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The influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning  
process in Ecuadorian high schools

TRABAJO DE FIN DE TITULACIÓN

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*Septiembre, 2018*

APROBACIÓN DEL DIRECTOR DE TRABAJO DE FIN DE TITULACIÓN

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María Arias Córdova

DOCENTE DE LA TITULACIÓN

De mi consideración:

El presente trabajo de fin de titulación: “The influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools” realizado por Farinango Machay José Feliciano; ha sido orientado y revisado durante su ejecución, por cuanto se aprueba la presentación del mismo.

Loja, mayo de 2014

f). .....

## DECLARACIÓN DE AUTORIA Y CESIÓN DE DERECHOS

“Yo, Farinango Machay José Feliciano declaro ser autor del presente trabajo de fin de titulación: “The influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools”, de la Titulación de Ciencias de la Educación mención Ingles, siendo María Arias Córdova directora del presente trabajo; y eximo expresamente a la Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja y a sus representantes legales de posibles reclamos o acciones legales. Además certifico que las ideas, conceptos, procedimientos y resultados vertidos en el presente trabajo investigativo, son de mi exclusiva responsabilidad.

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f).....

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## DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this research work to God for being my source of life and giving me the intelligence and strength to go on every day.

To my family who has been my support in bad and good times, thanks for all their love and help.

All my love to my son Marlon Smith for giving me the inspiration and the necessary strength to face the challenge of achieving my English Bachelor's Degree.

José Feliciano

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José Feliciano

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## ABSTRACT

This research is about the influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools. It was carried out to analyze main aspects related to academic aspect, social aspect and psychological aspect that hinder the English language teaching-learning process.

With that purpose, one high school was selected in Machala city and the participants were students, two classrooms from 8<sup>th</sup> grades two classrooms from 9<sup>th</sup> grades and one classroom from 10<sup>th</sup> grade of high school respectively.

The methods used in this research were quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative because it made possible to obtain accurate information, explain the relationship among variables, and interpret the data using statistics.

The qualitative research for exploring and understanding the phenomenon. Also, for interpreting the gathered information.

The results of this study show that the factor that affect large classes are: big number of students per classroom, lack of skills in managing learning, class size, classroom space, and different levels of proficiency. This means that teachers work in overcrowded classrooms and they neither manage learning correctly nor use English language for motivating students to learn in a good way.

Key words: English language teaching- learning process, influence –large classes



## RESUMEN

Esta investigación es sobre la influencia de las grandes clases en el proceso de enseñanza- aprendizaje del idioma Inglés en los colegios secundarias del Ecuador. Se llevó a cabo para analizar los principales aspectos relacionados con el aspecto académico, aspecto social y el aspecto psicológico que dificultan el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje del idioma Inglés.

Con este propósito, se seleccionó un colegio secundario en la ciudad de Machala y los participantes fueron estudiantes, dos aulas del octavo nivel, dos aulas del noveno nivel y un aula del décimo nivel de secundaria respectivamente.

Los métodos utilizados en esta investigación fueron cuantitativos y cualitativos. Lo cuantitativo porque hizo posible obtener información precisa y explicar la relación entre las variables, e interpretar los datos utilizando la estadística. La investigación cualitativa para explorar y comprender el fenómeno. Además, para la interpretación de la información obtenida.

Los resultados de las encuesta muestra que las principales influencias de las grandes clases son: gran número de alumnos por aula, la falta de habilidades en el manejo de aprendizaje, tamaño de la clase, el espacio del aula, y los diferentes niveles de competencia, esto significa que los profesores trabajan en aulas superpobladas y que no gestionan el aprendizaje correctamente ni utilizar un lenguaje de Inglés para motivar a los estudiantes a aprender en un buen sentido.

Palabras claves: Proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje, influencia grandes clases.

## INTRODUCTION

English is one of the most used languages in the world that brings people access to up to date and useful information needed in work and academic areas. For instance, students who enter the university need to have good English language skills in order to get academic success to continue their studies in a good way.

But there is a vast number of students who finish secondary education that do not have enough English language skills to develop the basic language communicative competence. In consequence, young Ecuadorian people do not have opportunities to improve their academic and professional skills and that is a limitation in their path.

Therefore, the title of this research is about the influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools and it has three main objectives; first, what instructional implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?; second, what social implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?; third, what psychological implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?

The objective of this research is to determine whether or not large classes affect the English language teaching-learning process, and there are some studies related to this topic that need to be considered. That is why those studies present the following information that is worthily to review.

Firstly, Thaher (2004) did a research about the effects of large classes on English as a foreign language. The purpose of this study was to determine what are the instructional effects of large classes, what are the psychological effects of large classes, what are the social effects of large classes on students by investigating and

analyzing EFL students' attitudes toward large classes at An-Najah National University in Palestine. The researcher distributed the questionnaires; the data for the questionnaire was collected according to feedback from the students at An-Najah. The researcher asked the students an open ended question about the effect of large classes on them. After gathering the data, the answers were classified into three major areas: instructional, psychological and social.

The second study was done by Khati (2010) to analyze exploring common expectations from students in large multilevel secondary level English classes in Ramechhap district in Nepal. The most important part about this study is to find out the expectations of students inside the classroom where they are learning English in different ways and the classroom is large in size.

That is why the researcher applied a questionnaire on six different areas like classroom management, establishing collaboration, range of tasks, giving feedback, classroom English and home assignment. For the questionnaire survey, sixty students of tenth grade from government aided school were selected to get required information. Thirty students were from Ramechhap district and thirty from Kathmandu valley representing rural and urban area of Nepal. The result does not have huge variation about the expectations of students of urban and rural areas.

The third study was done by Al-Husseini (2006) to analyze how English language teachers' perceptions of class size and the factors that influence them. The participants of this research were one hundred and twelve EL teachers' males and females teach in the three public educational levels as elementary, preparatory and secondary, and in the colleges in the Sultanate of Oman participated in answering the

questionnaire. The questionnaire contained 15 questions; this question contains 15 statements, the possible factors that might determine the teachers' perception of the class size.

Regarding the benefits of this research, this document will serve as a basis for people who want to know about the influence of large classes and it will help educational institutions in general, teachers, and students who are involved in the teaching and learning to bring a clear view of areas that need to be improved in the English language teaching and they will have better opportunities in their academic and professional lives.

In addition, this study is an important tool for teachers who want to work in large classes in public institutions because they will raise awareness of the factors that need to be improved in order to provide Ecuadorian students better English language knowledge.

The results found in this research, there were some limitations. Besides, not all the visited schools were open to help to the development of the study. For instance, Principals from more than three high schools felt threatened by the possibility of being observed and some teachers felt uncomfortable being observed and they did not behave naturally.

In addition, some students exaggerated their behavior while others performed shy as a result of the presence of the researcher in the classroom. Another limitation was related to the questionnaires, there were some questions that students did not understand and that influenced the accuracy of the results, those were some disadvantages of the process of observation and survey.

## METHOD

### *Setting and participants*

This research was carried in Machala province, a city in the Ecuadorian coast. In that city, one public high school was selected to conduct the study. The students who were part of this study were teenagers male and female between 14 to 16 years old, and all of them belong to a medium- to- low social and economic level.

In this institution, five classrooms were assigned by the director to participate in the survey. Those students were observed and surveyed 45 minutes, one class per day and each classroom had an average between 38 to 41 students in each classroom.

### *Procedure*

This research started out by seeking scientific information for the theoretical support on topics such as: Teaching approach methods, class size (number of students), Managing learning (instructions, feedback, discipline, and timing), Managing learning classes, Activities for working with large classes, Seating arrangement and classroom space (physical space-big/small rooms), Different level of proficiency, and five previous studies related to the research topic. This information was obtained through resources made available from books, scientific articles, journals, and internet.

The method applied in this study was quantitative and qualitative, by means of which the information was described, the data was collected and analyzed according to three aspects that were instructional aspect, social aspect, and psychological aspect.

The research process was conducted according to the following steps. First, five classrooms of public high school in Machala province where English is taught as a foreign language. Those students were surveyed for 45 minutes, one class per day and each classroom had an average between 38 to 41 students in each classroom.

The process of the research field consisted of applying instruments for gathering data during five days, in which five classes were observed and surveyed. Surveys consisted of different statements asked to students to know more about if large classes influence the teaching learning process; the details were recorded in survey sheets by taking 21 items about different aspects such as instructional aspect, social aspect and psychological aspect.

In addition, teachers were observed for 30 minutes while they worked with students in the classes, and the details of each class were taken as notes for the researcher in order to know what is the real interaction between students and teachers, teacher and students.

