

**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE NICARAGUA.**

**FAREM – MATAGALPA.**



**GRADUATION SEMINAR**

**General topic:**

Methodological strategies in the teaching learning process of English as a foreign language in Matagalpa and Jinotega during the second semester 2011.

**Subtheme:**

Causes of the low academic performance of English students' morning shift of seventh grade A, B and C at Miguel Larreynaga School during the second semester 2011.

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## General theme

Methodological strategies in the teaching learning process of English as a foreign language in Matagalpa and Jinotega during the second semester 2011.

## Subtheme

Causes of the low academic performance of English students in the morning shift from seventh grade A, B and C at Miguel Larreynaga School during the second semester 2011.

## Dedication

This work is dedicated firstly to God, because who guide my steps each day.

To my parents for their love and support during this five years.

To my grandfather rest in pace, who motivated me to study English.

Jarmi Atalia Gómez Escorcía

## Dedication

I dedicated this work to god for the life bounty, to my parents Cesar Suárez and Leonor Soza because they support me all the time.

To my brothers and sisters, because they were with me during bad and good moments.

To my daughter so that she is the light of my life.

Cándida Rosa Suárez Soza.



## Acknowledgements

With the deepest gratitude we wish to thank every person who has come into our life in inspired, touched and illuminated us through their presence.

We would also like to thank and express our gratitude to the following people for their magnificent support and contributions to the creation of this research.

For generously sharing their wisdom, love and divinity, we pay home age to:

- God who has given us the strength and intelligence to finish our studies.
- The great teachers who taught us the different subjects especially to teacher Ligia Pineda for being the tutor of this work.
- For their generosity in sharing their opinions at seventh grade students of morning shift at Miguel Larreynaga school.
- For their generous support to teacher Manuel Hernandez and the staff at Miguel Larreynaga school.

## TEACHER'S VALUATION

The teaching-learning process requires an engagement of all the members of a society, so in order to improve this process students of the English major at UNAN FAREM Matagalpa have decided to focus their Graduation Seminar in the topic ***“METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGIES IN THE TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN MATAGALPA AND JINOTEGA DURING THE SECOND SEMESTER 2011.”***

The main objective of this research is to investigate the problems that are affecting the English teaching and learning process and at the same time give some suggestions, ideas, and recommendations which could serve to in service English teachers and future teachers to improve their work.

As tutor of the seminar ***“Causes of the low academic performance of English students’ morning shift of 7<sup>th</sup>. Grade at Miguel Larreynaga high school Matagalpa, during the second semester 2011”***, I consider that it fulfills with the objectives and the requirements of a Graduation Seminar, therefore it is ready to be defended.

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Licenciada Ligia Pineda Ruiz

Tutor

## Summary

The purpose of this work is to know the causes of the low academic performance of English students in the morning shift at Miguel Larreynaga School.

The English subject as foreign language is very important, because permit to know others cultures and help to face the challenges that the society demands as well. For this reason, it is necessary that students develop the four basic skills to get a meaningful learning.

This work provide definition about: teaching learning process, and academic performance and general information about them. Then, it describes the causes that affect specifically the academic performance in the English subject in contrasting with the situation studied.

In addition, it explains the levels of learning as consequence of the academic performance.

In this case is considered that students of seventh grade at Miguel Larreynaga have gotten an Elemental learning and the main causes that affect this process were: the teachers' methodology, the students study habits, and the students' behavior.

It suggests some Teaching and Learning strategies in order to improve the academic performance, and some strategies to improve the students' behavior. Then it presents the principal conclusions.

This work was elaborated with the different bibliography support what permitted to show a simple schema of the some theories about the causes and consequences that affect the academic performance in English Subject.

Finally, the research is concluded with graphics and instruments applied.

## I INTRODUCTION

The education is the intellectual support of the development of a nation; to achieve it, is necessary to encourage the progress of students in school, this progress depends of teaching learning process which is showed in the academic performance.

The seventh grade students at Miguel Larreynaga present difficulties in the English subject in consequence they got low academic performance, for this reason the purpose of this research was to confirm the causes that affected the students learning.

This work is very important because permitted to identify the causes that affect the academic performance of English students from seventh grade at Miguel Larreynaga School during the second semester 2011. According with the result it was suggested some teaching and learning strategies in order to improve the academic performance.

This research has an explanatory character; because it was based on the variables which permitted to acquire information about the causes and consequences that affect the academic performance, it was worked with a pool of 160 students and a teacher; it was taken a sample of 61 students and a teacher.

It was used the empirical and scientific method, because it was applied interview, questionnaire and survey which were validated by the tutor Ligia Pineda and classmates. Then it was made a contrasting with the theory and the practice. Students and teachers were a key resource, to accomplish this work; so that they had a directed relationship with them; the following variables were measured: causes and consequences that affect the academic performance; the information was processed in the Microsoft Office Excel 2007 program and Microsoft office Word 2007 program.

## **II JUSTIFICATION**

This research is about the causes of the low academic performance of English students in the morning shift seventh grade A, B and C at Miguel Larreynaga School during the second semester 2011. These students present difficulties in the English subject, for this reason the purpose of this research is to confirm the causes that affect the students learning.

Considering that the components of teaching and learning process are teachers, students, parents and school conditions, if one of these components fails the results affect all the process. For example the teacher apply the appropriate strategies and techniques, but the students don't do the homework and they don't show interest in the class their learning will be poor. Therefore this work is very important, so that it is offer information about the causes that affect the academic performance and strategies which will help teachers and students to face this problem.

This research has scientific information and it is based in a real situation about the teaching learning process; which is very important because it permits to establish the relationship between the theory and the practice.

It is considered to be a useful tool for English teachers and MINED authorities who want to improve the English teaching, especially to teachers who do not have information about this topic.

### **III OBJECTIVES**

#### **General objective:**

To confirm the causes of the low academic performance of English students in the morning shift from seventh grade A, B and C at the Miguel Larreynaga School during the second semester 2011.

#### **Specific objectives:**

1. To identify the causes of the low academic performance of English students in the morning shift from seventh grade A, B and C at Miguel Larreynaga School during the second semester 2011.
2. To describe the causes of the low academic performance of English students in the morning shift from seventh grade A, B and C at Miguel Larreynaga School during the second semester 2011.
3. To suggest some teaching and learning strategies in order to improve the academic performance of English students in the morning shift from seventh grade A, B and C at Miguel Larreynaga School during the second semester 2011.

## **IV Development**

English is one of the widely used languages in the world. This language is used to communicate with other countries of the world. If someone knows English very well he/she can get better results in any field of study and he/she can reach the top ranks of the profession. It is a communicative language. People that know English can travel around the world and exchange ideas with people from other countries. Learning English helps to enrich our life in many ways, for this reason it is necessary that the students obtain a meaningful learning in the English class.

The education is the intellectual support of the development of a nation to achieve it, is necessary to encourage in the school, this progress depends of the teaching learning process.

### **1. Teaching learning process.**

The teaching learning process is the heart of education on it depend the fulfillment of the aims and objectives of educations.

According to the encyclopedia of education (2009) research, learning refers to growth of interest, knowledge and skills to transfer these to new situations.

Teaching is the process of providing opportunities for students to produce relatively permanent changes through the engagement inexperience provided by the teacher.

In other words, the teaching – learning process is a system of actions involving an agent and a situation including class size, physical characteristics, therefore the success depends of the teacher and students.

## **2 Academic performance.**

2.1 Definition. The result of the teaching – learning process is shown in the academic performance that each student obtains. According to the encyclopedia of education p. (282) the academic performance is a measure of the student's capacities that express the learning during the formative process. In others words, the academic performance is the level of knowledge acquired by the students in different areas.

2.2 Academic performance history. In the past, the academic performance was often measured more by ears than today. Teachers' observations made up the bulk of the assessment, and today's summation or numerical method of determining how well a student is performing is a fairly recent invention. Grading systems came into existence in America in the late Victorian period, and were initially criticized due to high subjectivity. Different teachers valued different aspects of learning more highly than others, and although some standardization was attempted in order to make the system fairer, the problem continued. Today, changes have been made to incorporate differentiation for individual students' abilities, and exploration of alternate methods of measuring performance is ongoing (Bell. M .2011)

When a student is able to practice her/his knowledge in real life situations it indicates that these students have a meaningful learning, and of course a good academics performance on the other hand, if the students aren't able to *resolve real life* situations this means that this learning is poor and they get a low academic performance.

