academic, technical, or private institutions in order to better understand that aspects needed for an engaged pedagogy in different contexts.

Besides, it may be interesting to measure the level students get after they complete their studies according to the CEFR in order to deeper analyze how engagement can enhance English learning and the communicative competence.



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## VIII. Appendixes

### Appendix 1. Common European Framework of References

#### Common European Framework of References (CEFR)

##### Levels: global scale

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

Source: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Cambridge University Press: Strassbourh. [www.uk.cambridge.org/elt](http://www.uk.cambridge.org/elt)

Appendix 2. Vision and Mission CHC

**Colegio Humanístico Costarricense**

**Nuestra Misión**

Ofrecer un modelo educativo de carácter humanista, comprometido con el desarrollo del talento y la apropiación de valores que promuevan el pensamiento analítico, reflexivo, propositivo, ético y trascendente.

**Nuestra Visión**

Convertirse en la academia humanista comprometida con la formación de personas asertivas, conocedoras de su entorno y promotoras de cambio como respuesta a los retos y particularidades del contexto nacional e internacional.

Appendix 3. Vision and Mission SAMAGU



**Colegio Santa María de Guadalupe**

**Visión:**

Una comunidad Educativa Católica que se distinga por ofrecer un servicio de excelencia en la búsqueda de la formación integral de personas competitivas y capaces de enfrentar los constantes desafíos para servir a la sociedad.

**Misión:**

Organizar una comunidad educativa fraterna, consciente y comprometida con el Evangelio, la filosofía y los objetivos institucionales; que proporcione:

1. Las herramientas necesarias para lograr el desarrollo integral de los educandos de manera que sean capaces de enfrentar los retos de la vida diaria en un mundo globalizado.
2. Una actitud de compromiso, amor y respeto hacia la institución.
3. Una educación sin fines de lucro acorde con los más altos niveles de calidad educativa.

## Appendix 4. Promotion in the national English test from the MEP in 2013 SAMAGU

Informe institucional de Bachillerato de la Educación Formal - año: 2013

Institución: COLEGIO SANTA MARIA DE GUADALUPE

Código: 1101331

Dirección Regional de: HEREDIA

**Inglés**  
**Rendimiento institucional, regional y nacional por objetivos generales**  
**Modalidad: ACADEMICO DIURNO**

Objetivos Generales	Promedios		
	Institucional	Regional	Nacional
Understanding and identifying concepts, general and specific facts, ideas and issues about sports, athletes' achievements, biographies and other related topics.	91.43	82.64	77.76
Applying information from different types of written sources about art expressions (acting, painting, dance, music and others) in Costa Rica and worldwide.	90.05	80.79	76.24
Identifying details, main ideas, opinions and points of view in familiar material: Costa Rican typical food, daily meals, cuisine in English, and others.	93.97	87.35	76.96
Recognizing specific and general information about food preparation: ingredients, procedures, kitchenware, appliances, and similar elements of this topic.	97.49	93.15	89.38
Inferring specific details, main ideas, opinions and points of view related to table manners, Costa Rican eating habits, courtesy, etiquette, table setting, etc.	87.96	82.59	74.96
Identifying concepts, general and specific facts, ideas and issues related to holidays, festivities, celebrations, traditions, customs and others.	89.74	80.37	71.40
Analyzing written information through inferences, deductions, and descriptions of issues related to natural resources, disasters, preservation, deforestation, etc.	80.74	72.84	66.65
Analyzing specific details, main ideas, opinions and points of view about advantages and disadvantages of tourist attractions, facilities, accommodations, etc.	85.80	80.82	75.32
Analyzing concepts, facts, ideas and issues related to symptoms, diagnosis, treatments, medications to cure and release illnesses and diseases.	80.42	69.36	63.44
Analyzing concepts, general and specific facts, ideas and issues about democracy: traditions, rights and obligations, political systems, the voting process, etc.	81.16	67.13	64.60

Appendix 5. Observation Instrument 1, non-structured.



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**Escuela de Letras y Ciencias del Lenguaje**  
**Sistema de Posgrados**  
**Master on Second Languages and Cultures**  
**Observation Instrument #1**  
**(Structured Observation)**



Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Level \_\_\_\_\_ High School: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:**

*This form; adapted from Ray Chesterfield Classroom Observation Tools, ACER Student Engagement Questionnaire and from Student Engagement: Teacher Handbook; provides 10 areas for observation. Each area includes prompts regarding what should be observed.*

**Purpose:** The data gathered in this observation will be used in the master's dissertation project of the observer(s). Its main purpose is to analyze the factors of the learning environment that promote engagement in an English class; especially at the eleventh graders of the institution. We thank for the time and all the information that can be provided on this instrument.

*Note:* All the data collected will be used anonymously and confidentially by the observers and researchers of the project.

**Part I. Engagement.** Look at the entire class. Write what the majority of students are doing when they seem engaged in learning activities (A). Write what the minority of students are doing when they seem disengaged (B). Write the number of students engaged in the activity and briefly describe that activity in the cell.

	<b>Description of task / behavior</b>	<b># of Students in task / behavior</b>
<b>GROUP A: Engaged students</b>		
Task 1:		
Task 2:		
Task 3:		
Task 4:		
Task 5:		

Task 6:		
Task 7:		
<b>GROUP B: Disengaged students</b>		
Task 1:		
Task 2:		
Task 3:		
Task 4:		
Task 5:		
Task 6:		

Part II. Classification of activities . Review what you write in the observation made on part I. Classify the activities or tasks in which most of the students were engaged in the cell A. Then, write the activities in which most of the students seem disengaged in the cell B.

<b>A: Engaging Activities</b>	<b>B. Disengaging Activities</b>

Name and signature of the teacher in charge of the class: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the observer : \_\_\_\_\_



Appendix 6. Observation 2, structured.