Once all the necessary data was collected, the results of the students' questionnaire were quantified using the quantitative method and Microsoft Excel 2010 program was used to calculate the percentages of answers obtained in each question in order to present the results in statistical charts.

The statistical charts allowed the researcher to have a better approach of the obtained results, and to analyze them it was necessary to use the answers of the students' statements provided in the survey. The analysis consisted of classifying the results according to instructional aspect, social aspect and psychological aspect related to students. Besides, theories from the literature review section were used also to support the findings.

## DISCUSSION

### Literature review

In Ecuador, as in other countries of the world, teaching English as a foreign language or English as a second language have been paying special attention in identifying the needs and attitudes of their students towards English and their reason for learning it. In order to accomplish this goal, Ecuadorian government has been making a lot of activities as teacher's training, updating methodologies which can help to improve the way that they teach.

Teachers know that there are a lot of ways to teach a second language inside or outside the classrooms, but for many reasons, teachers have to stop using some important methods, techniques making classes boring and uncomfortable for learners.

Nowadays, teachers are trying to teach English over 45 or 50 students per class that is not good. According to the students' needs, teachers have to apply new techniques, develop interesting classes and use different methods in order to keep students engaged in the learning process.

Teachers know that sometimes there is a little difficult to teach children a foreign language; for that reason, in this time this research is going to focus the influence of large classes in the English language teaching learning process with the purpose of determining whether or not large classes affect in the learning teaching process.

The teaching of English is made up of different aspects that involve teachers and students. Some aspects are going to be reviewed within this section.

### *Teaching approaches and methods*

Approaches and methods in teaching English can be seen as a historical sequence of revolutions and evolutions, some teachers prefer to practice one of the methods to the exclusion of the others, other teachers prefer to pick and choose in a principled way among the methodological options that exist, creating their own unique blend.

Of course, what is described here is only an abstraction. How a method is manifested in the classroom will depend heavily on the individual teacher's interpretation of its principles that is why some of the main methodological options available today are presented according some authors to apply in their lessons.

According to Freeman (2007) the characteristics of the grammar-translation method focuses on developing students' appreciation of the target language's literature as well as teaching the language. Students are presented with target language reading passages and answer questions that follow. Other activities include translating literary passages from one language into the other, memorizing grammar rules, and memorizing native languages equivalents of target language vocabulary. Class work is highly structured, with the teachers controlling all activities.

Regarding Grammar Translation method, Richard & Rodgers (2001) report that it has been used by language educators for many years and in modified form it continues to be widely practiced in some parts of the world today, the principal characteristics are to learn a language in order to read it, reading and writing are the major focus; little or no systematic attention is paid to speaking or listening and grammar is taught deductively that is, by presentation and study of grammar rules,



which are then practiced through translation exercises, and the sentence is the basic unit of teaching and language practice.

Regarding total physical response (TRP), Richard & Rodgers (2001) report that it begins by placing primary importance on listening comprehension, emulating the early stages of mother tongue acquisition, and then moving to speaking, reading, and writing. Students demonstrate their comprehension by acting out commands issued by the teacher; teacher provides novel and often humorous variations of the commands. Activities are designed to be fun and to allow students to assume active learning roles. Activities eventually include games and skits, as Freeman (2007) quotes that TRP was developed to reduce the stress students feel when studying a foreign language, by the use of variety of instructions and amusing skits making, in these way the language learning as enjoyable as possible.

Richard & Rogers (2001, p. 177) who describe the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) as “is the best considered an approach rather than a method”, it refers to a diverse set of principles that reflect a communicative view of language and language learning, and that can be used to support a wide variety of classroom procedures, in order to improve learners skill as reading, listening, and speaking,

Similarly, the CLT intend broadly, as Freeman (2000) suggests that this method gives importance to communicate in the target language; the author comments that everything is done with a communicative intent that is why students use the language a great deal through communicative activities like games, role plays, and problem-solving task as a result of this method the activities are truly communicative.

Other approaches used for teaching English in the classrooms are Content-Based Instruction, Cooperative language teaching and Whole language teaching.

Details of this method is provided by Richards & Rodgers (2001) who explain about Content-based instruction which language is taught through content subject matter because in that way learning becomes motivating for learners but this approach can be challenging for teachers because they need to acquire knowledge in the subject matter.

Likewise, Freeman (2000) describes as a way of learning language naturally because the contents for language instructions are taught through academic content. This method has originated a recent movement known as language across the curriculum because it integrates reading, writing, and grammar into different subjects' areas. Thus learners would need extra support to comprehend lessons and teachers must designed objectives for their classes.

This author also describes about Cooperative language teaching that the main purpose of cooperative language teaching is to help the teacher build positive relationship among students and at the same time teach cooperative skills among learners; here the teacher is a facilitator and take part in the teaching-learning process as an independent participant.

Finally, there is a learning approach known as Whole language teaching the principal characteristics are students centered learning in reading real text, focus on real and natural at the same time the authors mention that Whole Language approach make emphasis on using language naturally in the same way students learn their native language. In addition, learners use language functions such as for egocentric

thinking just as the way people do it in everyday life as conclusion whole language movements is not a teaching method

To sum up, there are some approaches and methods that are useful for teachers and they can be applied according to the teaching objectives of a lesson.

#### *Class size (number of students)*

Class size is one of the features that influence the English teaching and learning process as Harmer (1998, p.129) States that “big groups have disadvantages of course, but they also have one main advantage – they are bigger, so that humor, for example, is funnier, drama is more dramatic, a good class feeling is warmer and more enveloping”. The author adds that experience teachers use this potential to organize exciting and involving classes.

Similarly, Blatchford (2003, p. 2 ) reports that “While the teacher in the small class spent little time on control, and there was little need to keep children on-task, in the large class interactions with the children largely involved a constant battle to keep children`s attention on-task”.

This author notices that class size influence the type of activities that teachers plan for a lesson, the author also explains that some problems evidenced in classrooms with more than thirty students are: variety of abilities and proficiency, individual attention is reduced, students have fewer opportunities to practice speaking, and it is hard to individualize teaching according to students ‘needs specially when there are more than 30 students, In sum, this author expresses that small classes are better than large classes.

Another important definition of large classes is the following:

Class size fit neatly in categories. Ten to 15 students is the classical small class. Discussions are easy to set up, you'll know quite a bit about each of your students, and you can be very flexible in how you structure the class. Essay exams and term papers are the norm and not burdensome to correct. Fifteen to 40 students or so doesn't represent a qualitative difference in course structure, but things are just a bit harder for teachers. (Heppner 2007, p. 3).

As this author says, teachers need a different set of attitudes when teachers teach a large class. A large class is totally different than a small class that teachers have to be sure what they are going to teach.

According to Gibbs & Jenkis (1992) shy students, who may have the confidence to contribute in small groups, tend to keep quiet in large class. In fact, these authors claim that large class is one of the factors that influence teachers-student interaction and the effects on students' performance can vary among learners group.

#### *Managing learning (instruction, feedback, discipline, and timing)*

Managing learning is part of language instruction because many authors argue that it helps teachers to make classes more interesting. Likewise, teachers do not use only techniques and methods in the classroom; they also give feedback, instruction and time for each activity or task.

With regard to feedback Gower, Phillips, & Walters (1983) suggest that feedback is often given soon after you have finished teaching, through it can take

place a little later, or the following day. That is why; giving feedback is one of the most important responsibilities of a teacher. By providing ongoing feedback you can help your students evaluate their success and progress. Feedback can take a number of forms: giving praise and encouragement; correcting; setting regular tests; having discussions about how the group as a whole is doing; giving individual tutorials; etc. it also gives information that enables the learners to adjust what he or she is doing in order to get better.

About instruction, Gower, Phillips, & Walters (1983, p.40) suggests that “First attract the students’ attention and make sure everyone is listening and watching. Do not give out any handouts which may distract the students’ attention”. The authors also give tips to make instruction effective: use simple language and short expressions, be consistent, use visual or written clues, demonstrate, break the instruction down, target your instruction, be decisive, additionally, good use of eye contact is crucial in helping to establish comprehension. A teacher who never looks students in the eye seems to lack confidence and gives the students a sense of insecurity.

An interesting aspect about instruction and timing, Davis & Pearse (2000, p.117) claim that all of classes are normally based on a syllabus.” The syllabus constitutes the teacher essential guide for the course. It sets the teachers’ objectives and tells what to teach, in what order, in what period of time, and-to some extent-how”, in other words the authors state that effective instructions are vital if activities are to go well, especially activities involving changes of interaction teachers need to have all the learners’ attention when giving instructions.