2.3. Academic performance features: Performance in school is evaluated in a number of ways. For regular grading, students demonstrate their knowledge by taking written and oral tests, performing presentations, turning in homework and participating in class activities and discussions.



Teachers evaluate in the form of letter or number grades and side notes, to describe how well a student has done (Bell, 2011)

It could be said that the features of the academic performance are based in the strategies and instruments of evaluation that the teacher uses in order to obtain evidences of students' learning acquisitions.

### **3. Causes that affect the academic performance.**

**3.1. Teachers' calling.** Several factors have generally been identified as causes of academic performance. Barry, (2006) Said that a teacher who does not have both the academic and the professional teacher qualification would undoubtedly have a negative influence on the teaching and learning of his/her subject. However, he further stated that a teacher who is academically and professionally qualified, but works under unfavorable conditions of service would be less dedicated to his work and thus be less productive than a teacher who is unqualified but works under favorable conditions of service.

It can be said that the calling is very important to teach, because if a teacher has calling he/she looks for the strategies and techniques to teach in a better way, although the teacher is not professionally qualified, on the contrary if a professional teacher does not have calling his/her work will be deficient, therefore this will affect the students learning

According to the questionnaire and observation guide applied to the teacher it can be said that he had been studying English, but he is not a professional yet. Besides that, the English teacher feels teaching is not his vocation, because

- a- He does not want to teach English next year.
- b- He works with traditional methodology.
- c- He did not continue his undergraduate study.

For this reasons it is considered that the lack of teacher calling is a cause that affects the academic performance on the seventh grade students.

### **3.2. Motivation.**

Another factor is motivation. Barry, (2006) indicated “ that the lack of motivation and professional commitment produce poor attendance and unprofessional attitudes towards students which in turn affect the performance of students academically”

The motivation is very important, because if a student is motivated looks the strategies to learn. On the contrary if a student is not motivated he/she does not demonstrate interest to study, therefore his learning will be poor.

According to Brown, (1994) the motivation can be divided into two basic types: Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation reflects the desire to do something because it is enjoyable. If a person is intrinsically motivated he/she would not be worried about external rewards such as praise or awards, for example playing football because he/she enjoys.

Extrinsic motivation on the other hand reflects the desire to do something because of external rewards such as awards, money and praise. People who are extrinsically motivated may not enjoy certain activities; they may only wish to engage in certain activities because they wish to receive some external rewards.

Teachers may be very interested in foresting intrinsic motivation, but if students are only interested in receiving grades or praise, and do not enjoy learning then teaching may not wish to think or apply their knowledge are may only be concerned with what will be on the test.

The teacher’s enthusiasm influences on the motivation of students in the following ways:

High levels of motivation in teachers relate to high levels of achievement in students.

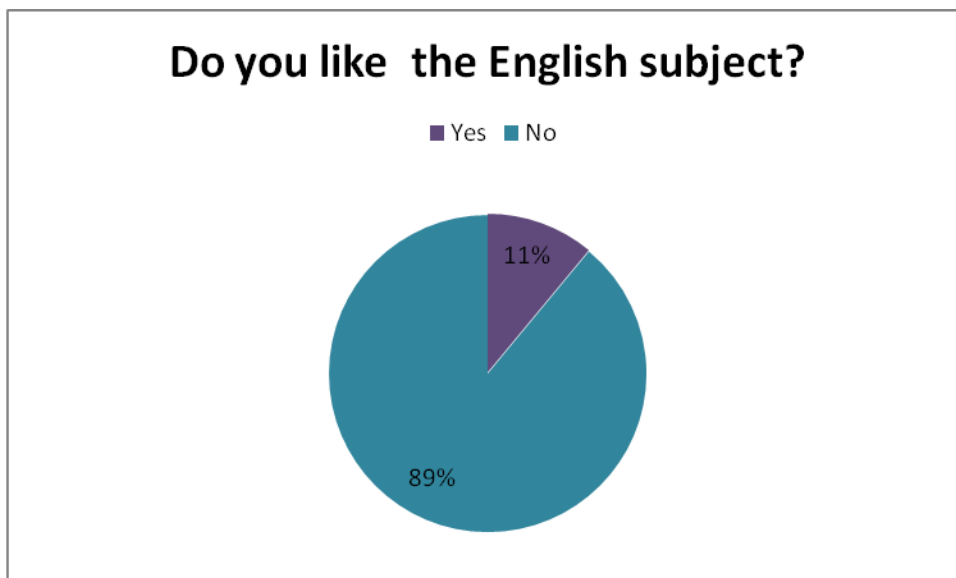
Teachers' enthusiasm for learning and for the subject matter under study has been shown to be an important factor in student's motivation, which is closely linked to student's achievement.

A teacher's involvement in graduate studies, which indicates enthusiasm for learning, may be a source of motivation and may be translated into higher achievement among students.

In contrast, students who are intrinsically motivated may enjoy challenging work, and make think in greater dept about ideas, that permit that students get excellent grades.

According to the survey applied to students, it was gotten the following information:

11% of the students said that they like English class and 89% said that they don't like study English as showed in the following graphic



Graphic 1

Based on this information, it can be said that 89% of the students are extrinsically motivated and only 11% are intrinsically motivated, which indicates that the lack of intrinsic motivation is a factor that affect the academic performance, so that the students study to get a grade. In this case, teachers who are in a similar situation should take into account the following tips.

- Encourage the students to be responsible for their own learning
- Maintain an organized classroom environment
- Assign appropriate challenges
- Provide reinforcement and encouragement during a task.
- Make the learner feel comfortable in the classroom.
- Emphasize higher mental process along with mastery learning strategies tends to create a learning environment that is exciting and constantly new playful.

**3.3. Teaching and learning materials.** “The creative use of a variety of media increases the probability that the students would learn more, retain better what they learn and improve their performance on the skills that they are expected to develop” Ausubel, (1973)

In other words a person learns easier when he/she interact with materials because it is an agent of own learning.

“Audiovisual aids are defined as any device used anything can be used as an aid, providing successfully communicates the idea or information for which it is designed.” Liberty, (2001)

Audiovisual aids are very effective tools to use in presentations. With the use of audiovisual aids, the presenter can engage more of the audience's senses and involve them easier in the content of a presentation. Audiovisual aids help make a presentation more effective, more understandable and more memorable.

### **3.3.1 Types of audiovisual aids**

White Boards and Flip Charts.

Large white boards and flip charts allow the presenter to create visual images during the presentation. Input from the audience can also be recorded. The advantage of flip charts is when one page is full; another page can be used to continue. With white boards, once the board is full, it must be erased to create a new space

Overhead Transparencies and Handouts.

Overhead transparencies can be created in advance and used to project visual forms of information that supports a presentation. They can also be written on during the presentation. Hard copy handouts of the same information can be given to participants to take home with them.

Slides

Slides can be in the form of physical slides displayed on the wall or a screen with a slide projector or, more commonly, via PowerPoint software. Slides can be created to show graphs, charts, figures, and key points as well as pictures and other images.

Sound Recording and Video

Cassette tapes, CDs, videos and DVDs are all technology mediums that provide both sound and vision to enhance a presentation. Most facilities have computer access with CD and DVD portals but older versions of sound technology such as cassette tapes and videos can also be used.

## Physical Objects and Models

Physical objects can be brought into the presentation to demonstrate a topic. For example, if the presentation is about traditional food, in a festival of the pop can be shown to the audience. Props can be used to create a particular environment. If the topic is recycling, for example, different examples of the kinds of plastic that can be recycled can be displayed. Models also serve as excellent three-dimensional aids, such as in a presentation for a proposed building.

Audiovisual aids can be a great tool to use in classrooms. Often they can spice up otherwise dull topics, keep students more engaged in their lesson and enliven their imaginations. Video presentations, slide shows, PowerPoint and other media have revolutionized the way teachers reach their students. But these aids are not without their disadvantages. It is important to weigh both the pros and the cons when considering how you will use audiovisual aids in your classroom. When a teacher use audio visual aids to teach English, the class is interesting and the students remember and this permit to create a meaningful learning.

