

## Students' Perspectives on their ideal English professor in class

Perspectivas dos alunos sobre o seu professor de Inglês ideal na aula

Perspectivas de los estudiantes sobre su profesor de Inglés ideal en clase

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### Abstract

This research aims to identify students' perspectives on their ideal English professor, characteristics and skills and investigate whether they would like to learn a second language and consider it to aid their professional life. Therefore, a survey was done online with N= 220 learners taking the A1 English level in a public university in the coastal region of Ecuador. The data collected comprised 19 statements divided into three categories ( 1. The perspective in the English professor's Identity; (2. Perspectives on the English Professor's Instruction; (3. Teachers Profile. The analysis uses descriptive statistics. The results demonstrate that students prefer flexible English professors who motivate them to learn a second language, which is essential for them. Most of the students agree that the ideal English professor must have a good proficiency in English level and studied in the field. In summary, as students like to learn a second language, believing it is essential for their professional career, they would prefer a professor who adapts to their necessities.

**Keywords:** Ecuadorian students perspectives; English teacher; Ecuador; Teaching.

### Resumo

Esta investigação visa identificar as perspetivas dos alunos sobre o seu professor, características e competências de Inglês ideal e investigar se gostariam de aprender uma segunda língua e considerar-a para ajudar a sua vida profissional. Por conseguinte, foi feito um inquérito online com N= 220 alunos a tomarem o nível de Inglês A1 numa universidade pública na região costeira do Equador. Os dados recolhidos compreenderam 19 declarações divididas em três categorias (1. A perspetiva da Identidade do professor Inglês; (2. Perspectivas sobre a Instrução do Professor Inglês; (3. Perfil dos Professores. A análise utiliza estatísticas descritivas. Os resultados demonstram que os alunos preferem flexíveis Os professores de Inglês que os motivam a aprender uma segunda língua, o que é essencial para eles. segunda língua, acreditando que é essencial para a sua carreira profissional, prefeririam um professor que se adapta às suas necessidades.

**Palavras-chave:** Perspectivas dos alunos do Equador; Professor de Inglês; Equador; Ensino.

### Resumen

Esta investigación tiene como objetivo identificar las perspectivas de los estudiantes sobre su profesor de Inglés ideal, sus características y habilidades e investigar si les gustaría aprender un segundo idioma y lo consideran como una ayuda para su vida profesional. Por lo tanto, se realizó una encuesta en línea con N = 220 estudiantes que cursaban el nivel A1 de Inglés en una universidad pública de la región costera de Ecuador. Los datos recopilados comprendieron 19 afirmaciones divididas en tres categorías (1. La perspectiva en la identidad del profesor de Inglés; (2. Perspectivas sobre la instrucción del profesor de Inglés; (3. Perfil del docente). El análisis utiliza estadísticas descriptivas. Los resultados demuestran que los estudiantes prefieren profesores de Inglés flexibles que los motiven a aprender un segundo idioma, lo cual es esencial para ellos. La mayoría de los estudiantes están de acuerdo en que el profesor de Inglés ideal debe tener un buen nivel de competencia en Inglés y estudios en el campo. En resumen, como a los estudiantes les gusta aprender un segundo idioma, creyendo que es esencial para su carrera profesional, preferirían un profesor que se adapte a sus necesidades.

**Palabras clave:** Perspectivas de estudiantes ecuatorianos; Docente de Inglés; Ecuador; Enseñanza.

## 1. Introduction

As most of us know very well, English is the most widely used language in the world. Moreover, Kitao (1996) states that this language is a bridge between countries for crucial economic, educational, and tourism agreements. Furthermore, the twenty-first century has ushered in a new era of speaking English daily.

As a result, EFL professors are significant since effective and efficient learning on the part of students highly depends on teachers and their actions in their classes (Markley, 2004). According to Al-Khairi (2015), being an EFL teacher is challenging since not all students are interested in learning a new language. Consequently, English teachers occupy a crucial part in EFL instruction because they must motivate students and emphasise the necessity of learning English as an international language in today's world. They must be imaginative, patient, and kind. They must also establish a productive and welcoming classroom atmosphere using innovative methods, approaches, and techniques. (Markey, 2004).