Teachers need to train them to be quiet and listen very carefully, also teachers have to think about both what teachers are going to say, and how students are going to say it. Instructions should be simple and clear, and as far as possible, standardized; that is why teacher's job is to correct learners, and to give them help when necessary. Those authors above emphasize that teachers give instructions according to learners' level of language. As an example: main techniques for beginner levels consist on repetition and drills, questions, group and pair activities. For a less experienced class, indicate who is to take which role, and give separate instructions for each stage of the activity

With regard to timing, Cummings (2000, p. 31) says "How we use our time and space directly affects students learning, and time is the coin of teaching. It's up to us to spend it wisely".

This author also explains that research base in support of time on a task, common sense tells us that the more time a student spends on a task and the more likely students are to master the task, and teachers address how to find that time and how much time to delegate to various activities. In addition, this author comments that each activity on a lesson plan must have an adequate amount, teachers should consider delivering of resources and teacher talk when planning time for each activity.

### *Managing large classes*

There is evidence that in managing large classes the most important part is to develop motivation and activation in order to get the best result during the class.

According to Saraswathi (2004) large classes make unrealistic demands on teachers because large classes encourage indiscipline, management of large classes is

physically exhausting, individual attention is impossible in large class, which is the reason a teacher cannot even get to know the names of all learners in a large class, a personalized approach, very vital to the process of learning, becomes impossible in a large class. A large class could become a relaxing experience for a teacher if the focus shifts from the teacher to the learners. For the learner learns by doing, not by remaining passive. Also the shy students, who may have the confidence to contribute in small groups, tend to keep quiet in large classes.

More information about managing large classes are given by , Davis & Pearse (2000) who report that in large classes are obviously much more difficult to achieve good results, because the learners may not all be able to see or hear you well, and teachers may not be able to see or hear all the learners well and it is very hard to get to know all the learners and their names, also there are too many pairs or groups for you to monitor and you cannot often give learners individual feedback on written work. According to these authors, the best way to teach is probably obtaining the learners' co-operation. If learners are adolescents or adults, teachers can discuss the challenges and options they face in their knowledge and teachers have to prepare some dialogues, role plays, talks, and present them at the front of the class

On the other hand, Jones (2007) suggests that the ideal size for a student-centered language class is probably 12, the number 12 can be divided into 6 pairs, or 4 groups of 3, or 3 groups of 4, or 2 groups of 6 and 12 students can easily hear one another in a whole class activity. But, of course, we can't choose the number of students in our classes. Most classes are larger, many classes are far larger.

The difference between a large class and a smaller class is the amount of time we have to monitor the groups; teachers may need to rearrange the students and where students sit. It is also important for students to sit close together so that they can talk softly and still hear one another, Keep track of which groups you listen to so no one gets left out, rearrange groups to be near enough for you to overhear as teachers walk around. A lot of students talking loudly make a lot of noise.

Another important information is presented by Mayer (2000, p. 31) says “How teachers implement the course content, instructional pedagogy, and technology use in the classroom may all be influenced by the number of students in the class”.

A final information about managing large classes, Anderson (2004) who declares that the best way to encourage students to learn is to apply the cooperative learning groups where the students work together and the role of the teachers is to introduce the task, ensure that the instructions are understood, ensure that each group has sufficient materials and equipment to complete the task successfully.

In sum, authors above coincide on choosing managing large classes according to teachers’ need in order to provide better opportunities of learning. At last, the authors concluded that teaching in large classes requires that teachers use combination of teaching methods and improve their knowledge in managing large classes.

#### *Activities for working with large classes*

Teachers can use different activities for working with large classes to make lessons more interesting and effective.



Woodward (2001) explains that if you have large classes from, say, 15 students upwards, either put students into pairs so that two students can work together on each sheet of paper and topic, or with much bigger classes of, say, 30 or 40, put students into groups of ten. Teachers have to get them to designate numbers so that everyone in each group knows who is number one, number two, etc. Then when calling out topics give, for example, all students one's 'movies' and all student two 'leisure activities ' and so on, this kind of activities encourage an awareness of work grouping, and it provides unforgettable experiences to learner at the same time avoid class routine.

Furthermore, Harmer (1998) reports that in large class is difficult for the teacher to make contact with the students who are sitting at the back and it is difficult for the students to ask for and receive individual attention. According to him it may seem impossible to organize dynamic and creative teaching and learning sections. Because, in large class is not easy to have students walking around or changing pairs etc. But, there are things which teachers can do as worksheets, use chorus reactions, use group leaders, and also in large classes, pair work and group work play an important part since they maximize students' participation. In a big group student chairs and desks cannot be moved, on the other way, it becomes difficult to use a lot of individual repetition and controlled practice, it may be more appropriate to use students in chorus.

Moreover, Keats & Boughey (1994) suggest something that activities in large classes are used to support the learning process. In this sense, these authors propose to use the technique of dividing large numbers of students into smaller groups

working simultaneously in the same classroom in order to increase their academic skills programs.

Additionally about activities for working with large classes are described by Jones (2007, p. 7) who says, “Some activities, like discussion and role play, are quite clearly suitable as working-together activities. Others, such as writing tasks or multiple-choice and fill-the-blank exercises, may not seem suitable at first glance”.

This author discusses that those activities may be just as effective and enjoyable when done in pairs or groups. When there are a lot of students brainstorming and comparing answers can lead to very lively discussions, but they have to be in English, and teachers may have to convince students that this is desirable.

Hess (2001, p.8) argue that “A variety of activities and techniques is important in all learning situations but particularly relevant in the large multilevel class because varieties of tasks can accommodate different levels in our class”. As this author suggests, during a vocabulary lesson, some students can be looking up the dictionary definition of words, while others find sentences in the text where the words appeared, and still others are formulating their own original sentences with the new words, if the students have been reading silently for a while, let them join a partner and read to each other. Variety is extremely important in provoking interest within large groups of students.

#### *Classroom space and Seating Arrangement (physical space-big/small rooms)*

There are many authors who claim that the physical classroom space influence students’ learning. Ideally classroom should have enough space to allow teachers and students interact adequately.

A first argument is explained by Anderson (2004, p 51) who reports “When students are expected to engage in discussion with other students, the physical arrangement of the classroom should facilitate (e.g. circular arrangements) rather than inhibit (e.g. static row and column arrangements) this discussion.”

In other words, well planned seating arrangement and placement of students who need help maintaining their attention in the front and center of the seating arrangement encourage these students to pay attention and participate during the class and, teachers make an effort to give students an attractive and comfortable environment in order to enhance learning process. Classroom space also determines the way students will move inside the class.

Another important point is given by Harmer (2006) who suggests that in many classrooms around the world students sit in orderly rows, there are many ways to organize the classrooms like separate table, circle, horseshoe, solo work, whole class, group work and pair work, those are very important because teachers need to keep in touch with what is going on and involve all students in such a situation. Whatever the seating arrangement in a classroom, students can be organized in different ways: They can work as a whole class, in groups, in pairs, or individually.

Moreover, Gower, Phillips, & Walters (2005, p.21) claim that “Your position and the way you organize the position of the students in your class is of great importance”. According to the authors, seating arrangement defines student’s interaction and contributes in class activities, and changing the seat place is valuable depending on the interaction desired. Teachers have to have enough time and help to make the necessary changes, where the students sit in a classroom can determine

their attitude to each other and to you, your attitude to them, how they interact, and the types of activity they can do

Additionally, Jones (2007, p.8) states that, “Real classrooms are often crowded. But even if we can’t move the furniture, the students can move! For pair work, students sitting side-by-side can move their upper bodies to face each other.”

As this author says, in order to improve the physical conditions of classrooms try to rearrange your students regularly if your class is composed of long rows, making sure that those in the middle sometimes sit on the outside, teachers have to think creatively about seating arrangements to ensure students can speak comfortably.

About this theme Achilles, Finn & Bain (2002) report that attention in large class size, teachers were unable to give individual attention and instructions, that is the reason in classes more than thirty students, they did not have the time to provide individualized attention to students who need to help academically as a result of this study, it was quite evident that the large class size affected some students, most of the students need more attention during the class.

#### *Different levels of proficiency*

This is one of the most difficult areas to control for when conducting second language research and the level of success in English learning may be determined by students’ aptitude or intelligence according to some authors.

About advantage and disadvantage of different levels of proficiency has been explained by Lou & Shekhtman (2002, p.20) who suggest that “At the lower levels, students need to acquire the basic linguistic system and some understanding of

culture. At the higher levels, they need to acquire the uncommon, as well as the common”.

This affirmation in some cases are different because nobody has the same skills to learn foreign language, in that case teachers have to take a placement test to know what the real knowledge from them is.

In addition, Zehler (1994) who claims that as classroom teachers are able to work with students who have different levels of ability, in areas of strength and in special skills or aptitudes. English language learners bring all times to the classroom new ideas or different questions. In this case teachers’ experiences in working with diversity among English speaking students have to understand and give a possible solution.