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**Observation Instrument #2**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Level \_\_\_\_\_ High School: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:**

*This form; designed under the theoretical principles of authors such as Trowler, Park, Stefani, Schlechty and Goldspink, Winter and Foster about engagement, intends to recognize the components of engagement among the students observed and being researched.*

**Purpose:** The data gathered in this observation will be used in the master's dissertation project of the observer(s). Its main purpose is to analyze the factors of the learning environment that promote engagement in an English class; especially at the eleventh graders of the institution. We thank for the time and all the information that can be provided on this instrument.

*Note:* All the data collected will be used anonymously and confidentially by the observers and researchers of the project

**Part I. Engagement.** Look at the entire class. Choose randomly one student that seems engaged in the class and check  the components you can identify.

Components to identify an engaged student.

- \_\_\_\_\_ The student invests the time of the class on doing the task or activity assigned by the teacher in an active way
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student shows effort to complete the task properly
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student uses the resources available to complete the task
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student looks for additional resources to enrich their learning and complete the task
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student pays attention to the teacher explanations and examples
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student shows interest in learning what is being studied
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student participates actively in the learning process without being called or asked
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student shows a positive attitude towards the subject
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student shows interest on learning what is being studied
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student understands that the new knowledge acquired is helpful for their present and future life
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student looks for the teacher assistance to be guided or corrected in the task
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student is attentive and focuses on what is being done
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student is committed to the task and learning
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student is persistent even when difficulties in the task arise
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student finds meaning and value towards the new knowledge
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student makes an effort to complete the task in time and correctly
- \_\_\_\_\_ The student shows a display of energy when doing the tasks.

Additional comments:

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Name and signature of the teacher in charge of the class: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the observer : \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 7. Observation Instrument 3, structured.



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**Observation Instrument #3**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Level \_\_\_\_\_ High School: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:**

*This form; designed under the theoretical principles of authors such as Trowler, Park, Stefani, Schlechty and Goldspink, Winter and Foster about engagement, intends to recognize the components of engagement among the students observed and being researched.*

**Purpose:** The data gathered in this observation will be used in the master's dissertation project of the observer(s). Its main purpose is to analyze the factors of the learning environment that promote engagement in an English class; especially at the eleventh graders of the institution. We thank for the time and all the information that can be provided on this instrument.

*Note:* All the data collected will be used anonymously and confidentially by the observers and researchers of the project

**Part I. Engagement.** Check(✓) the chosen option.

1. Which behaviors do students engaged in class present?

<b>They...</b>	
are attentive	
pay attention	
participate	
are committed	
ask questions	
do the tasks	
have a positive attitude	
Other	

2. Which behaviors do students disengaged in class present?

<b>They don't...</b>	
pay attention	
participate	
show commitment	
ask questions	
do the tasks	
let other students work	
have a positive attitude	
Other	

**Part II. School's Curriculum.**

**1. General Information.** Check  in front of each aspect that the high school has:

- \_\_\_ A clean classroom
- \_\_\_ Tables and chairs n each room
- \_\_\_ A place for teenagers to hang out in the break
- \_\_\_ Green areas for teenagers
- \_\_\_ Clean areas

- A gym or exercising areas
  - Clean bathrooms
  - Colorful decorations on the classroom walls
  - Library with books and other resources
  - Educational materials
  - Learning areas
  - A lunchroom or a cafeteria
  - Multimedia resources (TV, DVD, Video-beam, etc)
  - Are enough classroom for all the groups
  - Computer labs
  - Others \_\_\_\_\_
- 

2. General Information. Provide the information required.

Total student body population: \_\_\_\_\_

Males \_\_\_\_\_ Females \_\_\_\_\_

Students per class: \_\_\_\_\_

Total of classrooms: \_\_\_\_\_

A. Which other type of classrooms exist besides the normal ones?

- a. Conference room \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Library \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Multimedia room \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Language Lab \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Computer Lab \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Science lab \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Arts room \_\_\_\_\_
- h. Music room \_\_\_\_\_
- g. Kitchen \_\_\_\_\_
- i. Carpentry room \_\_\_\_\_
- j. Individual study rooms \_\_\_\_\_
- k. Group study rooms \_\_\_\_\_

**Part III. Teachers' Qualities.** Check in front of each aspect accordingly with the question.

1. How does the teacher discipline the students (tick all that apply)?

- 1. No discipline observed
- 2. Yells at the student
- 3. Punishes the student: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Quietly reminds the misbehaving student of the rules
- 5. Separates the misbehaving student from other students
- 6. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Comment:

2. How does the teacher praise the students (tick all that apply)?

- 1. No praise observed
- 2. Compliments the student
- 3. Hugs/touches the student
- 4. Gives the student a reward (more food, sweets, etc.)
- 5. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Comment:

3. Language Usage: Check  if what the teacher says is in English, in Spanish, or in a mix of Spanish and English?

Teacher:	English	Spanish	Mix
A. During all English class	_____	_____	_____
B. During instructions of tasks	_____	_____	_____
C. During individual conversation with students	_____	_____	_____
D. During grammar/subject explanations	_____	_____	_____
E. Praising students	_____	_____	_____
F. Punishing students	_____	_____	_____
G. Dynamic activities	_____	_____	_____
H. Other: _____	_____	_____	_____

4. Teacher-Student Interaction:

- 1. Teacher calls on boys and girls equally
- 2. Teacher calls mainly on girls
- 3. Teacher calls mainly on boys
- 4. Teacher provides praise to all students
- 5. Teacher provides praise mainly to girls
- 6. Teacher provides praise mainly to boys
- 7. Teacher involves all students

**Part IV. Pedagogical Mediation**

1. Check the instructional methods the teacher uses (at least 10 min. of lesson)

- Lecture
- Having pupils work in groups
- Writing notes/drawing diagrams
- Marking books/papers at her/his desk
- Marking books/papers at pupils' desks
- Roleplaying, debating, presenting orally in front of the class.
- Working with individual pupils
- Answering pupil's questions
- Group recitation
- Question and answer
- Other, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What are the pupils doing? Please tick pupil activities which include:

- Writing
- Drawing
- Roleplaying
- Listening to a song
- Reading out loud
- Reading silently
- Asking questions of the teacher
- Answering teacher's questions
- Talking with other pupils
- Group discussions
- Dialogues
- Individual tasks ( working on a book)
- Watching a video or movie
- Presenting orally in front of the class
- Other, please list: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Check (✓) if what the students say is in English, in Spanish, or in a mix of Spanish and English.