Similarly, decades ago, competent teachers were often thought to be information specialists, but nowadays, a successful or "ideal" teacher will probably have a variety of personality attributes. (Al-Khairi-2015) Therefore, the purpose of this investigation is to find out the perspectives on this group of students with their ideal English teacher in a class, including professor features, for instance, the knowledge of teaching skills, teaching styles and personality traits as it has an impact of students motivation to learn a English as foreign language (Ahangari & Zamani, 2016) The goal is to examine students' preferences for their ideal English professor to enhance teaching strategies, particularly in areas where educators may feel less confident, and to identify specific aspects that can be improved to strengthen second language teaching.

**Research question:** What are the students' perspectives on their ideal English professor?

Do students like to learn a second language?

This study seeks to examine students' perspectives on the ideal qualities, characteristics, and skills they expect from an English professor. By understanding their preferences, the study aims to shed light on what makes an educator effective in teaching English. Additionally, the research will explore students' interest in learning a second language and how they view it as a potential asset for enhancing their professional opportunities and career development.

## 2. Literature Review

The following literature review searches for students' perceptions of their ideal English teacher. According to Chen and Lin (2009), the essential characteristics of a skilled English teacher are: a) systematic, b) organiser, c) dependable, d) confident, e) regular, f) active, and g) intellectual teachers. Similarly, Fu, G.S. (1998) stated that ideal teaching attributes include practical knowledge, instructional abilities, interpersonal skills, and personal traits. According to this. Selvi (2012). Pointed out that non-native English speakers teachers may need help in educational institutions, and NNESTs are less professional than NESTs. It irregularly results in unfair hiring of them from some bilingual schools, which seems discriminatory. Moreover, Walkinshaw & Duong (2012) admit that many English as a second and foreign language schools prefer hiring native English speakers teachers instead of non-native English speakers.

In Contrast, Cheung (2002) declares that a study in Hong Kong, with N=420, reported that non-NESTs have a better methodology to teach English than the NEST, and sometimes speaking fluency the NEST can be difficult to understand for beginner learners. They cited in (Walkinshaw & Duong 2012, p.4). Similarly, results from Benke and Medgyes (2005), who declared with a study made in Hungarian, with N=422, reported that non-NESTs have a better methodology and strict culture to teach English in comparison with the NEST and sometimes speaking fluency from NEST can be challenging to understand for beginners learners—cited in (Walkinshaw & Duong 2012, p.4). Besides, Benke & Medgyes (2005) suggest that One of the advantages of having non-NESTs in class is that they can get into the L1 when it is necessary to explain grammar, and a disadvantage of having NESTs is that students would not get easy to understand the input they deliver. Many other studies published in this article demonstrate that students prefer non-NESTs since they can use L1 to explain something hard to understand, for instance, grammar rules or structures from sentences. Cited in (Walkinshaw & Duong 2012, p.4) Moreover, Johnson, K. E. (2006) mentions that theory and practice from non-native English speaker plays an important role and presents

the professionalism that demonstrates a good teacher. For instance, disciplinary knowledge and language acquisition can manage these issues when students prefer an N-NEST.

On the other hand, Walkinshaw and Duong (2012). Recaps a study from students that prefer an English teacher with good pronunciation, even though there is no native English speaker, despite the results from the investigation emerged with students' preferences for a native English speaker however, the same author mentions that a well prepared English teacher can mitigate this issue by being well prepared in the field. Another study from Tokoz-Goktepe (2014) Demonstrates that students' perspectives on their ideal English teacher are managed from different fields, as one is the output that students may need aid to produce while learning EFL. Therefore, students' attitudes toward their excellent English teachers make them feel confident in class while learning a second language, and they receive help from their professors to improve it. For instance, Horwitz (1987) observed in his study that when students' learning expectations do not match the class methods, they lose faith in the learning process. As a result, learning a second language can be affected. Therefore, teachers' task is essential since well-prepared activities will suit them and may contribute to the student's motivation (Stakanova and Tolstikhina 2014).

Moreover, the authors contribute that good planning may help students create a positive attitude and a good atmosphere in class. Hence, it begins with the teacher's creativity to develop it in class. Abdullah et al. (2012) pointed out from their results from an investigation that motivation produces good development in the process of EFL learning. The group of students involved in this investigation revealed that having activities such as reading and talking in pairs or groups before class begins increased the curiosity of being asked and answering the questions, aided in gaining self-confidence in students and encouraged them to speak a second language during class. Besides, delivering an amusing environment during the class will help the process of learning EFL; therefore, this group of investigated students agree that having a fun atmosphere in class will aid in developing output and feeling confident. (Bavi 2018)

### **3. Method**

The following research is social and quantitative (Pereira et 2018).