“Use different audiovisual aids it is very important the role of the teacher, so that he/she should analyze the influences of the resources in the process of teaching learning, know what, when, how and why these are used, examine the possibilities and limitations, besides it is important that the teacher analyze the social, economic and political context of the students”.(Clarke D.F 1989)

According to Clarke the role of the teacher is very important in the use of the audiovisual aids, so that the results depend on how the teacher use it in the classroom for example: if a teacher has all the audiovisual aids in their class but he does not used correctly, the class is a failure, and of course the learning of the students. So it is necessary that teachers before implementing the audiovisual aids with their students prepare careful the techniques, strategies and the context in the classroom.

Before students begin an activity, teachers should familiarize them with the entire list of instructions. Then, teachers should have students work on each step individually before moving on to the next step.

According to the teacher's answers in the oral interview the following information was obtained:

The teacher said that he uses different materials in order to teach the English class: tape recorder, text books, white board, videos, DVD, TV and hand outs.

In the survey applied to students, most of them determined that the most common materials used by the teacher are tape recorder, white board and text books.

The teacher and students' answers are similar; nevertheless during the class observation it was noticed that the teacher only used the white board.

It is known that not all the classes permit to use a variety of materials but in the observed class the teacher could have used another material such as real objects because the topic was Rooms at home and furniture. Besides it was noticed that the students were bored.

### **3. 4. Teaching methodology**

“The teachers’ method of teaching influence in the academic performance”

Barry. J, (2006)

Language learners are not equal. So, the learning process becomes individual, and this way to approach to this process makes the learner be successful or not when learning a foreign language. These characteristics are differences between learners which influence their attitudes to learn a language and how they learn it. These differences influence how they respond to different teaching styles and approaches in the classroom, and how successful they are at learning a language.

Brown, (1994) determined the following techniques and materials used in language teaching methods.

I. Grammar -Translation Method: An important goal is for students to be able to translate each language into the other.

II. The Direct Method: second language learning should be more like first language learning- lots of. Oral interaction, spontaneous use of the language, no translation between first and second languages, and little or no analysis of grammatical rules. By using this method teachers intend that students learn how to communicate in the target language.

III. The Audio –Lingual Method: The goals of teachers who use this method is to make students to be able to use the target language communicatively. Students over learn the target language. The teacher is like an orchestra leader, directing and controlling the language behavior of students.

IV. The Silent Way: Students should be able to use the language for self-expressions to express their thought, perceptions and feelings. They need to develop independence from the teacher.



V. Desuggestopedia: The objective is to deliver advanced conversational competence quickly. Learners are required to master prodigious list of vocabulary pairs. The goals are understand, not memorization.

VI. Community Language Learning: teachers who use want their students to learn how to use the target language communicatively. In addition, they want their students to learn about their own learning, and how to learn how to learn from one another.

VII. Total Physical Response: teachers who use TPR believe in their importance of having their students enjoy their experiences in learning to communicate in a foreign language.

The techniques and methods mentioned are integrated in the eclectic approach to language teaching practices.

The eclectic approach includes a number of possible methodological options at teacher disposals for tailoring classes to a particular context.

In contrasting with the Brown's point of view about teaching methods and the case studied the teacher uses some strategies of the traditional method so that he included exercises such as memorization and used words in sentences, this was noticed in the lesson plan and the observation guide.

### **3.5 Lesson plan**

Planning is a key element in everyday job. Without planning, job would simply be chaotic. The teaching of English as a foreign language would not be the exception. Planning becomes important because it guides teachers about their performance in their professional practice to reach their course goals.

The potential success or relative failure of a lesson will often be determined by the planning and preparation of the teacher. The term lesson is considered to be a unified set of activities that cover a period of classroom time, usually ranging from forty five to ninety minutes. These classroom time units are administratively significant for teachers because they represent steps along a curriculum before which and after which a hiatus (of a day or more) in which evaluate and prepare for the next lesson. Brown.D, (1994).

According to Brown it can be said the lesson plan is an essential tool in the teaching - learning process, because this avoids the improvised teaching and the routine in the classroom, beside the lesson plan permits to carry a students' learning control to determine the student's academic performance. Therefore it is necessary that the teacher before the lesson planner diagnostic, during the lesson presents, informs and manages, after the lesson assesses student's learning.

When the teacher is planning a class, the following elements should be taken into account: the learning, the learner, and the teaching aims point, the teaching procedures, the materials and the classroom management.

According to Brown, (1994) Teachers planning should include:

1. Goals: it is an overall purpose that will attempt to accomplish by the end of the class period.
2. Objective: it is very important to state explicitly what the teacher want students to gain from the lesson.

3. Materials and equipments: it may seem a trivial matter to list materials needed, but good planning includes knowing what teacher needs to take or to arrange to have in the classroom.

4. Procedures: at this point lessons clearly have tremendous variation, but as a very general set of guidelines for planning, the teacher might think in terms of making sure her/his plan includes.

a) An opening statements or activity as a warm-up.

b) A set of activities and techniques in which he/she has consider appropriate proportion of time for whole class work, small group and pair work, teachers talk, students talk.

c) Closure.

5. Evaluation: it is an informal or formal assessment that the teacher makes after students have sufficient opportunities for learning and without this component the teacher has not means for assessing the success of her/his students or making adjustment in her/ his lesson plan for the next day.

6. Extra class work: these are activities that will help students do some learning beyond the class hour (home work)

In other words these are included in three basic stages presentation, practice and production.

Teachers play an important role because they are the ones in charge of orienting and helping students' learning goals. Learners, on the other hand, are responsible about their own learning process. However, raising awareness about the students' learning styles and strategies is also useful. If learners are aware about their learning preferences and how they do it, learning will be successfully. Finally, as mentioned in the last view point, planning exert some influence in the class development, consequently, in the teaching and learning process as well.

In the observation guide applied to the teacher's lesson plan it was noticed that the teacher did not follow all the stages of the lesson plan, he only accomplished with two stages presentation and practice, but he did not take into account the last stages which was production.

In this case the lesson plan is considered as a factor that affects in a negative way the student's academic performance it was not observed a meaningful learning.

### **3.6 Study habits**

"Good study habits and academic achievement walk hand in hand". Escobar. V (2005)

The relationship between good study habits and academic achievement has to accomplish great success in any level of education. Nevertheless the majority of students get low to okay grades only because they get bored and cannot do right things at school, therefore the school should be fun and more effective to anyone who follows good study habits in order to get better grade.

Being organized and having homework routines are the most important things in helping students develop good study habits for life.

The study habits are difficult to acquire, nevertheless the regular practice permit to obtain it.

It is considered that students with good study habits get great academic performance, so it is the responsibility of the teachers, parents and government to collaborate in order to develop good study habits. For example the teachers can give information to students about their importance and how to get them. The parents can contribute to improve giving their children economical and emotional support. The government must provide the different materials that teachers and students need to develop the class better.

According to, the survey applied to the students it was noticed that students have the following study habits:

Sixty two percent of the students said that they accomplish their homework.

Ninety percent of the students expressed that they attend classes every day.

Eleven percent of the students argued that they dedicate an hour a week to study English.

It can be considered that the lack of study habits affect the academic performance in the students, because the majority of the students have an elemental learning, this was observed in the grade record of the teacher.

### **3.7 Conditions**

**3.7.1 Familiar and social context.** Other causes that affect the academic performance are the familiar and social context and school conditions.

Family size refers to the number of children in the reference family. The larger the family the less the attention and devotion of each child by the parents and the more the difficulties encountered by the parents in meeting the needs of the children both physically and emotionally particularly in this austere period when the prices of food in commodities are skyrocketed.

“The position a child occupies in a family equally plays a significant role in this development and academic achievement” Barry, (2006).

In contrasting with Barry’s ideas the real situation in Nicaragua is that most of the families are too big which is difficult for parents to give the necessary attention to their children because they have to work in order to provide the home’s basic necessities, so the children stay alone in the house doing chores, therefore they do not dedicate enough time in order to study, generally this affects the academic performance.

On the other hand, a small family can give a better attention to their children to supporting them with their extra class work.

Another common situation in Nicaragua is that some families with good economic situation give economic support to their children, but they do not dedicate time to help them in their homework, beside the lack of affect this produces emotional instability, therefore they obtain a low academic performance.

In the research it was found that the majority of students are poor according to the interview applied to the teacher.