While...	English	Spanish	Mix
Asking for clarification			
Asking for permission			
Working in groups and interacting with peers			
Presenting orally			
Answering questions			
Solving exercises			
Other			

4. Classroom Resources. Write V=visible but not used , U=used in this lesson, N=not visible but available or A=not available for each of the following materials:

1. prescribed textbooks \_\_\_\_\_
2. exercise books \_\_\_\_\_
3. wall charts \_\_\_\_\_
4. board & markers \_\_\_\_\_
5. power points \_\_\_\_\_
6. visual teaching aids \_\_\_\_\_
7. other reading materials \_\_\_\_\_
8. TV & DVD \_\_\_\_\_
9. Video beam \_\_\_\_\_
10. Interactive games \_\_\_\_\_
11. Board games \_\_\_\_\_
12. CD player \_\_\_\_\_
13. Computer \_\_\_\_\_

5. Describe any printed material visible to pupils in the classroom. What is on the walls? What is on the board?

6. Are there any other visual aids or pictures (calendar, clock, etc.)? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ What?

7. Describe any changes that occur during the time that you are in the school. (Does the teacher add posters or change what is on the chalkboard?)

8. What strategies did the teacher use to assess oral language? (check all that apply)

- Called on individual pupils to repeat phrase/word/sound
- Choral response with signal to repeat phrase/word/sound
- Called on individual pupils to give brief (e.g., yes/no) response
- Choral response to give brief (e.g., yes/no) response
- Called on individual pupils to give free expression response
- None
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9. What strategies did the teacher use to assess reading? (check all that apply)

- Ask students to read aloud individually
- Choral reading on signal
- Ask comprehension questions
- None
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

10. What strategies did the teacher use to assess listening? (check all that apply)

- Ask students to assess understanding
- Ask students for pronunciation of words
- Ask questions to specific students about specific ideas
- Give students a written activity
- None
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

11. What strategies did the teacher use to assess writing? (check all that apply)

Ask students to write a paragraph or essay


Ask students to provide peer feedback

Ask students to do creative writing

None

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. On this page draw a map of the classroom. Locate: posters, blackboards, schedules, etc., and draw the position of each desk. Mark the location of each student by assigning each a number and indicating the teenager's gender: (F) for feminine and (M) for masculine.



Name and signature of the teacher in charge of the class: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the observer: \_\_\_\_\_



Appendix 8. Teachers' interview guide.



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**Teacher Interview Guide**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ High School: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

In this interview we intend to get your impression about class engagement based on your own experience and daily situations. The information gathered will be completely helpful for our final project of the master program. We thank you for your time and information provided.

**Note:** All the data collected will be used anonymously and confidentially only by the observers and researchers of the project.

1. In which aspects does the school's philosophy enhance eleventh grader's engagement?
2. How does the highschool curriculum engages students in the English class in your opinion?
3. In which aspect is the English syllabus related to student's needs?
4. Which do you think are the most engaging contents of the English syllabus for eleventh graders' students?
5. How do you enhance teacher-student interaction in classes?
6. How do you engage eleventh grader's students in the class?
7. How much time do you give students from one to another activity (transitions)?
8. Which teaching methods do you use to enhance class participation?
9. Which materials do you use to enhance class participation?
10. In which activities are the communicative approach principles being applied?
11. How do you manage discipline in class?
12. How do you praise students?
13. Which are the main classroom rules that your students should follow?
14. How do you prefer to arrange the classroom?

## Appendix 9. Students' interview guide.



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## Guía de Entrevista a Estudiante

Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_ Colegio: \_\_\_\_\_

Entrevistador: \_\_\_\_\_

Entrevista a: \_\_\_\_\_ Hombre \_\_\_\_\_ Mujer

La siguiente entrevista pretende recolectar su percepción sobre la motivación en la clase de inglés basado en su experiencia y en sus situaciones diarias, por lo tanto es una guía, el entrevistador puede añadir preguntas que el crea necesarias. La información aquí recolectada será de mucha ayuda para nuestro trabajo final. Le agradecemos el tiempo brindado y la información dada.

**Nota:** Toda la información aquí recolectada será tratada de forma anónima y confidencial por los investigadores del proyecto final de graduación.

### a. La clase de Inglés

1. ¿Qué es lo que más le gusta de la clase de Inglés?
2. ¿Cómo describiría usted la clase de Inglés?
3. ¿Cómo percibe usted a su profesor(a) de inglés a la hora de enseñar?
4. ¿Consideraría usted que la experiencia que su profesor(a) tiene como docente influye en la manera de explicar y en las actividades que se ejecutan en clase?
5. ¿Promueve su profesor(a) de inglés la disciplina en el aula?
6. ¿Como los motiva su profesor(a) durante la clase?
7. ¿Cómo da instrucciones su profesor de inglés a la hora de asignar ejercicios?
8. ¿Cuáles son las reglas de la clase de inglés?
9. ¿Cómo describiría los tipos de acomodo de clase que frecuentemente se utilizan en la clase de ingles? ¿Cuál es su preferida?
10. ¿Cuáles actividades son las que más le atraen en inglés (e.g. Escucha, lectura, etc)?
11. ¿Cuáles materiales de los que se usan en clase de inglés le atraen más?
12. ¿Cambiaría algún aspecto de la clase de inglés?