#### **3.1 Participants**

The sample of this quantitative research is 220 students from the second semester in a public university in the Ecuadorian coast province of Los Rios.

Among these students, 43% were males, and 67% were ladies.

The participants were chosen by convenience since they were studying at the same university as the researcher works in the same place; thus, students were from different careers, for instance, agronomy, biology, marketing and zootechnical. They all attend English classes twice a week, belonging to A1 proficiency.

#### **3.2 Data Collecting and Analysis**

The data collection employed in this research was an online survey done in Google form and sharing the link to students to answer the questions (Carillo et al., 2022).

This survey comprised 19 statements divided into three sets. (1. The perspective in the English professor's Identity; (2. Perspectives on the English Professor's Instruction; (3. Teachers Profile: Additionally, one more set is to determine if this group of EFL learners likes to learn a second language and if they believe it will aid them in the individuals' vocational interests. In order to evaluate the student's view of their ideal English teacher, a four-point scale (1 - strongly disagree to 4 - strongly agree) The development of the subject matter occurred. (Rahman et al., 2022). Learners needed to decide in 30 minutes to answer the survey.

After applying the survey, a software statistic Jamovi, Students' results were analysed using the previous version. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to describe what this group of students accepted. The alpha reliability was 0.99, which indicates high instrument reliability.

## 4. Results

### The perspective in the English professor's Identity

Table 1 illustrates the final results from students' perspectives on their ideal professor identity. The first set of 9 questions where learners gave us the first impression of their results.

Analysing the results in the Jamovi statistical program, we see that 217 students agree that the ideal English professor must motivate learners to learn a second language, expanding the findings of Campbell and Storch (2011). They defined motivation as an essential individual variable when learning a second language.

As the students demonstrate that feeling confident will help them learn better EFL, 215 learners agree. Calibrating their insecurity to another point they consider very important in class 210 agrees. Elias & Schwab (2006) pointed out, "Teachers play a fundamental role in the cognitive and social-emotional development ... by allowing them to learn. Effective classroom management sets the stage for this learning" (p. 309). Therefore, having time to know students in class plays another role, as numerous studies have found that educators significantly influence education development (Hattie 2009). Being a professor with a significant role in analysing and developing a good atmosphere with their students will help the classroom environment.

As 212 students agree that their ideal English professor must stimulate and develop a fun environment in class, with these results, we can see that motivation, in the end, is vital to transmitting to students while learning a second language.

**Table 1 - Students' perspective on their ideal English teacher identity.**

Perspective	1	2	3	4	N	Mean	SD
A good English instructor should motivate learners to study English.	2	1	67	150	220	3.66	0.538
In order for students to learn English successfully the ideal English instructor should help them establish self-confidence.	2	3	81	134	220	3.58	0.572
In English class, the ideal English teacher should alleviate students' insecurity.	3	7	97	113	220	3.45	0.629
The ideal English teacher maintains a positive classroom environment by using authority when appropriate.	6	3	90	121	220	3.48	0.665
The ideal English instructor takes the time to get to know his or her students.	3	6	102	109	220	3.44	0.620
The ideal English instructor is adaptable when scheduling/rescheduling assessments and deadlines.	2	8	104	106	220	3.43	0.611
The ideal English instructor promotes student participation.	5	4	105	106	220	3.42	0.646
The ideal English instructor develops a fun and stimulating classroom environment.	4	4	84	128	220	3.53	0.630

Source: Moncayo (2024).

Table 2 demonstrates the student's perspectives on their ideal English teacher instructions; first of all, they must be familiar with students' social and cultural backgrounds, and 210 students agreed. Achieving the expectations from Roya and Ahangari (2016). Who pointed out that the results revealed that students rated an excellent English instructor as having the capacity to build appropriate interactions with students having the highest mean. On the other hand, one of the meaningful

strategies that their ideal English teacher must have is that 210 learners of EFL agreed that feedback is essential in the class. In the same vein, Cantos (2022), Stated that the inflexibility of English teachers, even taught with grades, can be seen in students as a block to interact with their professors.

Moreover, seeking strategies to get into the English topic as most of the students will feel secure in the activities made by the teacher, 216 students voted that their ideal English teacher must prepare the class adequately.