Furthermore, Maxom (2009, p. 52) who reports that “When you select information to teach in your lessons, you need to think about what level the students are at add how well your lesson fits into what they already know and what they need to know”.

In other words this author also expresses that if the instructional pace is too rapid, students skills will be left behind. There are many ways to give instruction to students’ diverse needs, but each technic has obstacle, when they don` t have the same level as others they have to organize some specific programs as special education and remedial programs, those are a special form of ability grouping designed to provide special resources to accelerate the achievement of students with learning problems.

Another important point is given by Harmer (2006) claims that one of the biggest problems teachers face is a lesson where the students are at different levels,

some with quite competent English, some whose English is not very good, and some whose English is only just getting started. In order to avoid problems of teaching mixed ability class, this author suggests using different materials, different tasks, ignoring the problem or using students as ways of dealing with it.

In addition once the supporting themes above have showed important information of some details that may influence of large classes, likewise, studies with the same focus of this research will be analyzed too.

Therefore, studies are going to help us to know how similar investigations were developed and which results were obtained. Thus, the next five studies are going to be examined carefully to know different aspects about the influence of large classes in the English language teaching learning process.

Firstly, Thaher (2004) did a research about the effects of large classes on English as a foreign language. The purpose of this study was to determine what are the instructional effects of large classes, what are the psychological effects of large classes, what are the social effects of large classes on students by investigating and analyzing EFL students' attitudes toward large classes at An-Najah National University in Palestine. The researcher distributed the questionnaires; the data for the questionnaire was collected according to feedback from the students at An-Najah.

The researcher asked the students an open ended question about the effect of large classes on them. After gathering the data, the answers were classified into three major areas: instructional, psychological and social which were considered as the study instrument by the researcher in the form of a questionnaire.

As a conclusion students demonstrated negative and positive responses towards large classes. It is important to point out that while dealing with the negative instructional effects which large classes have on EFL students, teachers should take into consideration the social and the psychological effects since these effects are interrelated.

The second study was done by Khati (2010) to analyze exploring common expectations from students in large multilevel secondary level English classes in Ramechhap district in Nepal. The most important part about this study is to find out the expectations of students inside the classroom where they are learning English in different ways and the classroom is large in size. That is why the researcher applied a questionnaire on six different areas like classroom management, establishing collaboration, range of tasks, giving feedback, classroom English and home assignment. For the questionnaire survey, sixty students of tenth grade from government aided school were selected to get required information. Thirty students were from Ramechhap district and thirty from Kathmandu valley representing rural and urban area of Nepal.

The result does not have huge variation about the expectations of students of urban and rural areas. The students from rural area show slightly higher expectation in using mother tongue in an English class, whereas the sharing experiences like activities is more liked by the students from urban area. Similarly, the students from urban seem to be more frank and shared as they have higher expectation in participating group and pair tasks, and they have three times more expectation of native like English than the students of rural area who expect more simple English. Therefore, the researcher concluded that in a large heterogeneous class, there is no

alternative of developing a collaborative working atmosphere, providing a variety of works and making all students involved in different activities appropriate for different levels. She also opines about the movement of the teacher that moving around the class also makes the class seem smaller and encourages student involvement. This study also proves that an English teacher should move all around the class.

The third study was done by Al-Husseini (2006) to analyze how English language teachers' perceptions of class size and the factors that influence them. The participants of this research were one hundred and twelve EL teachers' males and females teach in the three public educational levels as elementary, preparatory and secondary, and in the colleges in the Sultanate of Oman participated in answering the questionnaire.

The questionnaire contained 15 questions; this question contains 15 statements, the possible factors that might determine the teachers' perception of the class size. This was followed by an open question where participants were asked to state any other factors they would like to. In order to encourage participation the participants were not asked to write their names or schools. . Main results showed that there is a relationship between teacher's perception of class size and his/her experience of the largest and smallest class size, the school size and the educational context in his/her country. Researchers concluded that a classroom with goal orientation influence learning and motivate students to perform better achieving the goals of the class.



The aim of the fourth study was performed to analyze an examination of teachers' perceptions and practice when teaching large and reduced size classes and teachers really teach them in the same way. This study was performed by Harfitt (2012) and it consisted in relation to the methods used in this study as the database includes 22 semi-structured of three experienced English language teachers with three experienced teachers across three case study schools as well as 48 lesson observations in Hong Kong secondary schools. In this study constitutes a teacher teaching a large class as well as a reduced size class of comparable level and ability. Each case then provides an opportunity to understand and explain any differences that are identified. By taking a particular case and understanding it well, it is possible to determine what it is and what it does.

The researcher found that main aspects the small classes are better than larger ones. With regard to teachers, some of them demonstrated good teaching practice to solve problems of second language learning, and training in teaching methods. Among main conclusions, the researcher state that study of this kind may also help to address another under researched area in class size, namely what distinguishes more successful small classes from the less successful ones and what best practice in small class teaching might look like the best thing to improve student's performance in language learning.

The last study was done by Adeyemi (2007) to know what relationship and difference exist between class size and the quality of output from secondary schools in Ekiti State in Nigeria. This study was performed with the participation of 120 schools; those were selected through stratified random sampling technique. The instrument used for collecting information for the study was an inventory. They

described an inventory as a checklist or an open instrument compiled to serve educational needs. The inventory comprised items on enrolment figures, number of classes in each school; number of teachers and students' grades in English Language in schools. The average class size was determined by dividing the total number of students in each school by the total number of classes. Schools in the sample were categorized into two groups. The schools with the average class size of 35 students or below per class were classified into one group while schools with the average class size of above 35 students per class were classified into the other.

In addition, the researchers observed that the findings also agreed that the classrooms in schools are often few for the large number of students in a class thereby affecting their achievement level. At the end of the study, the researcher concluded that class size is a critical factor in determining the quality of output from secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Students in schools having small class sizes had better quality of output than students in schools having large class sizes.

## Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

In this section we will focus on the main part of the research, which are the results. To accomplish this purpose we are going to examine all the results using a qualitative and quantitative analysis.

The result will be described and analyzed to establish the influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools, statistical graphs will show the percentages obtained in the students' surveys. Then, those percentages will be analyzed using information from surveys formats.

Finally the results obtained are sustained with the support of the information from the literature review section. It is important to mention that the data presented here is classified into the influence of large classes related to academic aspect, social aspect and psychological aspect.

*Quantitative Analysis*

*Instructional implications*

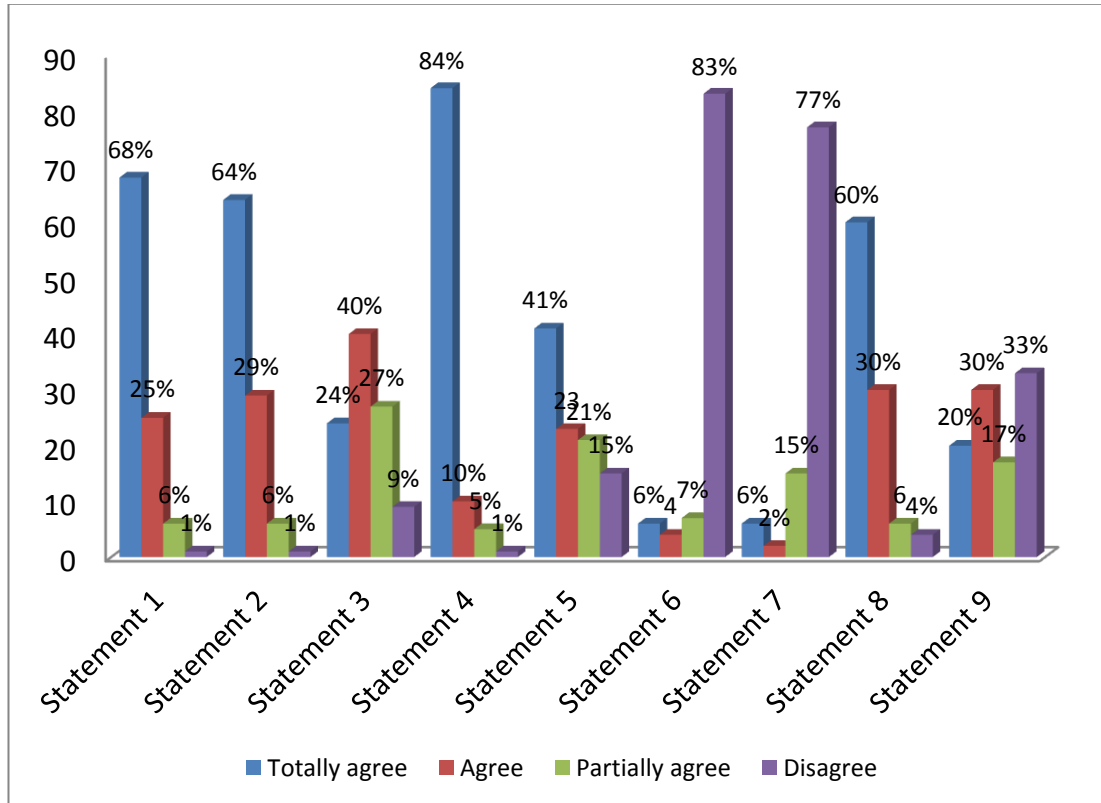
*What instructional implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?*