### b. El Colegio

1. Cómo promueve el colegio su visión humanista?
2. Cómo promueve el colegio la educación integral del estudiante?
3. Que tipo de actividades extracurriculares realizadas por el colegio le gustan más? Cuáles de estas actividades contribuyen más en su formación integral?
4. ¿Cómo considera usted que influye el colegio en su motivación de aprender inglés?
- 5.Cuál es su opinión del colegio en general? (infraestructura, cuerpo docente, recursos, pedagogía y malla curricular)

Appendix 10. Students' questionnaire.



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Encuesta al Estudiante: Cuestionario

Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_ Colegio: \_\_\_\_\_

El siguiente cuestionario pretende recolectar su percepción sobre la motivación en la clase de inglés basado en su experiencia y en su situaciones diarias. La información aquí recolectada será de mucha ayuda para nuestro trabajo final. Le agradecemos el tiempo brindado y la información dada.

**Nota:** Esta encuesta es una adaptación de los siguientes instrumentos Ray Chesterfield Classroom Observation Tools, ACER Staff Student Engagement Questionnaire y de Student Engagement: Teacher Handbook. De acuerdo con el objetivo propuesto por las investigadoras, este instrumento provee de 5 áreas de análisis, cada área incluye determinadas instrucciones a seguir.

**Nota II:** Toda la información aquí recolectada será tratada de forma anónima y confidencial por los investigadores del proyecto final de graduación.

**Parte I. Información general.**

1. Género  Femenino  Masculino  
 2. Años cumplidos  15  16  17  18 o más

**Parte II. Motivación.** Marque con una X la respuesta que mas represente su opinión.

1. ¿Qué tan importante son los siguientes aspectos para usted?

	Del todo no es importante	No es muy importante	Casi importante	Bastante importante
1. El desarrollo de ambientes que lo reten a estudiar.				
2. El desarrollo de prácticas dinámicas en el aula.				
3. Interactuar con sus compañeros(as).				
4. Participar en experiencias educativas enriquecedoras como giras, excursiones, etc.				
5. Tener ambientes que apoyan el aprendizaje como aulas, biblioteca, laboratorios, etc.				
6. Participar en formas de aprendizaje relacionadas con su carrera o profesión a seguir.				
7. El tener resultados prácticos en el aprendizaje.				
8. Promover la retención de contenidos.				

2. ¿Cuales serían los mejores aspectos que la institución puede ofrecer para incrementar la motivación hacia el inglés?

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**Parte II. Filosofía colegial.**

1. Indique su opinión hacia las siguientes afirmaciones marcando con una X la casilla que represente su respuesta.

	No	A veces	Si
a. En general, me siento bien en este colegio.			
b. Le siento estima a este colegio.			
c. Me siento seguro en este colegio.			
d. Mis opiniones son respetadas en este colegio.			
e. Hay por lo menos un adulto en el colegio que me conoce bien.			
f. Siento que los profesores me apoyan.			
g. Siento que el personal administrativo me apoya.			
h. Siento que mis compañeros me apoyan.			
i. Puedo ser creativo en proyectos y tareas			
j. Me siento cómodo siendo yo mismo en el colegio.			
k. El reglamento del colegio es justo.			
l. El reglamento del colegio es aplicado constantemente por profesores o administrativos			
m. Si pudiera escoger un colegio en este momento, escogería este colegio.			

2. En general, ¿con cuánta frecuencia la institución cumple los siguientes aspectos en relación con el programa de inglés? Marque con una X

	Nunca	A veces	Frecuentemente	Siempre
Proveer a los estudiantes de las herramientas necesarias para un aprendizaje óptimo (ej: equipo, laboratorio de idiomas, recursos en el idioma, etc.)				
Alentar la interacción de los estudiantes con estudiantes de intercambio, charlistas o hablantes nativos del idioma.				
Ayudar a los estudiantes a balancear responsabilidades no académicas como trabajo o familia.				
Proveer a estudiantes de ambientes sanos para la socialización como actividades extracurriculares (festivales, bailes, etc)				
Alentar a los estudiantes en el uso de la tecnología como herramienta educativa ya sea con computadoras o tecnología móvil.				
Dar la importancia necesaria al programa de inglés como idioma clave en el crecimiento profesional en la actualidad.				

3. Marque con una X la casilla que represente su opinión.

Como estudiante de undécimo año usted piensa que...

	muy en desacuerdo	en desacuerdo	de acuerdo	muy de acuerdo
2. ... <b>los profesores son</b> “accesibles, simpáticos y les gusta ayudar”?				

3. ... <b>otros estudiantes son</b> “amigables y muestran su apoyo”?				
4. ... <b>el personal administrativo es</b> “flexible, considerado, y ofrece su ayuda”?				
5. ... los <b>servicios que ofrece la institución son</b> “flexibles, considerados, y de ayuda”?				
6. ... el <b>personal de ayuda a estudiantes</b> (ej. Comedor, biblioteca, conserjes, etc) es “accesible, amigable y simpático”?				

4. ¿Alguna vez, usted ha considerado transferirse a otro colegio?

Nunca (Siga con la pregunta 4)  En alguna ocasión

3.1. ¿Por qué ha considerado transferirse a otro colegio?