**Table 2 - Students' perspective on their ideal English teacher instructions.**

Perspectives	1	2	3	4	N	Mean	SD
The ideal English instructor is familiar with students' social and cultural backgrounds.	2	11	135	75	220	3.27	0.595
The ideal English teacher provides students with meaningful feedback.	1	9	100	110	220	3.45	0.599
The ideal English teacher adequately prepares the class.	1	3	74	142	220	3.62	0.539
The ideal English teacher employs specific teaching approaches and tactics.	2	4	111	103	220	3.43	0.581
The ideal English teacher has lots of teaching experience.	3	3	84	130	220	3.55	0.599

Source: Moncayo (2024).

Table 3 assesses us with the results that most 142 students agree to prefer a Native English professor in their classroom. Nevertheless, 193 learners agree that a non-native speaker can teach EFL. The results here emerge as something contradictory to students on one side. They prefer a Native English professor but do not desist from having a non-native English professor in class.

A well-structured lesson presents, as well as considerations for establishing a pleasant and comfortable learning environment, for instance, controlling time, instructional strategies, behavioural expectations, and space, communicating effectively with learners, engaging students in learning, monitoring learning, and providing constructive feedback. (Tajeddin et al., 2023). Two hundred sixteen students agreed that a good teacher must be well prepared in their field, including language fluency and good pronunciation. The mean of having an English teacher with good pronunciation also implies a good point in this field.

**Table 3 - Students' perspectives on teachers' profile.**

Perspectives	1	2	3	4	N	Mean	SD
The English teacher must be a native English speaker.	10	68	104	38	220	2.77	0.784
The English Professor must be well-prepared in their field of language.	2	2	76	140	220	3.61	0.559
Could a non-native speaker be an English teacher?	8	19	78	115	220	3.36	0.791
A good English teacher should sound with good pronunciation.	1	12	119	88	220	3.34	0.601

Source: Moncayo (2024).

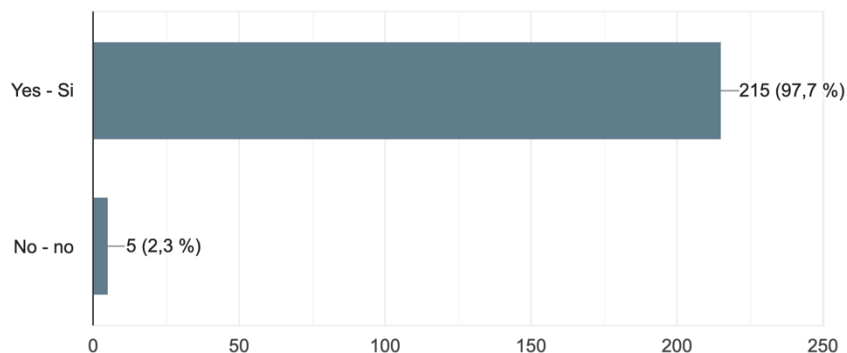
## 5. Findings

The following statistical studies were carried out based on the results:

**Figure 1** - The survey demonstrates that most students like to learn a second language.

Do you like learning a second language? te gusta aprender un segundo idioma?

220 respuestas



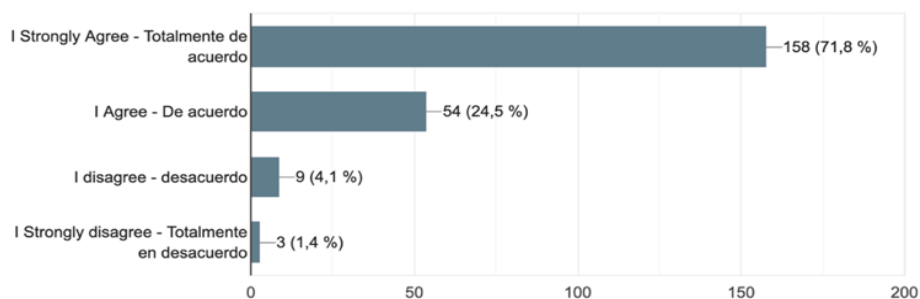
Source: Moncayo (2024).

Including cultural features of the target language in foreign language lessons would significantly increase students' interest in and drive to study the language. (Ho, M. C., 1998) This result demonstrates that 215 students agree that they would like to learn a second language. Moreover, as Figure 2 demonstrates, most learners believe learning a second language will help them reach their professional career goals; in this group of learners surveyed, 212 learners agreed on that.

**Figure 2** - The students demonstrate that they agree that learning a second language will aid them in reaching their goals in their professional careers.