TABLE 1

| N | In classes with a large number of students:   | Totally agree |    | Agree |    | Partially agree |    | Disagree |   | TOTAL |     |
|---|---|---------------|----|-------|----|-----------------|----|----------|---|-------|-----|
|   |   | f             | %  | f     | %  | f               | %  | f        | % | f     | %   |
| 1 | The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class.  | 135           | 68 | 49    | 25 | 12              | 6  | 2        | 1 | 198   | 100 |
| 2 | The activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.                                | 128           | 64 | 57    | 29 | 12              | 6  | 1        | 1 | 198   | 100 |
| 3 | The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those sitting at the back of the classroom. | 48            | 24 | 80    | 40 | 54              | 27 | 16       | 9 | 198   | 100 |
| 4 | Varied class  | 167           | 84 | 21    | 10 | 9               | 5  | 1        | 1 | 198   | 100 |

|   |  |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     |     |
|---|--|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|-----|-----|
|   | activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc.                      |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     |     |
| 5 | Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class.                | 82  | 41 | 46 | 23 | 41 | 21 | 29  | 15 | 198 | 100 |
| 6 | Students can cheat during the test.  | 11  | 6  | 7  | 4  | 14 | 7  | 166 | 83 | 198 | 100 |
| 7 | Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects.                              | 11  | 6  | 4  | 2  | 30 | 15 | 153 | 77 | 198 | 100 |
| 8 | The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class.                   | 119 | 60 | 60 | 30 | 12 | 6  | 7   | 4  | 198 | 100 |
| 9 | Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students. | 40  | 20 | 59 | 30 | 33 | 17 | 66  | 33 | 198 | 100 |

GRAPH 1



Autor: Josè Feliciano Farinango M.

Source: students' survey

Table one shows nine statements designed to quantify the instructional implications in classes with a large number of students. In order to get the best information about this topic, students were asked to select one option based on the following criteria: totally agree, agree, partially agree and disagree respectively.

*The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class.*

According to the answers provided by the surveyed students in statement number one, it is observed that 68% of the students totally agree with it. Moreover,

25% of the surveyed students affirmed that they agree with it. Additionally, 6% of the learners partially agree with this statement. On the other hand, 1 % of the respondents disagree.

There is a first group of students 68% totally agree with statement 1, which means that more than half of them are doing activities in order to apply what they learn in class. In order to affirm this positive answer, Freeman (2007) suggests that the number of activities proposed for working with large classes encourage students to involve with their classmates in the participation in the classroom, because there are a lot of types of activities to show them like: group work, individual work, projects, work in pairs, word puzzles, listening to tape, etc.

Moreover, there is a second group of students 25% agree with it because they can learn despite of belonging to large class. Regarding students' satisfaction, Davis & Pears (2000) state that effective instructions are vital if activities are to go well, especially activities involving changes of interaction teachers need to have all the learners' attention when giving instructions. In this part these authors also emphasize that teachers must have to know how to involve students in the class, for this to happen it is important to highlight the teachers' job in regard to the development and implementation of a good instruction, a good instruction integrates what students need to learn and how it will be done effectively during the class time.

Besides, there is a third group of students 6% who selected the option partially agree, it means that teachers are working in these activities, but not as always as it has to be.

On the other hand, there is a fourth group of students who state that these activities are not done, it means that students could not answer what teacher asked,

it denoted that the activities done in class does not help to apply what students learn in class.

As a conclusion of this statement related to instructional implications given by student's show that high number of students state that activities to apply what they learn in class are done. However those activities are not always done. It means that in large class teachers have to focus more attention on it, in order to improve the language learning process in a good way in high school students.

*The activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.*

In accordance with the result observed in statement number 2 about the activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills , the group of students 64 % that represents 128 out of 198 of surveyed students totally agree with it. Besides, 29 % which represents 28 out of 198 surveyed students agree with it. Additionally, 6 % which represents 12 out of 198 surveyed students partially agree with it. On the other hand, a few students 1% which represents 1 out of 198 surveyed students disagree with this option.

According to the authors, teachers can use different activities for working with large classes to make lessons more interesting and effective as Keats & Boughey (1994) suggest that teachers include something that is used to support the learning process. In this sense, teachers propose to use the strategy of dividing large numbers of students into smaller groups working simultaneously in the same classroom, in order to increase their academic skills programs as reading, writing, listening and speaking. Likewise, Richard & Rodgers (2001) report that communicative language teaching encourage teachers to involve students in real life situations, in order to improve learners skills as reading, listening, and speaking.



That is why the result above from authors are the same as students answer because by the time students have been studying English, some of them have been learning using strategies that is the reason most of them are totally agreed with it, it is showed by 68%, and 25%, of surveyed students.

Furthermore, 6% of surveyed students partially agree with it because in large classes students rarely practice the activities as listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

On the contrary, just a few students, it is demonstrated by 1% of surveyed students answered that learning how to read, to write, to speak and to listen are so difficult in classes with so many students.

In conclusion, the result above demonstrates a high percentage of students answered in a positive way as these authors quote above in large classes the activities done allow practicing listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. But another group of students need more attention in those kinds of activities.

*The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those sitting at the back of the classroom.*

As it is shown in statement number three, 24% which stands for 48 out of 198 surveyed students selected the option totally agree. Additionally 40% that makes out 80 out of 198 surveyed students agree with it. Likewise, 27% which depicts 16 out of 198 surveyed students partially agree. On the other hand, 9% of surveyed students disagree with it.

About this theme an important point is given by Harmer (2006) who suggests that in many classrooms around the world students sit in orderly rows, there are many ways to organize the classrooms like separate table, circle, horseshoe, solo work,

whole class, group work and pair work, those are very important because teachers need to keep in touch with what is going on and involve all students in such a situation, including those are sitting at the back of the classroom.

According to the survey it gives evidence that a first group 24% and a second group 40% more than half of students totally agree with it because if the class arrangement is organized in a good way, students will participate during the class, as in the observation classrooms two classrooms were organized in orderly rows and teacher could ask students from all parts of the room in apparently random order. It keeps everybody attentive during the class including those are sitting at the back of the classroom.

As Anderson (2004) suggests that well planned seating arrangement and placement of students who need help maintaining their attention in the front and center of the seating arrangement encourage these students to pay attention and participate during the class and, teachers make an effort to give students an attractive and comfortable environment in order to enhance learning process. Classroom space also determines the way students will move inside the class.

However, a third group less than half of students 27% partially agree with it because in large class just a few students can participate but not all the time. On the other hand, a fourth group of students 9% answered that in large classes, students are not able to participate in class activities, including those are sitting at the back of the classroom, it means that for this group of students never participate and they are not attentive.

These results give evidence of a common problem in Ecuadorian public high schools that make difficult the English language teaching. It is unfeasible for students

to learn the target language appropriately without an appropriate learning environment.

An important way to incentive students participation might be replacing the traditional way to teach, every teachers must have contingency plans within the class syllabus as the authors say above, if the class arrangement is organized in a good way , students will participate during the class.

*Varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc.*

In statement number 4 about varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc. It is possible to see that 84% which represents 167 out of 198 surveyed students totally agree with it. While 10% that correspond to 21 out of the 198 participants who answered that they agree. Additionally, 5% that represents 9 out of 198 of surveyed students partially agree with it. On the other hand, 1% which represents 1 out of 198 surveyed students disagree with this statement.

Adding considerations about activities for working with large classes are described by Jones (2007, p. 7) who says “Some activities, like discussion and role play, are quite clearly suitable as working-together activities. Others, such as writing tasks or multiple-choice and fill-the-blank exercises, may not seem suitable at first glance”. This author states that those activities may be just as effective and enjoyable when done in pairs or groups, when there are a lot of students brainstorming and comparing answers can lead to very lively discussions, but they have to be in English, and teachers may have to convince students that this is desirable.

According to the results, most of the time teachers organized these kind of activities, as 84% of surveyed students answered that when teachers use individual activities in classes at the same time teachers can notice that individualized learning is an essential step in the development of learner autonomy and this kind of technique stimulate students' knowledge and interest in a better way as this author quotes above.