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**Parte III. Cualidades del Profesor**

1. Indique su opinión marcando con una X hacia las afirmaciones a continuación.

	Si	No	A veces	Nunca
1. El profesor utiliza instrumentos del entorno virtual.				
2. El profesor refleja en sus clases un dominio de la asignatura: contenido, enfoque, materiales didácticos y afines.				
3. El profesor demuestra capacidad para incorporar innovaciones didácticas en sus lecciones				
4. El profesor demuestra un nivel de inglés lo suficientemente avanzado para poder impartir clases				
5. El profesor facilita en sus clases el entablar vínculos y acercamientos con otras culturas				
6. En las lecciones, el profesor se comunica al 100% en inglés.				
7. A la hora de aclarar algún término a los estudiantes el profesor se apoya en técnicas como la mímica, dibujos o 'flashcards', evitando el español.				
8. El profesor presenta de forma clara los objetivos de las actividades durante el proceso de enseñanza.				
9. Fuera del horario lectivo, el profesor se comunica en inglés con los estudiantes				
10. Las actividades realizadas en clases muestran relación al tema visto y son escalonadas del nivel básico a nivel más avanzado.				
11. Las actividades realizadas por el profesor dan la oportunidad al estudiante de discutir, valorar, y producir en el idioma				

**Parte IV. Pedagogía.**

1. En su opinión, ¿cuál de las siguientes actividades lo motivan a usted en clase de inglés?

	Nunca	Poco	Bastante	Siempre
Explicación (clase tradicional)				
Discusiones de grupo				

Debates, mesas redondas				
Actividades en grupos pequeños				
Presentaciones orales				
Escritura de párrafos/ensayos en clase				
Dramatizaciones				
Actividades individuales				
Trabajo con el libro de texto				
Práctica relacionada con las artes como música, cine, arte, etc.				
Laboratorios de inglés o excursiones relacionadas con inglés				
Actividades de escucha				
Diálogos				

2. ¿Se ha aburrido en clases de inglés en el presente año?

Nunca (Siga con la pregunta 3)     Alguna vez/veces     Siempre

1. ¿Por qué se ha aburrido en clases de inglés? Marque todas las opciones que puedan aplicar.

<input type="checkbox"/>	El trabajo no me presentaba retos, era muy fácil.
<input type="checkbox"/>	El trabajo era muy difícil.
<input type="checkbox"/>	El material no era interesante.
<input type="checkbox"/>	La forma de enseñar no era interesante.
<input type="checkbox"/>	El material no era importante.
<input type="checkbox"/>	No había interacción con la profesora.
<input type="checkbox"/>	No había interacción con mis compañeros

3. Cuál de las siguientes categorías describen su rendimiento académico en inglés?

De 90 a 100  
 De 80 a 89

De 70 a 79  
 De 60 a 69

Inferior a 59

Appendix 11. Teachers' questionnaire.



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**Teacher Survey: Questionnaire #1**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ High School: \_\_\_\_\_

In this questionnaire we intend to get your impression about class engagement based on your own experience and daily situations. The information gathered will be completely helpful for our final project of the master program. We thank you for your time and information provided.

*Note:* All the data collected will be used anonymously and confidentially only by the observers and researchers of the project.

*This form; adapted from Ray Chesterfield Classroom Observation Tools, ACER Staff Student Engagement Questionnaire and from Student Engagement: Teacher Handbook; provides 5 areas for analysis. Each area includes prompts regarding what should be answered.*

**Part I. Engagement.** Please respond to the following questions by reflecting on the eleventh graders students you have taught in the current academic year. Write a (✓) on the chosen option and provide information when necessary.

A. How important are each of the following aspects of high school for students according to your perception?

	Not at all Important	Not very Important	Fairly important	Very Important
1. Developing environments which challenge students to learn				
2. Engaging in active learning practices				
3. Interacting with peers				
4. Participating in enriching educational experiences				
5. Providing environments which support learning and development				
6. Participating in hands-on forms of learning				
7. Developing higher-order thinking				
8. Developing general learning outcomes				
9. Promoting student retention				
10. Overall satisfaction with the entire learning experience				

B. As far as you can tell, how frequent your students do the following?

	Cannot say	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Always



1. Asked questions or contributed to discussions in class or online						
2. Sought advice from you						
3. Made a class presentation						
4. Worked hard to master difficult content						
5. Prepared a draft of an assignment before handing it in						
6. Used library resources						
7. Worked on an essay or assignment that required integrating ideas or information from various sources						
8. Used student learning support services such as the library room, resources and extra materials.						
9. Blended academic learning with future career.						
10. Included diverse perspectives (e.g. different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or written assignments						
11. Came to class having completed readings or assignments						
12. Kept up to date with their studies						
13. Worked with other students on projects <b>during class</b>						
14. Worked with other students <b>outside class</b> to prepare assignments						
15. Put together ideas or concepts from different subjects when completing assignments or during class discussions						
16. Tutored or taught other students						
17. Used an online learning system to discuss or complete an assignment						
18. Used email or an online forum to communicate with you						
19. Discussed grades or assignments with you or another teacher						
20. Talked about homeworks, projects and career plans with you or their advisors.						
21. Discussed ideas from their readings or classes with you outside class						
22. Received prompt written or oral feedback from you on their academic performance						
23. Worked harder than usual to meet your standards or expectations						

24. Worked with you on activities other than coursework (e.g. committees, orientation, student organizations, etc.)						
25. Discussed ideas from their readings or classes with others outside class (e.g. students, family members, co-workers, etc.)						
26. Had conversations with students of a different ethnic group than their own						
27. Had conversations with students who are very different from them in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions or personal values						
28. Talk in English at all time <b>during class</b>						
29. Talk in English with other <b>outside class</b> (e.g. students, family members, co-workers, etc.)						

C. What can be done to engage students in class?

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D. How does the institution engage students?

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**Teacher Survey: Questionnaire #2**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ High School: \_\_\_\_\_

In this questionnaire we intend to get your impression about the school curriculum from the place you currently work based on your own experience and daily situations. The information gathered will be completely helpful for our final project of the master program. We thank you for your time and information provided.

*Note:* All the data collected will be used anonymously and confidentially only by the observers and researchers of the project.

*This form; adapted from Ray Chesterfield Classroom Observation Tools, ACER Staff Student Engagement Questionnaire and from Student Engagement: Teacher Handbook; provides 5 areas for analysis. Each area includes prompts regarding what should be answered.*

**Part II. School Curriculum.** Please respond to the following questions by reflecting on the current academic year. Write a ✓ on the chosen option.