In the survey applied to the students it was noticed that the forty seven percent of the students have an extent family, and only sixty one percent of them live with their parents, the other students live with tutors. This situation indicates that the social and familiar context affect the students’ academic performance

**3.7.2 Scholar factor.** The unconducive atmosphere of secondary schools’ learning environment also contributes to the poor academic performance of students.

“The problems of large population of students in classrooms do not create a good condition for learning which can lead to poor academic performance of students”. Chavez, (2006).

In Nicaragua, the secondary schools are experiencing an increase in population. There are classrooms with sixty students. The recommended according to the educational law items number 23:C1 the thirty from thirty five students in each classroom nevertheless this has not been obeyed, so that current, the majority of the classroom are over population with sixty students or more, besides in some cases the classroom size is small, there is lack of furniture as a desk which affect the students learning.

In the class observation, it was observed that there are many students in the class room, which does not provide enough chairs for students to sit. For this reason the school infrastructure is another factor affecting the academic performance.

### **3.8 Students' behavior**

“Students attitudes and behaviors is important to determine which conditions in class room support the development of higher levels of perceived academic competences and engagement in school. Students interactions in classroom are significantly and positively related to engagement, teacher support and expectations of conduct have an immediate influence in the academic performance”. Akey, (2006)

According to Akey, the students behavior is an important point in order to determine the students' academic performance, because if a student pays attention in class and interact with her/his teacher and classmates, he/she can understand the class better, on the other hand if a student does not pay attention in class and disturb it her/his learning will be poor, so a key point is the teachers authority in the classroom, therefore the teacher's attitude affect the students' behavior.

In the observation guide, it was noticed that the students' behavior is the principal factor that affect the academic performance, because the majority of students were doing other activities and not paying attention when the teacher explained the class.

### **3.9 Evaluations**

“Evaluation is the systematic assessment of the worth or merit of some object. It is the systematic acquisition and assessment of information to provide useful feedback about some objects”. Trochim, (2006)

In others words the evaluation is a tool which permit to assess the students' learning.

There are many different types of evaluations depending on the object being evaluated and the purpose of evaluation.

3.9.1 Diagnostic Assessment: Involves making judgments as to how a pupil is performing against a predetermined set of criteria. This kind of assessment must be linked to further work which will tackle problems identified. There is thus an overlap between formative and diagnostic assessment of aptitude.



The diagnostic evaluation can be used at the beginning of a course, unit and a topic, in order to check the students' previous knowledge and link it with the new know ledges. This provides a baseline for future assessment.

3.9.2 Formative assessment in the classroom: Formative assessments are going, repetitive measures designing to provide information to both the instructor and student concerning students' understanding of small segments of course materials. As an integrated approach to assessment and instruction, formative assessment emphasizes mastery of course material as opposed to evaluation of performance or assignment of grades. Formative assessment is conductive throughout the instructional process to monitor students' progress and provide feedback on strengths and weaknesses. The key to formative assessment is the role of feedback; this feedback allows' students to correct conceptual errors and encourage instructors to modify instructional activities in light of their effectiveness. Since formative assessment are designed to guide learning and are not utilized as an outcome measure, they are generally considered a low stakes assessment. With the emphasis on student – centered instructional strategies, instructor is encouraged to actively integrate formative assessments into the course mix.

Formative assessment provides:

- Insight on students' strengths and conceptual errors in relation to specific course concepts.
- Guidance to improve students understanding.
- A means of monitoring progress in learning.
- ◆ ● Diagnostic information concerning students' errors in understanding.
- A non – threatening environment to identify and correct problems in learning and instruction.

- Feedback to the instructor concerning the effectiveness of instructional activities.

#### Formative assessment

##### Advantages:

- Allows for the identification of conceptual errors.
- Promotes active reflection on the effectiveness of instruction
- ◆ ● Encourage feedback.

##### Disadvantages:

it may be difficult

- To motivate student's' performances on low stake assignments.
- Time consuming for instructor to provide effective feedback.
- Formative assessment requires intensive dedication.

3.9.3 Summative evaluation: The summative evaluation is the process which the quantities result is gotten. This is carried on through the application of different instruments of evaluation.

The difference between formative and summative evaluation is that the formative evaluation improves the object being evaluated, the assessment of the organizational context, procedures inputs. The key to formative assessment is the role of feedback. While that the summative evaluation examines the student's grades and shows it to the students' parents and MINED

Based on the observation guide applied to the classroom it is considered that the teacher applied the three different assessments. For example, at the beginning of the class he took into account the student's previous knowledge, part of the diagnostic assessment, he gave feedback when students did not understand their

in the explanation, and this point is essential part of the formative assessment the other hand the summative assessment was evidenced record of the student grade

#### **4. Consequences that affect the academic performance.**

4.1 Learning levels. These are the different rank use it in order to assess teaching learning process, these it determined through the qualitative evaluation and quantitative evaluation.

Teachers with the curricular transformation (2009) are using the following scales

Levels	Quantitative evaluation	Qualitative evaluation
Meaningful learning	90-100	AA
Satisfactory learning	76-89	AS
Elemental learning	75-60	AE
Beginning learning	59-0	AI

Meaningful learning: The achievement indicators of the competences have been accomplished with the desired performance.

Satisfactory learning: The majority of the achievement indicators of competences have been accomplished satisfactorily.

Elemental learning: there is less evidence of the achievement indicator's fulfillment, although the student shows to accomplish with some learning.

Elemental learning: there is less evidence of the achievement indicator's fulfillment, although the student shows to accomplish with some learning.

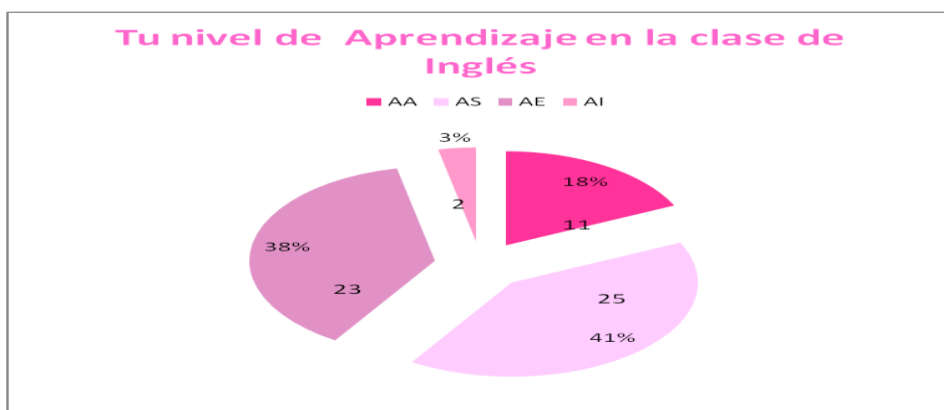
Beginning learning: there is no evidence of the majority achievement indicator accomplish.

A student with a meaningful learning is able to face the society challenges. but also another point is that the students that get an elemental learning with the minimum grade 60 he/she does not develop all the study program competence, so is not prepared to face the real life situation.

Meaningful learning is considered when a seven grade student is able to give personal information about him or her.

According to the teacher' answer in the questionnaire the students have an elemental learning level, in the survey applied to the students the following data was obtained.

Graphic 12



The data of the graphic shows that the majority of the students have elemental learning level and satisfactory learning level, but the grade record was noted that the majority of students have an elemental learning level as the teacher said in the questionnaire's answers.

## **Strategies to teach English**

Here are some strategies to teach English as a foreign language.

Use worksheets and quizzes are useful classroom materials that students can use to learn English as a foreign language.

Implement simple exercises such as translating paragraphs in their original language to English will help them with their English comprehension.

Use reading materials as magazine, articles in English that include English poems and short stories.

Use vocabulary cards to learn words quickly, while fill-in-the-blanks exercises help students articulate in English to complete sentences.

It is important for students to interact with the language showing them films and television shows in English will help immerse them in the language in an enjoyable way.

Teachers can also help students interact with the language by bringing native English speakers in the classroom to converse in with the students. Multimedia tools such as videos and audio clips will help in listening comprehension. After each lesson, ask students to analyze what they have learned by explaining the materials in English.

## **Strategies to Learn English**

Learning a new language can be very frustrating, but if you have the right tools it can be very fun and rewarding

Here you will learn 10 strategies that will help you learn English faster and easier.

### **Find a Place to Study**

Look for a place where you can study in peace. A place where you are not interrupted and you can really concentrate on your study.