Do you think learning a second language will help you to reach your professional goals? ¿Crees que aprender un segundo idioma te ayudará a alcanzar tus metas profesionales?

220 respuestas



Source: Moncayo (2024).

## 6. Discussion and Conclusions

This study sought students' perspectives on their ideal English teacher, for instance, in the profiles, instructions, and Identity. Hence, the results from the perspective of motivation from the teacher to student are the one with the high ( $M= 3.66$ ) in Table 1 item 1, Moreover obtained a high ( $M= 3.62$ ). In Table 2, item 3, most students believe that the English professor must prepare an excellent lesson for the class; these results confirm Bernaus & Gardner's (2008) findings that students' motivation plays a significant role in learning a second language. Thus, learning a foreign language refers to a suggestion to plan a perfect lesson for the class. Nevertheless, aptitude generally refers to having the capacity to master a foreign or second language from students (Wen, Biedroń, & Skehan, 2017). These groups of learners demonstrate that preparing a good lesson plan for class can get satisfactory results in learning EFL. As the ( $M= 3.61$ ) in set 3 item 2 proves, EFL learners in this university agree that their ideal English teacher must be well prepared in their field, which means having skills in teaching EFL or English linguistic career. Hence. It means that EFL teachers are the ones most students prefer instead of other English teachers prepared in another field.

On the other hand, the high mean in set 1 item 2 shows us an ( $M=3.58$ ) that students appreciate that professor who works on students' anxiety instead of giving them pleasure in the process of EFL learning as the ( $M=3.45$ ) in set 1 item 3 from students declare that the professor roles must calibrate with students in security while learning EFL. Moreover, in set 1, item 4 presents that students prefer a professor who can manage a good atmosphere in class and with the necessary authority when required as the ( $M= 3.48$ ) from this results. In the same set 1 on the last item ( $M= 3.53$ ), students again emerge with the result that they prefer an EFL teacher who can manage an excellent stimulating environment in the classroom but does not leave his or her professional development to teach EFL. In conclusion, after analysing these results from students, there is a clear point of view from the student's perspective in their ideal English professor, An instructor who inspires students maintains a positive classroom environment while establishing an authoritative and respectful tone through their knowledge of the subject.

On students' perception of the ideal English instructions, the ( $M= 3.27$ ) results showed that they agreed to have a teacher familiar with their social and cultural background, whereas the ( $M= 3.55$ ) agreed that they prefer an English professor with much experience teaching English. The essential teaching component is teaching expertise, which necessitates adequate theories and procedures (Mudra 2018). Therefore, an English teacher with experience can manage it as this group of students desires. As experience could be one of the aspects to consider, the ( $M= 3.55$ ) agree to have an English teacher with much experience in their classroom.

On the other hand, in set 3 item 1, the students voted to prefer a native English teacher ( $M= 2.77$ ); nevertheless, students admit that a non-native speaker of English can be an EFL teacher ( $M= 3.36$ ) from the result in set 3 item 3. Comparing these results with the ones made at the different levels, it emerged that most students preferred native English speakers instead of non-native speakers, yet the same group of students investigated demonstrated that they agree that a non-native English speaker can be an English professor, as the results from Carillo et al. (2022) made in the same university the results from their investigation emerged with similar results as this one in the preference of their native English speaker.

Furthermore, pronunciation is also essential in this group of students as they agree to have an EFL professor with good pronunciation as the ( $M= 3.66$ ) rose in this set 3 item 4.

In contrast, Al-Khairi (2015) mentioned that pupils dislike learning a second language. Cited in (Herrra, p. 8, 2022), this group of Ecuadorian university students demonstrated that they like to learn a second language, as in Figure 1, with well-prepared English teachers in their field. Hence, young adult learners believe that learning a second language will aid them in their professional lives, as Figure 2 demonstrates the survey results.

As the present study tried to identify the ideal English professor for this group of young adult learners in a university, it seems to summarise that most of them prefer an English professor who specialises in their field and with good pronunciation as it is an international English language, the accent is not better or worse however learners wait to have well prepared English teachers in the area.

The results have been positive after the survey; however, this study faces limitations as it was online. The researcher could not see whether all students answered the questions with awareness of the importance of the topic, besides the lack of studies implemented in Ecuador about this topic to compare results.

Finally, it may be better for future researchers to implement this research with many more students in more universities in the same university or country about the perspectives of their ideal English professor. Therefore, this can change the results from these findings or can add some more details to them.

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