A group of partially agree answered that for them teachers do not use activities mentioned before all the time, it means that teachers rarely use that activities, as Harmer (1998) states that despite the problems of big classes, there are things which teachers can do such as pair work and group work those play an important part in the student's participation, in large class it becomes difficult to use a lot of individual repetition and controlled practice, in a big group it may be more appropriate to use students in chorus.

The results were the same as authors say and students' answers, it means that students appreciate to form groups because they share with classmates. In other words, they feel protected and supported by friends. In addition, students answered that in large classes varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc. However, as we can see in the graph above 1% of the surveyed students wrote back that those activities are not possible in large classes.

In order to have the best results, teacher must focus of attention to include all the students into the same purpose. It is hard sometimes to motivate left behind students but that is the teachers' job, class activities must meet the students' needs, and teachers have a big responsibilities in preparing them.

*Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class.*

In relation to the students' surveys about activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class, statement number five indicates that 41 % of students selected the option totally agree. Also, 23% that represents 46 out of 198 surveyed students do the similar activities such as plays, competitions, debates; games, etc. students selected the option agree. Additionally, 21% which represents 41 out of 198 surveyed students selected the option partially agree about those activities. On the other hand, 15% which represents 29 out of 198 surveyed students disagree.

An important point to comment, Freeman (2007) states that students use the language a great deal through communicative activities such as games, role plays, and problem solving task. Activities are truly communicative to encourage learners to communicate using the target language.

Although this results state a clear preference for group work activities, it was found that a low percentage of teachers used group work in real classes. Most of time teachers organized activities in an individual or whole group scheme to work mainly with exercises from the textbook as 41% and 23% of students are assumed that their teachers in large classes set activities to allow them to practice of what they are learning in order to increase their English knowledge.

Certainly, teachers presented some topics and divided students in groups assigning them an activity related to the theme of the lesson and it is very satisfactory for them, but those activities are not always developed that is why these group of students 21% are partially agreed with it as Woodward (2001) suggests that if teachers have large classes for example 15 students upwards, teachers have to put students into pairs so that two students can work together on each sheet of paper and

topic, or if teachers have much bigger classes for example 30 or 40, teachers have to put students into groups of ten.

On the other hand, a group of students 15% state that these activities are not used because teachers did not teach with those activities.

As a result of this statement, a big number of surveyed students answered in a positive way that in large classes' teachers use those kinds of activities because those activities are better for students to learn in a good way. However, a few number of surveyed students answered in a negative way that in large class activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are not used in class, and teachers have to take into account in this aspect in order to develop better activities to achieve students' attention in their classes.

*Students can cheat during the test.*

Statement number six demonstrates that 6% which represents 11 out of 198 surveyed students totally agree with it. Moreover, 4% that represents 7 out of 198 surveyed students wrote back that students agree. Additionally, 7% which represents 14 out of 198 surveyed students are partially agreed about this statement. On the other hand, 83% that represents 166 out of 198 surveyed students disagree.

Gower, Phillips & Walters (1983) suggest that in order to have students' attention teachers have to have good use of eye contact because is crucial in helping to establish comprehension.

According to statement number six above, big numbers of students 83% of students wrote back that they disagree about this statement because this activity is bad habit, it means that students do not have problem because teachers are very attentive and students study their subjects every day.

There is a low group of students 17% who answered that students can cheat during the test because teachers maybe use the same test for many years or applied the same test for all of the school.

About this problem one of the best way to avoid this bad habit Gower, Phillips & Walters (1983) suggest that teachers must observe critically during the class, as in most teaching situations and teachers should be able to stand back mentally and observe the class as it is going on, see what the students are doing well, what they are having problems with specially during the test as well as how they are interacting as a group.

As a result of this statement, a big number of students answered that in large classes students cannot cheat during the test. However, just a few students replied that they can cheat during the test; teachers in large classes should have to organize different test or change some details in order to avoid the cheating habit.

*Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects.*

What is interesting about the result in statement number seven, 6% of surveyed students totally agree to do another activity during the class. Moreover, 2% of surveyed students are in agreement. Besides, this graph show that 15% of surveyed students are partially agreed about this statement, On the other hand, 77% of surveyed students disagree.

It is important to remember what Mayer (2000, p. 31) says “How teachers implement the course content, instructional pedagogy, and technology use in the classroom may all be influenced by the number of students in the class”.

There is a first group 6% of students answered that students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects during the English class. It is not new to see

students doing other activities. A second group 2% of students answered the same as the first group because teaching English with a big number of students are much more difficult to have a good results as in the observations showed the same context because a lot of students had bad custom.

Specifically, teachers tried all the time to stop students' doing assignments from other subjects during the English class while working in the activities; at the same time they constantly spoke in Spanish about topics unrelated to the lessons. Regarding this topic Davis & Pearse (2000) argue that in large classes are obviously much more difficult to achieve good results because the learners may not all be able to see or hear you well, and teachers may not be able to see or hear all the learners well and it is very hard to get to know all the learners and their names also there are too many pairs or groups for teachers to monitor and teachers cannot often give learners individual feedback on written work.

There is a third group 15% who answered that teachers did not manage learning effectively according to the number of students in the classroom that is why students have the opportunity to do another activity during the class.

On the other hand, a fourth group 77% of surveyed students did not like to do another activity during the class. If they do another activity, this situation can influence the teaching learning process because students work in the activities without a clear purpose.

As a conclusion of this statement in large classes a few numbers of students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects because teacher did not prepare the lesson and activities for students during the class. That is why there was a good opportunity for students to study other topics because in large classes teachers



could not see them what students are doing. In order to avoid this problem teacher should make a good lesson plan and provide them the activities that maintain attention all the time.

*The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class.*

Statement eight shows that 60% of the surveyed students chose the option totally agree. Indeed, 30% of the participants agree with this statement. Furthermore, 6% of the surveyed students partially agree with it. On the contrary, 4% of the learners selected the option disagree.

According to the result observed in the graph number 1 statement number 8, we can observe that the seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class, in large classes students are highly motivated to engage in activities that teachers do as indicated by 60% of respondents are totally agreed, as Harmer (2006) who suggests that in many classrooms around the world students sit in orderly rows, there are many ways to organize the classrooms like separate table, circle, horseshoe, solo work, whole class, group work and pair work, those are very important because teachers need to keep in touch with what is going on and involve all students in such a situation.

Moreover, 30% of participants answered that they feel comfortable in these classes because they engage in activities that allow them to practice their skill that is why they are in agreement, as a first argument explained by Anderson (2004, p. 51) reports “When students are expected to engage in discussion with other students, the physical arrangement of the classroom should facilitate (e.g. circular arrangements) rather than inhibit (e.g. static row and column arrangements) this discussion.”

In other words, well planned seating arrangement and placement of students who need help maintaining their attention in the front and center of the seating arrangement encourage these students to pay attention and participate during the class and, teachers make an effort to give students an attractive and comfortable environment in order to enhance learning process. Classroom space also determines the way students will move inside the class.

Furthermore, 6 % of students gave a partially agree answer because they believe that in large classes the seating arrangement facilitates very little to carried out the activities in class that is the reason their language skills are limited or reduced.

On the other hand, the low percentage 4% of the surveyed students wrote back that the seating arrangement does not facilitate the tasks that are carried out in class.

Additionally, Jones (2007, p.8) explains that “Real classrooms are often crowded. But even if we can’t move the furniture, the students can move! For pair work, students sitting side-by-side can move their upper bodies to face each other.” in order to improve the physical conditions of classrooms try to rearrange your students regularly if your class is composed of long rows, making sure that those in the middle sometimes sit on the outside, think creatively about seating arrangements to ensure students can speak comfortably.

It is also important to take into consideration that through the surveyed applied and observation on students; their classrooms are bigger than other high schools classrooms in Machala province that is why the graph above 60% and 30% show the result in a positive way, as the authors suggest an important aspect about

the physical context is the use of space. Moreover, when materials and equipment are needed, they should be readily available in good working order and changing furniture and designing adequate space increases probability of good learning.

Even though learners considered that classroom space is good for their learning process. However, the authors' explanations make possible to confirm that the size of the physical classroom was not adequate for students learning process.

That is why teachers should change their methods or techniques in dealing with large classes and teachers should adopt or prepare new techniques, like arranging the class in groups, or in a natural way, for example five students per group, it could help in solving this problem as some authors say above.

*Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students.*

As in statement number 9 about Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students, the answers are the following: 20 % which presents 40 out of 198 students totally agree with it, another result of surveyed students show that 30 % that represents 59 out of the 198 of students agree, Moreover, 17% which represents 33 out of 198 surveyed students wrote back that they partially agree. On the contrary, 33% that represents 66 out of 198 surveyed students disagree.