### **Set a Time to Study**

Set some time to yourself to read and write every day. Be persistent; make your study time a habit.

### **Write the Word in Your Mind**

While you read, try to write the word in your mind. Do the same thing every time you listen to a word. A great combination is to read a book and listen to its audio book at the same time. You not only improve your reading skills but also your listening and comprehension skills.

### Allow Time to Assimilate

Allow yourself new words, idioms, slangs or bad words that you heard or read so you can really learn them. Try to use the new word as much as you can. A picture dictionary is a great source to learn new words

### Think in English - Do Not Translate

While you are writing or speaking English, try to think in English as much as you can and forget about your mother (native) language as much as you possibly can. Do not translate.

### Live in English

Try to speak, read and write in English. In short try to live in English as much as you can in order not to lose your speed of thought.

### Watch Movies in English

Watch movies in English with or without subtitles. Watching movies is one of the greatest things you can do to improve your vocabulary, listening, comprehension and still have lots of fun.

### Study Grammar

Study grammar every day. I know it is boring but it is very important to develop your writing skills.

### Use the Dictionary

Use an online dictionary to look up new words. Install a dictionary in your mobile phone.

### Be Easy on Yourself

Be easy on yourself. You don't need to get upset with yourself when or if you make a mistake. Learning a new language can be very frustrating sometimes. When you feel that you are overwhelmed give yourself a little break.

## **Strategies for Improving Student Behavior**

- Plan rules and procedures in advance.
- Establish clear rules and procedures when needed.
- Allow students to assume responsibility for behavior.
- Encourage teacher/student cooperation.
- Minimize disruptions and delays.
- Plan independent lessons and group lessons.



## **V Conclusions**

The causes of the low academic performance of English students in the morning shift from seventh grade at Miguel Larreynaga School were:

1. The methodology used by the teacher, is traditional.
2. Inadequate behavior by the student in the classroom.
3. The students do not dedicate enough time to study English
4. The teacher does not have calling to teach English.
5. The students are not intrinsically motivated; they study to get a grade
6. The classroom is small and there is not enough furniture for all the students.
7. The majority of students acquired an elemental learning, for this reason it is considered that students have a low academic performance.

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# VII APPENDICES

## Appendix 1

### National Autonomous of Nicaragua

#### FAREM-MATAGALPA

##### Questionnaire to teacher

We are doing a research about the causes of the low academic performance. Therefore we request you to answer this questionnaire.

**Objective:** to confirm the teaching learning process of the seventh grade students in the English class.

##### I General data

Teacher: .....

Subject: .....

Student's number: .....

Date: .....

School: .....

##### II Questionnaire

1. Do you like to teach English why
2. Describe the steps that you follow in your lesson plan.
3. How do you consider the communication with your students
4. Which is your academic level
5. What kind of evaluations do you apply to assess your students

## Appendix 2

### National Autonomous of Nicaragua

#### FAREM-MATAGALPA

#### Interview to teacher

We are doing a research about the causes of the low academic performance. Therefore we request you answer this interview.

Objective: to confirm the teaching learning process of the seventh grade students in the English class.

#### I. General data

Teacher: .....

Subject: .....

Student's number: .....

Date: .....

School: .....

#### II. Interview

1. What materials do you use in the English teaching
2. How many students do their homework
3. How often do your students attend the class
4. What extracurricular activities does the school promote to motivate the students
5. How do you assess your students' economical situation

Appendix 3

**National Autonomous of Nicaragua**

**FAREM-MATAGALPA**

**OBSERVATION GUIDE**

Objective: to assess the teaching learning process of seventh grade students.

General data.

Teacher's name: -----

Date: -----

School: -----

Student's number: -----

- I. Methodological organization
  - 1. The class is organized in
    - a. Group work -----
    - b. Pair work -----
    - c. Individual work -----
    - d. Exposition -----

	Yes	No
2. The teacher begins the class on time	-----	-----
3. The classroom is well organized	-----	-----
4. The teacher takes into account the students previous Knowledge	-----	-----
5. The teacher present the objective of the class	-----	-----
6. The teacher explain and give examples of the class	-----	-----
7. The activities are based in real situations	-----	-----
8. The teacher does feedback	-----	-----
9. The teacher uses English language in the classroom	-----	-----
10. The teacher corrects the students mistakes in the use of language	-----	-----

11. The teacher follows the different stages of the lesson plan -----

II. Communication

1. The teacher promotes the students participation -----

2. The students demonstrate self confidence when they participate -----

3. The student's participation is active -----

4. The interaction between teacher and student is frequent -----

5. The teacher promotes extrinsic motivation to the students -----

III. Teacher resources

1. The teacher uses

- a. Board -----
- b. Textbook -----
- c. Flash cards -----
- d. Pictures -----
- e. Hand out -----
- f. Paper -----
- g. Real objects -----
- h. Others -----

2. The school conditions are:

- a. Excellent -----
- b. Good -----
- c. Bad -----

3. The students' behavior is

- a. Excellent -----
- b. Good -----
- c. Bad -----



IV Evaluation of the teaching learning process

Ye No

1. The teacher applies formative evaluation

---- ----

2. the teacher keeps a record of students grade

---- -----

observations

## Appendix 4

### Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua

#### FAREM – MATAGALPA

##### Encuesta dirigida a estudiantes

Somos estudiantes de quinto año de la carrera de Inglés, estamos realizando una investigación sobre las causas del bajo rendimiento académico, por lo tanto le agradeceríamos responda la presente encuesta.

Objetivo: valorar el proceso enseñanza aprendizaje de los estudiantes de séptimo grado en la disciplina de Inglés.

##### Datos Generales

Grado: ----- fecha: -----

Escuela: ----- edad: -----

Encierre la respuesta correcta

##### I. Contexto escolar

1. Actividades que usa tu maestro en clase
  - a. Juegos
  - b. escuchar música
  - c. traducir
  - d. aprender vocabulario.
2. Materiales que usa tu maestro en la clase de Inglés
  - a. Grabadora
  - b. televisión
  - c. D. V.D
  - e. pizarrón
  - f. láminas
  - g. objetos
  - h. libros de textos
  - i. revistas
  - j. todos los anteriores

3. Tu nivel de aprendizaje en la clase de Inglés es
4. avanzado b. satisfactorio c. elemental d. inicial
5. La comunicación con tu maestro es:
  - a. excelente b. buena c. regular d. mala
6. Te gusta la clase de Inglés
  - a. si b. no

## II. Contexto familiar y social

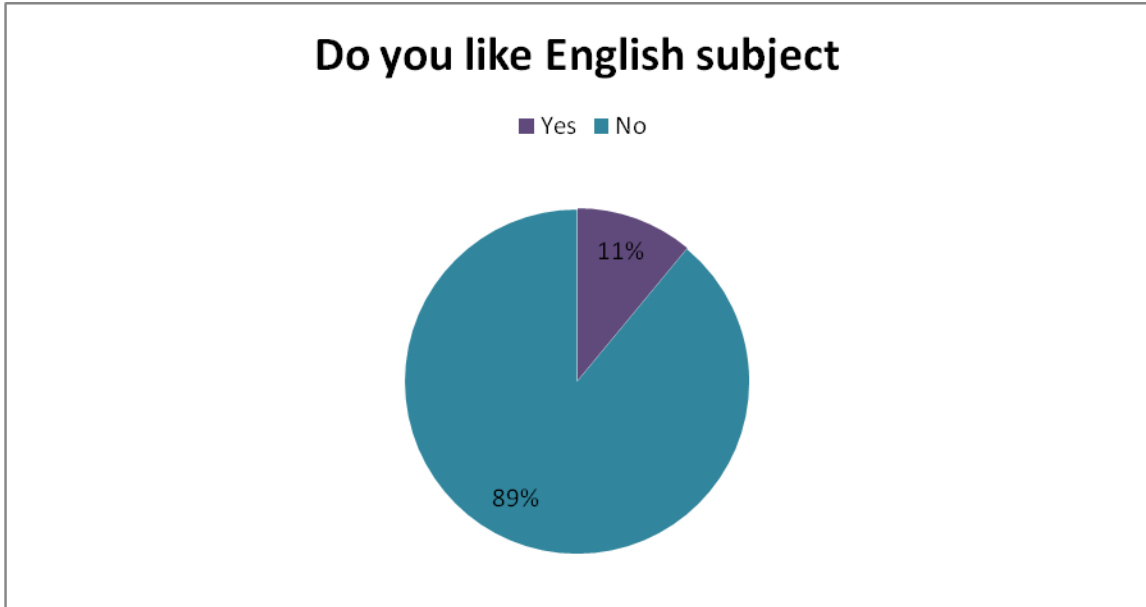
1. Vives con
  - a. Tus padres b. solo con tu mamá c. solo con tu papá d. tutores
2. La comunicación con tus padres es
  - a. excelente b. buena c. regular d. mala
3. cantidad de personas que viven en tu casa
  - a. dos b. tres c. cuatro d. cinco e. mas
4. En tu familia trabajan
  - a. mamá b. papá c. otras personas que viven en tu casa