2.1. School's philosophy

A. How frequently do 11th graders participate in these type of activities during the school year?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Quite often	Always
1. Art exhibition, play, dance, music, theatre or other performance					
2. Physical fitness activities					
3. Examine the strengths and weaknesses of their views on a topic or issue (critical thinking)					
4. Improve knowledge and skills that will contribute to their employability					
5. Socialize and relate to their partners inside the class and outside the class room.					
6. Develop communication skills relevant to their discipline					
7. Explore how to apply their learning in the school					
8. Try to better understand someone else's views by imagining					

how an issue looks from their perspective					
9. Learn something that changed the way they understood an issue or concept					
10. Think about how to present themselves to potential employers					
11. Explore where to look for jobs relevant to their interests					
12. Set career development goals and plans					

B. As a whole, to what extent does the institution encourage each of the following aspects?

	Never	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work				
Providing students the support they need to help them succeed academically				
Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social and ethnic backgrounds				
Helping students cope with their non-academic responsibilities (e.g. work, family, etc.)				
Providing students the support they need to socialize				
Encouraging students to attend events and activities (e.g. special speakers, cultural performances, sporting events, etc.)				
Encouraging students to use computers in their academic work				



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**Teacher Survey: Questionnaire #3**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ High School: \_\_\_\_\_

In this questionnaire we intend to get your impression about the teacher qualities and pedagogical mediation based on your own experience and daily situations. The information gathered will be completely helpful for our final project of the master program. We thank you for your time and information provided.

*Note:* All the data collected will be used anonymously and confidentially only by the observers and researchers of the project.

*This form; adapted from Ray Chesterfield Classroom Observation Tools, ACER Staff Student Engagement Questionnaire and from Student Engagement: Teacher Handbook; provides 5 areas for analysis. Each area includes prompts regarding what should be answered.*

**Part III. Teachers Qualities.** Please respond to the following questions by reflecting on your teaching experience. Write a X on the chosen option and provide the information when necessary.

3.1. Experience

A. Are you currently enrolled in a postgraduate program?

1. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
2. No \_\_\_\_\_
3. If yes, which one? \_\_\_\_\_.

B. In what teacher training have you been involved? Mark all that apply.

1. Certified training \_\_\_\_\_
2. Non-certified training \_\_\_\_\_

C. In what teaching/education programs have you been involved? Mark all that apply.

1. Doctoral or masters degree \_\_\_\_\_
2. Graduate/postgraduate diploma \_\_\_\_\_
3. Graduate certificate \_\_\_\_\_
4. Bachelor degree \_\_\_\_\_
5. Licenciatura degree \_\_\_\_\_
6. Advanced diploma \_\_\_\_\_
7. Diploma \_\_\_\_\_
8. Other: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

D. In what teacher/education training have you been involved? Mark all that apply.

1. Mandatory general short course (e.g. induction sessions) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Voluntary general short course (e.g. induction sessions) \_\_\_\_\_
3. Mandatory short course on specific facet (e.g. assessment, class preparation) \_\_\_\_\_
4. Voluntary short course on specific facet (e.g. assessment, class preparation) \_\_\_\_\_
5. None of the above \_\_\_\_\_
6. Other: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

E. From which sources have you received informal advice or support? Select all that apply.

1. Academic staff \_\_\_\_\_
2. Administrative staff \_\_\_\_\_
3. Professional networks \_\_\_\_\_
4. Postgraduate students \_\_\_\_\_
5. Teaching advisors \_\_\_\_\_
6. Education support staff \_\_\_\_\_
7. Other: please specify \_\_\_\_\_

3.2. Teacher-student interaction

How many of your students would you predict that would say that they find...	Cannot say	A few	About the right amount	Quite a bit	A lot
1. ... <b>you</b> “available, helpful, and sympathetic”?					
2. <b>your teaching colleagues</b> “available, helpful, and sympathetic”?					
3. ... <b>other students</b> “friendly and supportive”?					
4. ... <b>administrative personnel</b> “helpful, considerate and flexible”?					
5. ... <b>services</b> “helpful, considerate and flexible”?					
6. ... <b>student support services staff</b> “friendly, available and sympathetic”?					

3.3. Class management

A. How do you discipline the students (tick all that apply)?

- 1. No discipline
- 2. Yell at the student
- 3. Punish the student: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Quietly reminds the misbehaving student of the rules
- 5. Separates the misbehaving student from other students
- 6. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

B. Write one technique you usually use when there is a misbehaving student:

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C. How do you praise the students? Check all that apply.

- 1. No praise
- 2. Compliment the student
- 3. Hug/touch the student
- 4. Give the student a reward (food, sweets, etc.)
- 5. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

D. Write one technique you usually use to praise students:

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**Teacher Survey: Questionnaire #4**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ High School: \_\_\_\_\_

In this questionnaire we intend to get your impression about pedagogical mediation from the place you currently work based on your own experience and daily situations. The information gathered will be completely helpful for our final project of the master program.  
We thank you for your time and information provided.

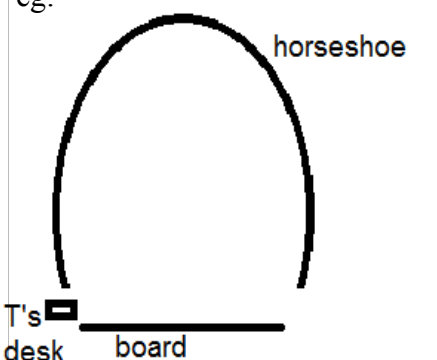
*Note:* All the data collected will be used anonymously and confidentially only by the observers and researchers of the project

*This form; adapted from Ray Chesterfield Classroom Observation Tools, ACER Staff Student Engagement Questionnaire and from Student Engagement: Teacher Handbook; provides 5 areas for analysis. Each area includes prompts regarding what should be answered.*

**Part IV. Pedagogical Mediation**

**4.1. Class arrangement**

A. Draw two class arrangements you usually like to work with **11<sup>th</sup> Graders.**

<p>eg:</p> 	<p>1.</p>	<p>2.</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------	-----------

B. Why do you like to work with these arrangements?

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4.2 Teaching approach

A. During the current academic year, to what extent do your **11<sup>th</sup> graders** students have developed the following skills based on the communicative approach?