With regard to feedback in large classes Gower, Phillips & Walters (1983) claim that about giving feedback is one of the most important responsibilities of a teacher. By providing ongoing feedback teachers can help their students evaluate their success and progress. In addition, feedback can take a number of forms: giving praise and encouragement; correcting; setting regular tests; having discussions about

how the group as a whole is doing; giving individual tutorials, etc. It also gives information that enables the learners to adjust what he or she is doing in order to get better.

As these authors say above one of the most important aspects such as discipline and instruction must be comfortable to get better feedback in large classes. Even though teachers tried to control discipline, students talked and commented between them that lessons were boring, in many of the surveyed classes occurred this problem, that is the reason, 20%, 30% and 17% of students surveyed cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students, this evidence was real in the observation classrooms because everybody spoke at the same time that teacher could not answer any question in a good way.

It could be affected by the time as Cummings (2000, p. 31) who says “How we use our time and space directly affects students learning, and Time is the coin of teaching. It’s up to us to spend it wisely”.

This author also explains that research base in support of time on task, common sense tells us that the more time a student spends on a task and the more likely students are to master the task, and teachers address how to find that time and how much time to delegate to various activities. In addition, this author comments that each activity on a lesson plan must have an adequate amount, teachers should consider delivering of resources and teacher talk when planning time for each activity.

It was found that teachers give neither accurate instructions nor feedback. Also, teacher did not assign time to activities. That caused that students worked ineffectively and sometimes they did not finish the tasks on time.

On the other hand, just a few students 15% of surveyed students wrote back that students can receive regular feedback from the teacher when there are large numbers of students.

In conclusion, big number of students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students, but just a few students receive feedback from teachers, it means that teachers should change their methods or techniques in dealing with feedback and teachers should adopt or prepare new ways to give the best feedback, and teachers should consider delivering of resources and teacher talk when planning time for each activity. It could help in solving this problem.

*Social Aspect*

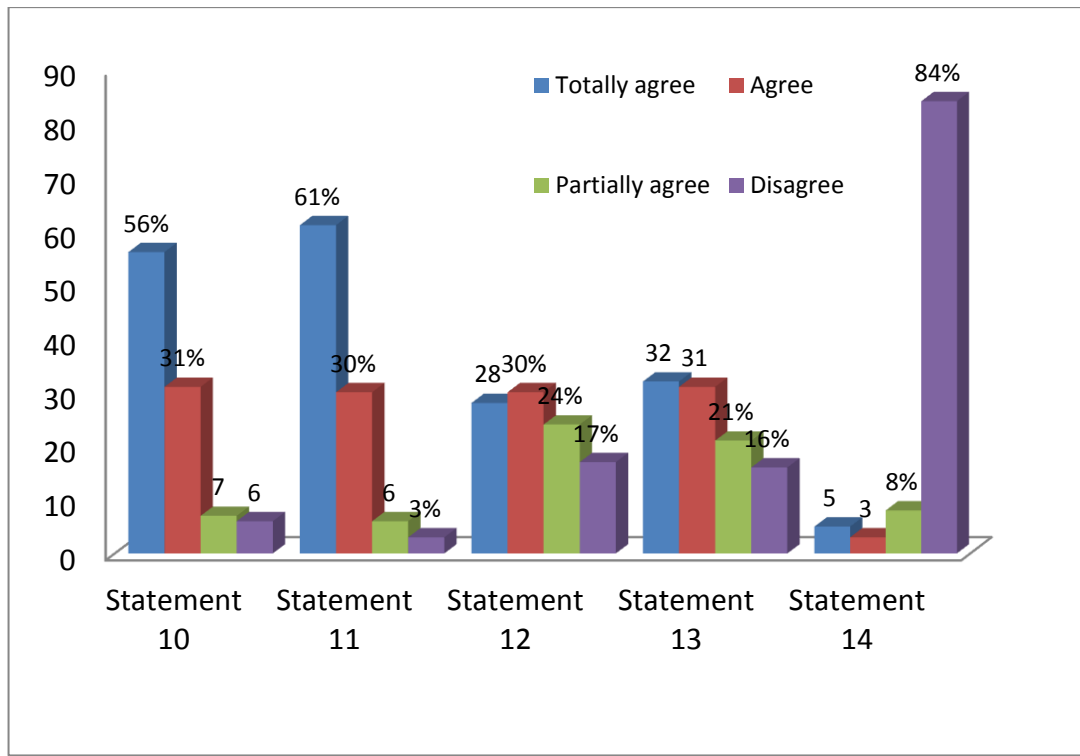
*What social implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?*

Table 2

| N  | In classes with a large number of students:                                   | Totally agree |    | Agree |    | Partially agree |   | Disagree |   | TOTAL |     |
|----|---|---------------|----|-------|----|-----------------|---|----------|---|-------|-----|
|    |   | f             | %  | f     | %  | f               | % | f        | % | f     | %   |
| 10 | There is a proper balance of student-student and teacher-student interaction. | 112           | 56 | 61    | 31 | 14              | 7 | 11       | 6 | 198   | 100 |

|    |  |     |    |    |    |    |    |     |    |     |     |
|----|--|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|----|-----|-----|
| 11 | Students have the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates.                                    | 121 | 61 | 59 | 30 | 13 | 6  | 5   | 3  | 198 | 100 |
| 12 | The teacher has problems remembering all the students' names.  | 55  | 28 | 59 | 30 | 49 | 24 | 35  | 17 | 198 | 100 |
| 13 | The atmosphere is less stressful since the teacher does not ask several questions to the same student.         | 63  | 32 | 61 | 31 | 42 | 21 | 32  | 16 | 198 | 100 |
| 14 | It is easier for students to use their cellphone or any other mobile device without being seen by the teacher. | 10  | 5  | 6  | 3  | 16 | 8  | 166 | 84 | 198 | 100 |

**Graph 2**



Autor: Josè Feliciano Farinango M.

Source: students' survey

Table two shows five statements, those statements are designed to quantify the social implications in classes with a large number of students. In order to get the best answer, students were asked to select one option based on the following criteria: Totally agree, Agree, Partially agree and disagree respectively.

*There is a proper balance of student-student and teacher-student interaction.*

In relation to the statement number ten, this graph shows that 56% that represents 112 out of the 198 surveyed students totally agree with it. Furthermore, 31% that represents 61 out of 198 surveyed students agree. Moreover, 7% which represents 14 out of 198 surveyed students are partially agreed. On the other hand,

6% that represents 11 out of 198 surveyed students answered that they disagree about this statement.

There is a group of learners who give clear indication that more than half 56% of surveyed students totally agree and they are very sure that there is a proper balance of student-student and teacher-student interaction because class activities motivated them to learn English and students like the way the teachers present the contents of the lessons. As Richards & Rodgers (2001) explain that the main purpose of cooperative language teaching is to help the teacher build positive relationship among students and at the same time teach cooperative skills among learners; here the teacher is a facilitator and take part in the teaching-learning process as an independent participant.

There is a second group 31% of students can do many activities from both teachers and other students. This atmosphere of participation might lead to positive learning and achievement. Additionally, Anderson (2004) who reports that the best way to encourage students to learn is to apply the cooperative learning groups where the students work together and the role of the teachers is to introduce the task, ensure that the instructions are understood, and ensure that each group has sufficient materials and equipment to complete the task successfully.

Teachers frequently called students' attention making connections between the topics of the lessons and students' interests, but a low number 7% of students partially agree, it could be for many reasons for example students do not like English or students feel tired and so on.

A low percentage, 6% of surveyed students replied that they disagree about this statement because their answers in the survey and during the class observation



students lost interest progressively due to the numbers of students and teachers' poor skills in managing learning.

This result in statement ten, gives evidence that a big number of students state that in large class there is a proper balance of student-student and teacher-student, but not all the time as it has to be. It means that teachers should take into account in this situation, in order to increase the atmosphere of participation, and it might lead to positive learning and achievement.

*Students have the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates.*

Statement number eleven allows seeing that 61% corresponds to 121 out of the 198 students selected the option totally agree. Moreover, 30% which represents 59 out of the 198 surveyed students agree. Additionally, 13% of students are partially agreed. On the other hand, 3% of surveyed students feel unsatisfied.

According to the results observed in the graph number two, statement number eleven we can see that 61% and 30% of surveyed students answered that students have the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates.