## III Hábitos de estudio

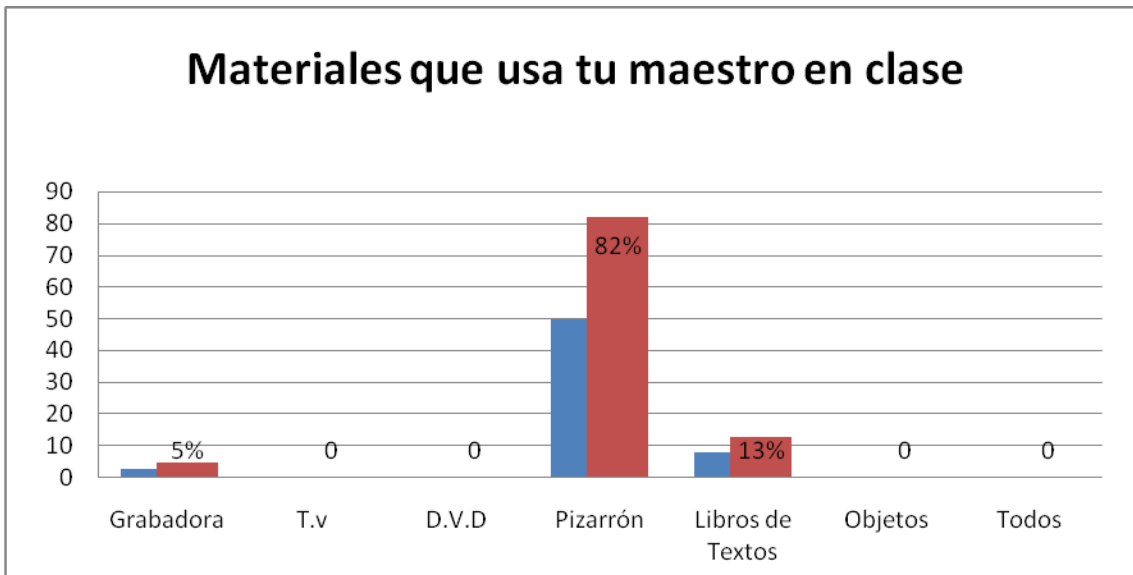
1. El cumplimiento de tus tareas es
  - a. siempre b. algunas veces c. nunca
2. Frecuencia con que asiste a clase
  - a. todos los días b. algunas veces c. raras veces
3. además de hacer tus tareas tiempo que dedicas a estudiar Inglés en la semana
  - a. 1 hora b. 2 horas c. 3 horas o mas d. nada