	Never	Seldom	Fairly Often	Regularly
1. <b>Be able to</b> communicate in English within a broader social-economic context in and outside Costa Rica.				
2. <b>Understand</b> English as a tool to directly access scientific, technological and humanistic information and , in this way expand their knowledge of the world.				
3. <b>Develop</b> the ability to communicate in English for practical purposes.				
2. <b>Analyze</b> the basic elements of an idea, experience or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth, and considering its components using English.				
3. <b>Synthesize and organize</b> ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships in oral and written forms.				
4. <b>Make</b> judgments about the value of information, arguments or methods, such as examining how others gather and interpret data and assessing the soundness of his or her conclusions in oral and written forms.				
5. <b>Apply</b> theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations in oral and written forms.				
6. <b>Offer insights and encourage positive attitudes</b> into the culture and civilization of English speaking countries in oral and written form.				

4.3 Teaching techniques or activities

A. In your opinion, do you apply in your class each of the following activities? Check the appropriate box

	Never	Hardly ever	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
Lecturing					
Teacher-led discussions					
Discussion groups					
Small group activities					
Oral presentations					
In-class writing					
Roleplays					
Individual activities					

Book work					
Studio practice in applied and fine arts (e.g. dance, drama, music)					
Laboratory or practice (e.g. labs, field work, art exhibits...)					
Listening activities					
Talk shows, debates, round tables, symposiums					
Dialogues					

#### 4.4. Teaching techniques

A. How much time do you spend in these activities?

	30 minutes approx	1 hour approx	From 1 to 2 hours	More than 2 hours
Lecturing				
Teacher-led discussions				
Discussion groups				
Small group activities				
Oral presentations				
In-class writing				
Roleplays				
Individual activities				
Book work				
Studio practice in applied and fine arts (e.g. dance, drama, music)				
Laboratory or practice (e.g. labs, field work, art exhibits...)				
Listening activities				
Talk shows, debates, round tables, symposiums				
Dialogues				

B. During the current academic year, about how much reading and writing have you assigned your students?

	None	1 to 4	5 to 10	11 to 20	More than 20
1. Number of assigned textbooks, books or book-length packs of subject readings					
2. Number of written assignments of <b>fewer than 1,000</b>					

<b>words</b>					
3. Number of written assignments of <b>between 1,000 and 5,000 words</b>					
4. Number of written assignments of <b>more than 5,000 words</b>					

C. To what extent is your teaching intended emphasized in the following areas?

	Never	Seldom	Fairly Often	Regularly
1. Acquiring a broad general education				
2. Acquiring job-related or work-related knowledge and skills				
3. Writing clearly and effectively				
4. Speaking clearly and effectively				
5. Thinking critically and analytically				
6. Analyzing quantitative problems				
7. Using computing and information technology				
8. Working effectively with others				
9. Learning effectively on their own				
10. Understanding themselves				
11. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds				
12. Solving complex, real-world problems				
13. Developing a personal code of values and ethics				
14. Contributing to the welfare of their community				



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**Teacher Survey: Questionnaire #5**



Date: \_\_\_\_\_ High School: \_\_\_\_\_

In this questionnaire we intend to get your impression about class engagement, school's curriculum, teacher qualities and pedagogical mediation from the place you currently work and your own experience and daily situations. The information gathered will be completely helpful for our final project of the master program. We thank you for your time and information provided.

*Note:* All the data collected will be used anonymously and confidentially only by the observers and researchers of the project

**Part V. General Information.** Write the information is asked.

A. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Check your gender:

Female ( )      Male ( )

C. Check your latest level of education:

Profesorado: \_\_\_\_\_

Bachelor's Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

Licenciatura: \_\_\_\_\_

Master's Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctorate's Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

D. Write your latest degree title: \_\_\_\_\_

E. Check what your main work function is:

\_\_\_\_\_ teaching only

\_\_\_\_\_ mainly teaching, some coordination

\_\_\_\_\_ mainly coordination, some teaching

\_\_\_\_\_ mainly teaching, some research

\_\_\_\_\_ mainly research, some teaching

\_\_\_\_\_ only coordination

\_\_\_\_\_ only research

F. Which one of the following best describes your employment at your institution this year?

1. Temporary or casual \_\_\_\_\_

2. Fixed-term contract up to 12 months \_\_\_\_\_

3. Fixed-term contract more than 12 months \_\_\_\_\_

4. Permanent or open-ended contract \_\_\_\_\_

5. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

G. How many lessons are you employed in the institution? \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 12. Principals' questionnaire.



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**Encuesta al Director(a): Cuestionario**

Fecha: \_\_\_\_\_

Colegio: \_\_\_\_\_

El siguiente cuestionario pretende recolectar su percepción sobre la motivación del estudiante en la clase basado en su experiencia y en su situaciones diarias. La información aquí recolectada será de ayuda para nuestro trabajo final de graduación de posgrado. Le agradecemos el tiempo brindado y la información dada.

*Esta encuesta es una adaptación de los siguientes instrumentos Ray Chesterfield Classroom Observation Tools, ACER Staff Student Engagement Questionnaire y de Student Engagement: Teacher Handbook. De acuerdo con el objetivo propuesto por las investigadoras, este instrumento provee de 5 áreas de análisis, cada área incluye determinadas instrucciones a seguir.*

**Nota:** Toda la información aquí recolectada será tratada de forma anónima y confidencial por los investigadores del proyecto final de graduación.

**Parte I. Motivación.** Por favor responda las siguientes oraciones reflexionando en las actitudes de los estudiantes de undécimo nivel del presente año lectivo.