## Appendix 5

GRAPHIC 1

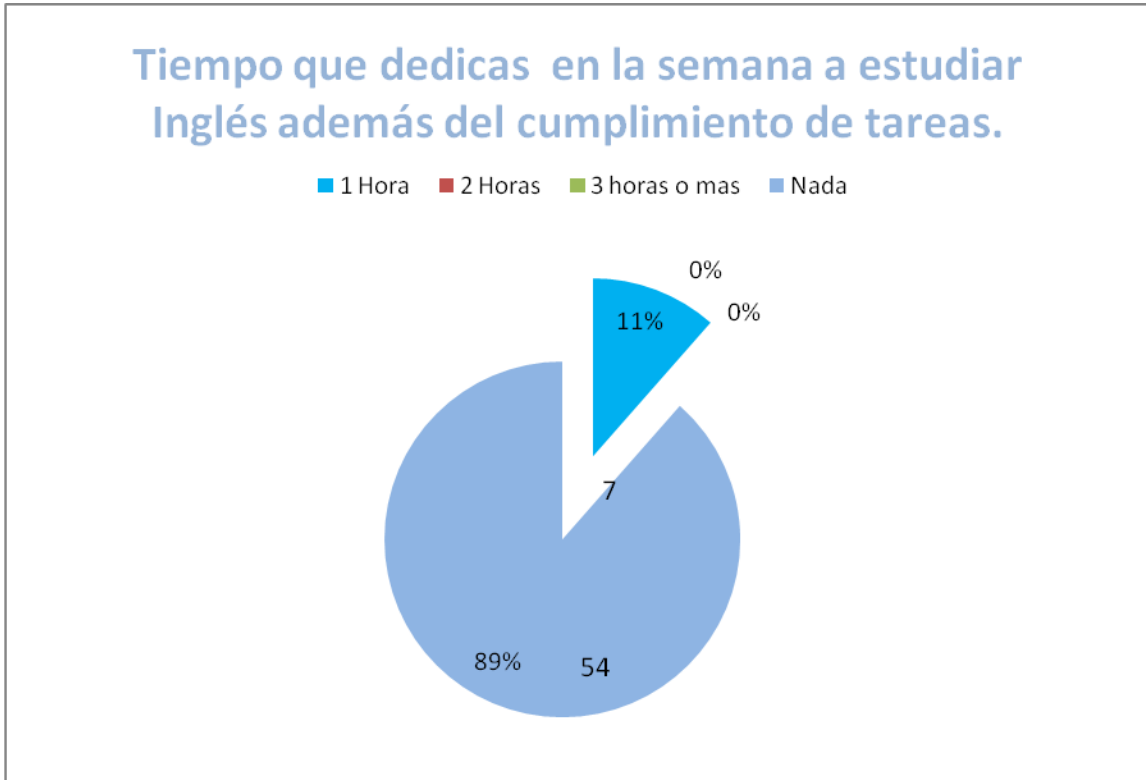


GRAPHIC 2

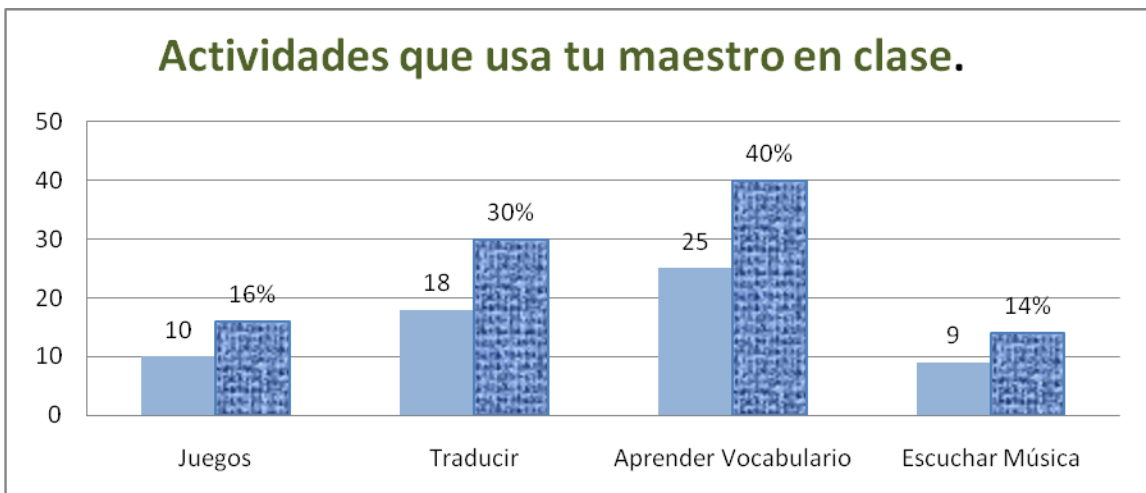


## Appendix 6

GRAPHIC 2



GRAPHIC 4

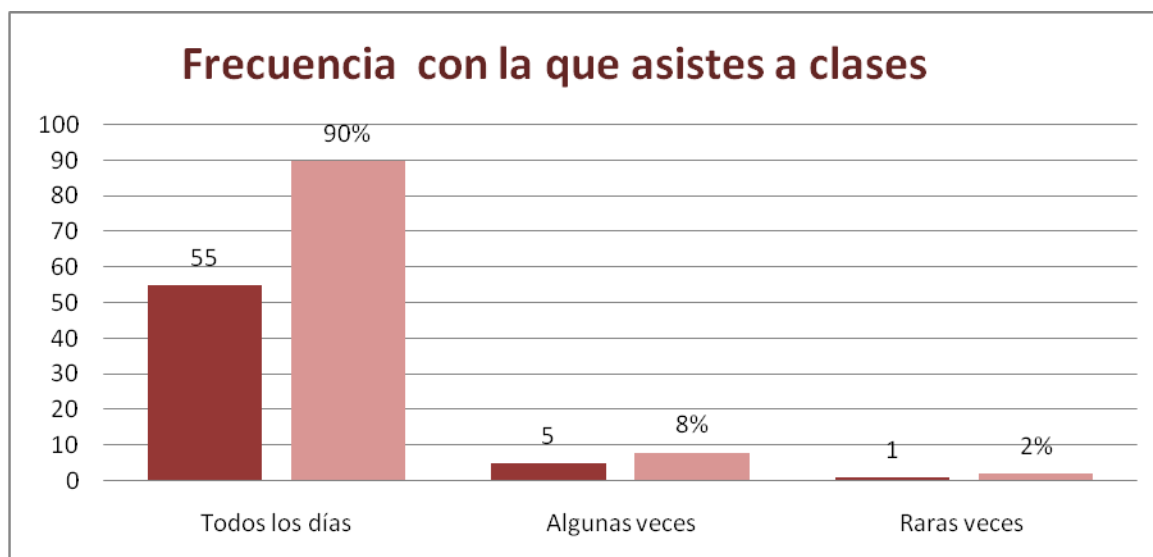


## Appendix 7

GRAPHIC 5

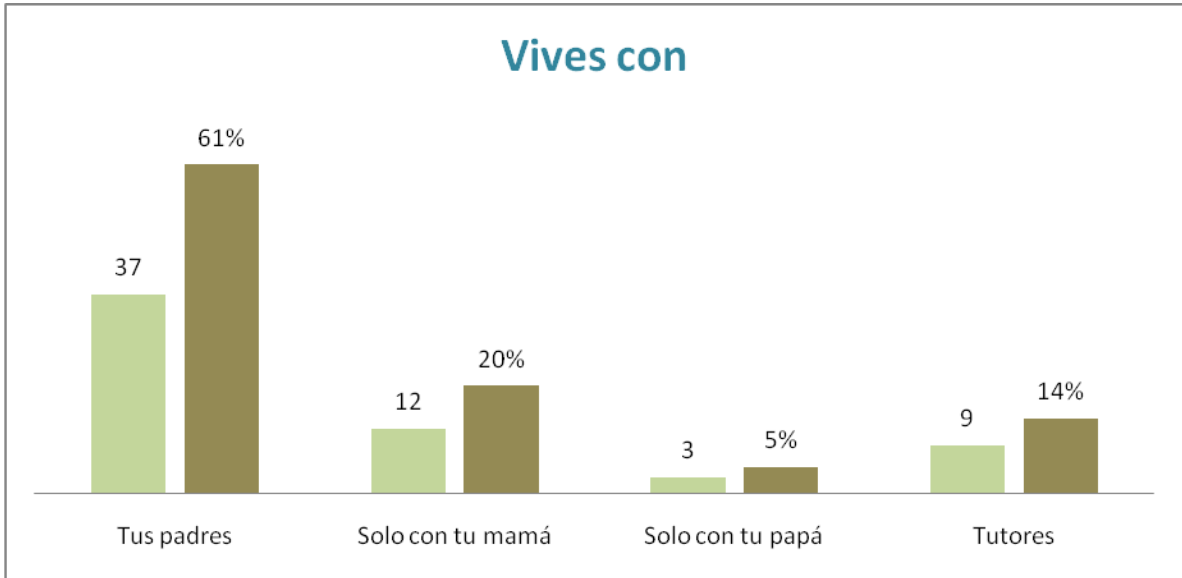


GRAPHIC 6

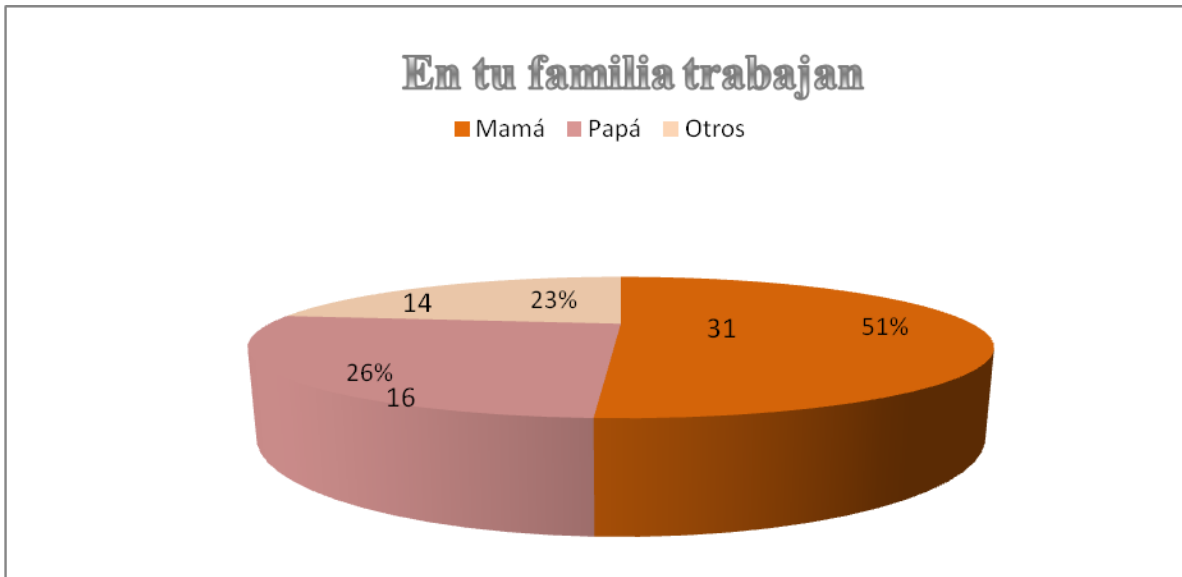


## Appendix 8

GRAPHIC 7

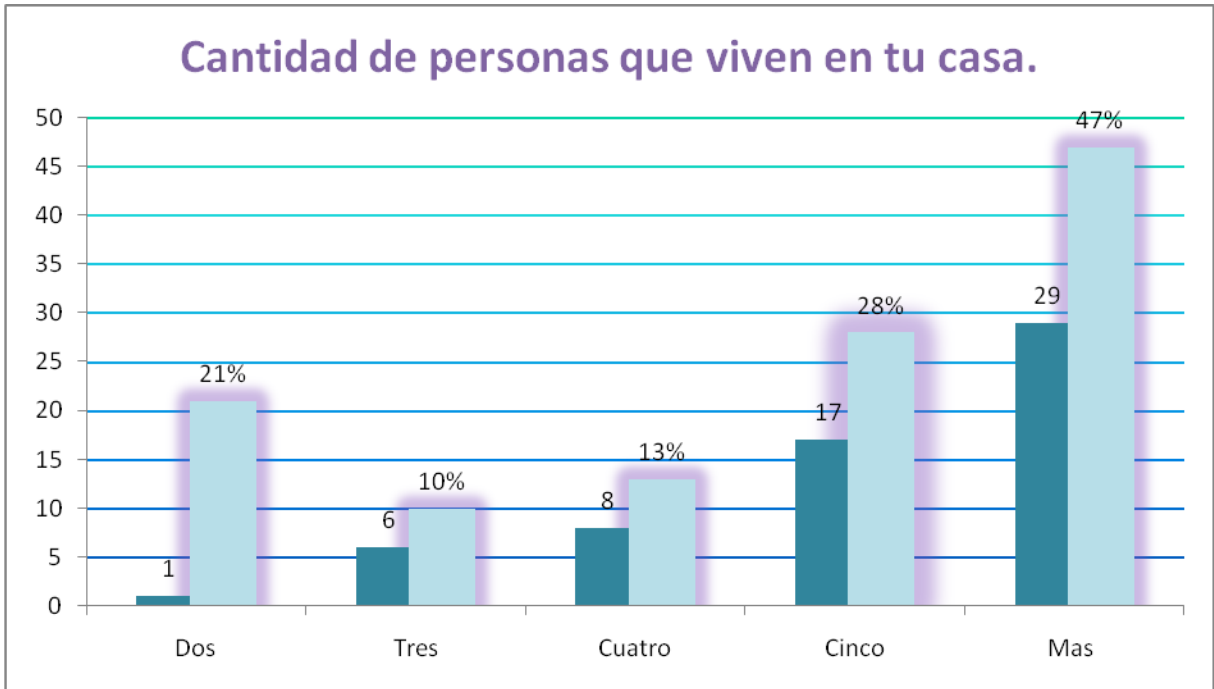


GRAPHIC 8

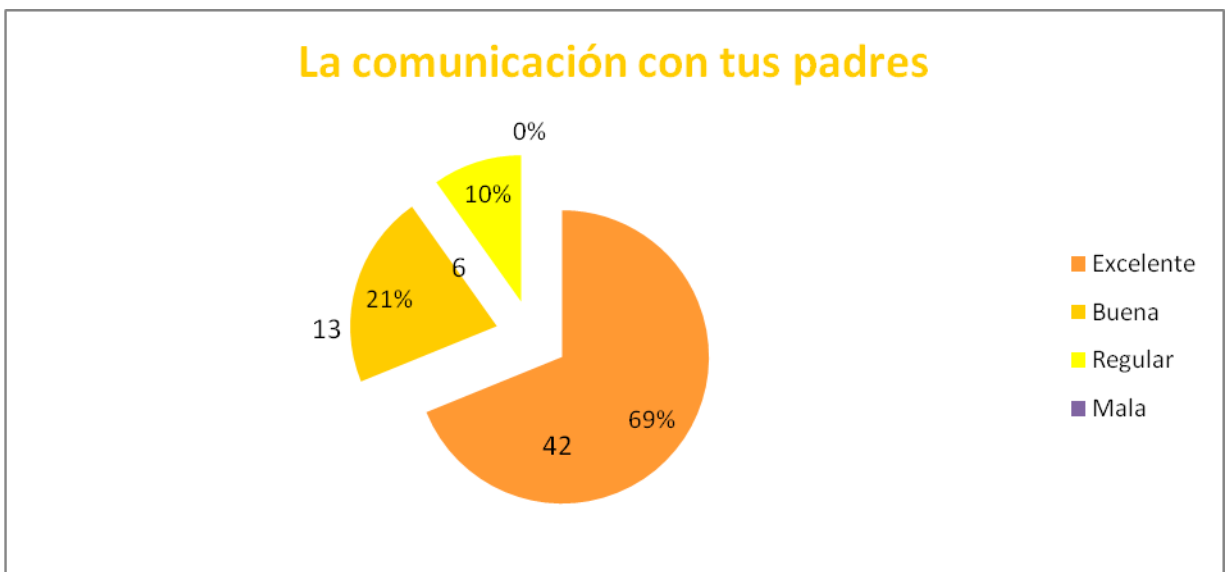


## Appendix 9

GRAPHIC 9



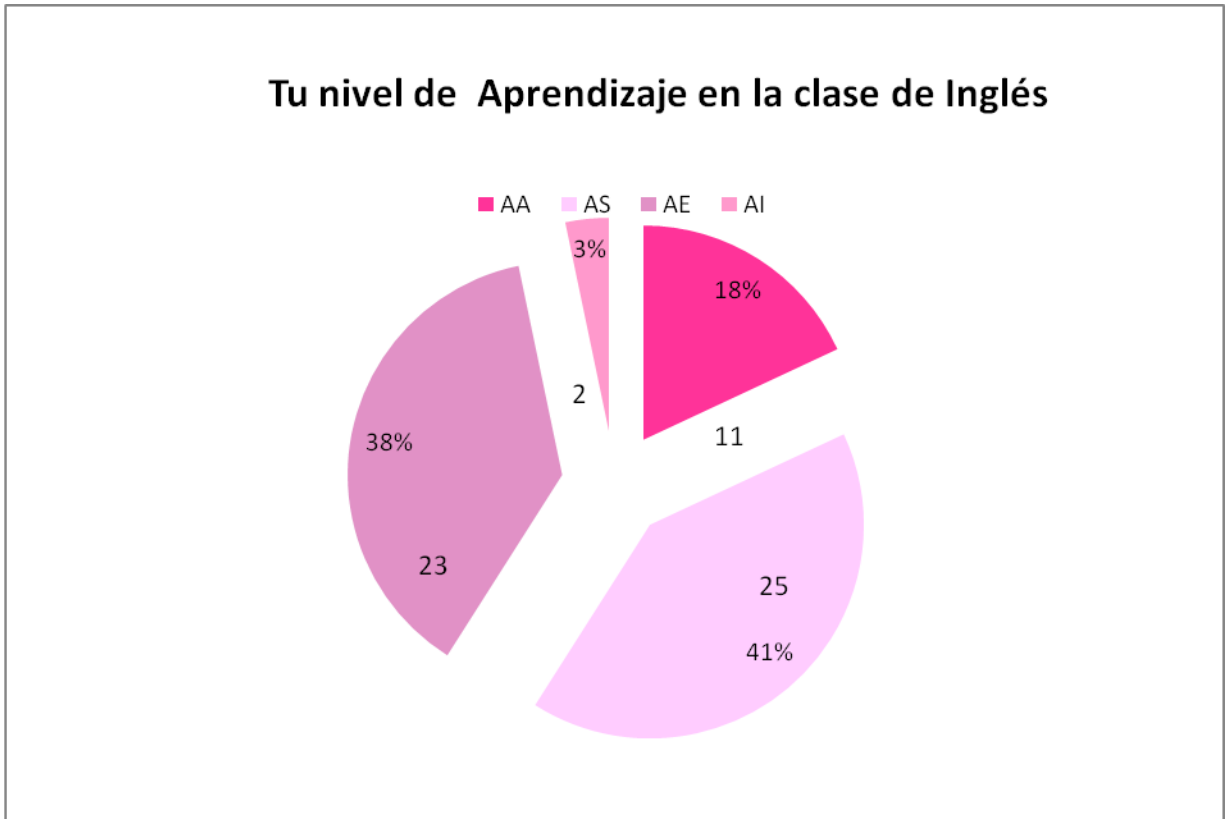
GRAPHIC 10





## Appendix 10

GRAPHIC 11



## Appendix 11

### Parrilla de resultados

Preguntas	indicadores	N de estudiantes	porcentajes
Te gusta la clase de Ingles	Si	7	11%
	No	54	89%
Materiales que usa tu maestro en clase	grabadora	3	5%
	televisión	0	0%
	D.V.D	0	0%
	Pizarrón	50	82%
	libros	8	23%
	objetos	0	0%
	todos	0	0%
Tiempo que dedicas en la semana a estudiar Ingles además de cumplir con las tareas	1 hora	7	11%
	2 horas	0	0%
	3 horas o mas	0	0%
	nada	54	89%
Cumple con las tareas	siempre	38	62%
	algunas veces	23	38%
	nunca	0	0%
Frecuencia con la que asiste a clase	todos los días	55	90%
	algunas veces	5	8%
	raras veces	1	2%
Vives con	tus padres	37	61%
	solo con tu mamá	12	20%
	solo con tu papá	3	5%
	tutores	9	14%

## Appendix 12

En tu familia trabajan	mamá	31	51%
	papá	16	26%
	otros	14	23%
La comunicación con tu maestro es	excelente	5	8%
	buena	36	59%
	regular	18	30%
	mala	2	3%
Tu nivel de aprendizaje de la clase de inglés es	avanzado	11	18%
	satisfactorio	25	41%
	elemental	23	38%
	inicial	2	3%
Actividades que usa tu maestro en clase	juegos	10	16%
	escuchar música	9	14%
	traducir	18	30%
	aprender vocabulario	25	40%
Cantidad de personas que viven en tu casa	dos	1	2%
	tres	6	10%
	cuatro	8	13%
	cinco	17	28%
	mas	29	47%
La comunicación con tus padres es	excelente	42	69%
	buena	13	21%
	regular	6	10%
	mala	0	0%