A. ¿Qué tan importante son los siguientes aspectos para los estudiantes de quinto de acuerdo a su *percepción*?

	Del todo no es importante	No es muy importante	Casi importante	Bastante Importante
1. El desarrollo de ambientes que los reten a estudiar.				
2. El desarrollo de prácticas activas en el aula.				
3. Interactuar con sus compañeros(as).				
4. Participar en experiencias educativas enriquecedoras.				
5. Proveer de ambientes que apoyan el aprendizaje.				
6. Participar en formas de aprendizaje relacionadas con carreras o profesiones.				
7. Desarrollar habilidades de pensamiento de alto nivel.				
8. El desarrollo de resultados prácticos en el aprendizaje				
9. Promover la retención de contenidos				
10. Satisfacción general del proceso enseñanza-aprendizaje				

B. ¿Cómo describiría usted a un estudiante de quinto año que este muy motivado en la asignatura de inglés?

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C. ¿Cuáles serían los mejores aspectos que la institución puede ofrecer para incrementar la motivación de aprender el idioma inglés ?

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**Parte II. El Colegio.**

A. Información General. Por favor brindar la información solicitada.

Población estudiantil total del colegio: \_\_\_\_\_

Número de aulas en la institución: \_\_\_\_\_

Número aproximado de estudiantes por clase en undécimo año: \_\_\_\_\_

Número de grupos de undécimo año: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Filosofía Colegial. Conteste de manera detallada las siguientes preguntas.

1. ¿De qué manera el colegio promueve el bienestar estudiantil?

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2. ¿En qué aspecto(s) considera usted que el valor integral ve reflejado en el currículo según la misión y visión de la institución?

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3. ¿En qué aspecto(s) considera usted que el valor humanístico se ve reflejado en el currículo según la misión y visión de la institución?

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**Parte III. Bienestar Estudiantil.** Marque con una X la casilla que responda a su opinión.

1. ¿Con cuánta frecuencia los estudiantes de undécimo año participan en las siguientes actividades durante el curso lectivo?

	Nunca	Rara vez	Casi siempre	Siempre
1. Exhibiciones de arte, teatro, danza, música o alguna otra presentación.				
2. Actividades de bienestar físico (e.g. deportes)				
3. Examinan y discuten puntos sobre las debilidades y fortalezas de algún tema promoviendo el pensamiento crítico.				
4. Mejoran el conocimiento y las habilidades requeridas en un futuro para trabajar.				
5. Socializan y se relacionan con sus pares tanto adentro como afuera de clases.				
6. Desarrollan habilidades comunicativas en inglés.				
7. Exploran como aplicar el conocimiento adquirido en el colegio en la vida real.				
8. Tratan de entender el punto de vista de otra persona imaginándose en la situación de la otra persona.				
9. Aprendieron algo que cambio la forma de entender una situación o forma de ver el mundo.				
10. Piensan en su futuro, como presentarse ante futuros empleadores.				
11. Exploran donde buscar por trabajos relacionados con sus intereses.				
12. Se proponen metas y planes de carreras				

2. ¿En general, con cuánta frecuencia la institución promueve los siguientes aspectos en relación con el programa de inglés?

	Nunca	A veces	Frecuentemente	Siempre
Proveer a los estudiantes de las herramientas necesarias para un aprendizaje óptimo (eg: equipo, laboratorio de idiomas, recursos en el idioma, etc.)				

Alentar la interacción de los estudiantes con estudiantes de intercambio, charlistas o hablantes nativos del idioma.				
Ayudar a los estudiantes a balancear responsabilidades no académicas como trabajo o familia.				
Proveer a estudiantes de ambientes sanos para la socialización como actividades extracurriculares				
Alentar a los estudiantes en el uso de la tecnología como herramienta educativa ya sea con computadoras, o tecnología móvil.				
Dar la importancia necesaria al programa de inglés como idioma clave en el crecimiento profesional en la actualidad.				

**Parte IV. Cualidades del profesor**

1. ¿Cómo cree usted que es la mejor forma de fomentar la disciplina en la clase? (Marque todas las opciones que puedan aplicar)

- 1. No se necesita disciplina.
- 2. Gritarle a los estudiantes.
- 3. Castigar a los estudiantes: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. En silencio recordarle a los estudiantes de las reglas de clase.
- 5. Separar a los estudiantes indisciplinados de otros estudiantes.
- 6. Otro (especifique) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Escriba una técnica para controlar disciplina que usted recomienda:

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3. ¿Cómo cree usted que es la mejor forma de estimular la participación con mensajes positivos en la clase? (Marque todas las opciones que aplican)

- 1. No se necesita dar mensajes positivos a los estudiantes.
- 2. Dándole un cumplido al estudiante sobre su trabajo
- 3. Abrazándolo o mostrándole afecto al estudiante.
- 4. Dándole algún premio al estudiante (ej. Confites, chocolates, etc)
- 5. Otro (especifique) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Escriba una técnica para estimular la participación con mensajes positivos que usted recomienda:

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Appendix 13. Engaging activity portrayed by SAMAGU's teacher.

**REVIEW UNIT 4B - THE FUTURE OF FASHION**

CREATOR	- INVENTION or FAMOUS MATERIALS
Alex Soza, Danish Fashion Designer	
Scientists at the DuPont Company	
Huges Vinchon at Dubar Warneton	
Canadian Biotechnology firm	
Nexia's head Jeff Turner	
Philips Electronics	
	Sensors hidden in her clothes allow her to affect the lights and beat of the music, pants that flash when people want to make contact with her.
Clive van Heerden	
Researchers at Natick	

Summary of the reading :

**Write down the meaning in English of :**

Wearable: \_\_\_\_\_

Device: \_\_\_\_\_

Foresee: \_\_\_\_\_

Copper: \_\_\_\_\_

High Tech: \_\_\_\_\_

Bullet-proof: \_\_\_\_\_

Intelligent bra: \_\_\_\_\_