These responses are positive since students show that there is a sense of participation in the large class. They can share with their classmates and compare their jobs with them for the purpose of having a good relationship between them, as Hess (2001, p.8) argue that "A variety of activities and techniques is important in all learning situations but particularly relevant in the large class because varieties of tasks can accommodate different levels in our class". In other words this author suggests some activities for example during a vocabulary lesson, some students can be looking up the dictionary definition of words, while others find sentences in the text where the words appeared, and still others are formulating their own original

sentences with the new words, if the students have been reading silently for a while, let them join a partner and read to each other. Variety is extremely important in provoking interest within large groups of students

On the other hand, there are two groups of students 6% and 3% answered that students do not have the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates because in large groups teachers find problems like different level of attention and behavioral mistakes. It is also proven that there is more interaction between the teacher and the student in smaller groups. In bigger groups the interaction between students and the teacher does not take place. About this topic Wharton & Race (1999) state that English is a complex language and it requires that teachers must structure the work appropriately; students should be comfortable with a simple request to do this in pairs, for a less experienced class, indicate who is to take which role, and give separate instructions for each stage of the activity. At the same time most of the teaching techniques are effective with small groups of students.

As a result for this statement a big number of students agree that in large class students have the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates. But a few group of students disagree about this statement so the best relationship between them are in small class because teacher can organize pair work, work together, and they can interchange their knowledge but in large classes, it may seem impossible to organize dynamic and creative teaching and learning sessions. In this case teachers should try to find the way how to have the best relationship like organizing games, role plays, movies, debates, social programs, etc.

*The teacher has problems remembering all the students' names.*

With regard to the teacher has problems remembering all the students' names, statement number twelve above shows that 28% of surveyed students totally agree. Likewise, 30% of surveyed students agree. Moreover, 24% of the students partially agreed. On the other hand, 17% of surveyed students disagree.

About this situation Saraswathi (2004) states that large classes make unrealistic demands on teachers because large classes' promote indiscipline, management of large classes is physically exhausting and individual attention is impossible in large class, which is the reason a teacher cannot even get to know the names of all learners in a large class.

Students replied that their teachers in the large classes did not remember their names as this author says above, it is demonstrated by 28% and 30% which is considered a negative result.

Many students during the observation as in the result of the surveys answered that teachers had problems remembering all the students' names because teachers have different kind of curses and teachers confuse with the real names of the students, teachers only remember the commanders' names or who participate during the class or who is sitting next to the teacher, this affirmation is represented by 24% of surveyed students who chose the option somewhat satisfactory.

Moreover, teachers only asked whether students comprehend the contents making questions such as you Miss or you Mr. and a lot of teachers do not use students' names, as in the observation classrooms teachers most of the time forgot students names.

On the other hand, just a few students 17% answered that they disagree about this statement. It means that a few teachers do not have problems remembering all the students' names

As a result of this statement, in large class the teachers have problems remembering all the students' names. In order to avoid this problem teacher should organize many activities at the beginning of the year.

*The atmosphere is less stressful since the teacher does not ask several questions to the same student.*

As statement number thirteen shows, 32 % of the population which is represented by 63 students totally agree with it. Also, 31% which represents 61 students agree. Likewise, 21% of participants are partially agreed, and only the 16% of surveyed students considered the opposite.

Regarding to this topic, Blatchford (2003, p.2) claims "While the teacher in the small class spent little time on control, and there was little need to keep children on-task, in the large class interactions with the children largely involved a constant battle to keep children`s attention on-task". In other words , this author states that class size influence the type of activities that teachers plan for a lesson, this author also explains that some problems evidenced in classrooms with more than thirty students are: variety of abilities and proficiency, individual attention is reduced, students have fewer opportunities to practice speaking, and it is hard to individualize teaching according to students 'needs specially when there are more than 30 students, In sum, this author expresses that small classes are better than large classes.

According to the results obtained a high number of students 32% and 31% perceive that the atmosphere is less stressful since the teacher does not ask several

questions to the same student because in some cases the activities developed in the classroom are not clear. That is why the best way to work for students are in small groups, for that the teachers may know how to involve all the students in the class.

However, these are only suggestions, because the reality is otherwise, the teaching experience indicates that not all students of large classes may feel less stressful when the teachers ask the same student, as it is demonstrated by 16% of surveyed students.

As a result of this question, in large classes the atmosphere is less stressful since the teacher does not ask several questions to the same student.

*It is easier for students to use their cellphone or any other mobile device without being seen by the teacher.*

In statement number fourteen it is noted that 5% of surveyed students totally agree. Likewise, 3% of surveyed students agree. Besides, 8% of surveyed students partially agree. On the other hand, 84% of surveyed students disagree.

Another important information is presented by Mayer (2000, p. 31) says “How teachers implement the course content, instructional pedagogy, and technology use in the classroom may all be influenced by the number of students in the class”.

Surveys confirmed that less than the quarter 5%, 3% and 8% of students answered that it is easier for students to use their cellphone or any other mobile device without being seen by the teacher.

On the other hand, 84% of surveyed students answered that it is not easier for students to use their cellphone or any other mobile device without being seen by the teacher.

Researcher could see a clear contradiction between observation and students' responses because the real context observed in the classes were another

result, specifically, teachers tried all the time to stop students' chatting by cellphone or any other mobile device while working in the activities; students constantly spoke in Spanish about topics unrelated to the lessons. As it was said before, teachers did not manage learning effectively according to the number of students in the classroom.

One advice to avoid this kind of problem is given by Gower, Phillips & Walters (1983) suggest that in order to have students attention teachers have to have good use of eye contact because is crucial in helping to establish comprehension. Having a good eyes contact, attention of students will be satisfactory, at the same time students can avoid to do other things.

In conclusion, high number of students answered that it is not easier for students to use their cellphone or any other mobile device without being seen by the teacher; just a few students are in agreement with this theme.

Indeed, the social implications surrounded the students and the teacher can determine the causes for low confidence, and one way to raise students' morale is by letting them speak their minds, and not by limiting them on their points of view because all of them must be highly respected and appreciated.

*Psychological Aspect*

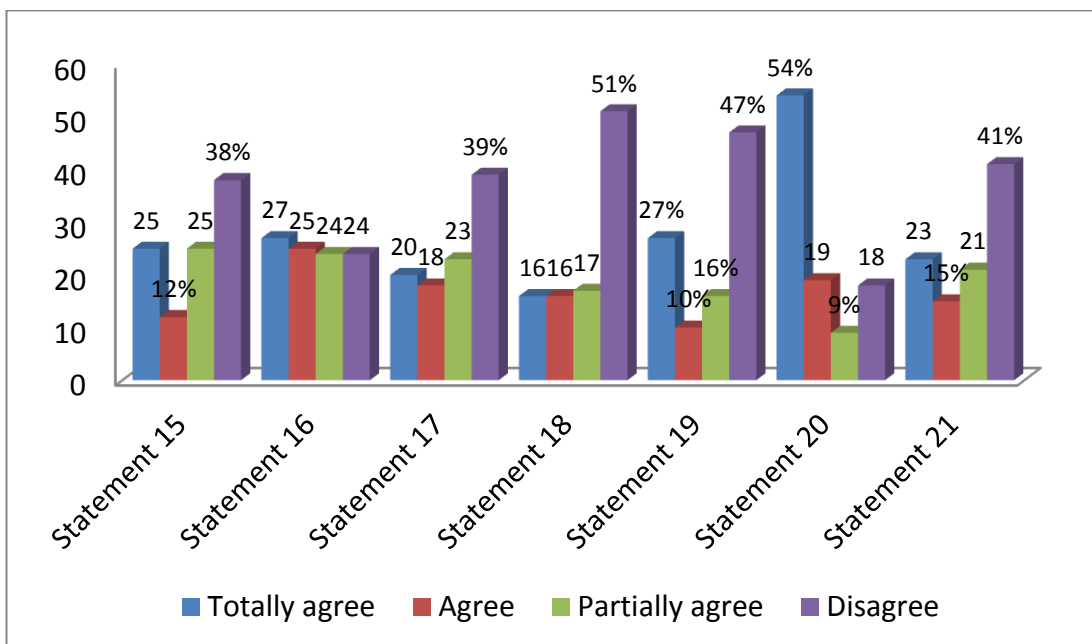
*What psychological implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?*

TABLE 3

| N° | In classes with a large number of students:                     | Totally agree |    | Agree |    | Partially agree |    | Disagree |    | TOTAL |     |
|----|---|---------------|----|-------|----|-----------------|----|----------|----|-------|-----|
|    |   | f             | %  | f     | %  | f               | %  | f        | %  | f     | %   |
| 15 | The atmosphere is stressful.                                    | 50            | 25 | 23    | 12 | 50              | 25 | 75       | 38 | 198   | 100 |
| 16 | Students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest.     | 53            | 27 | 47    | 24 | 49              | 24 | 49       | 24 | 198   | 100 |
| 17 | Students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions. | 40            | 20 | 36    | 18 | 46              | 23 | 76       | 39 | 198   | 100 |
| 18 | Students do not like to participate because they feel afraid.   | 32            | 16 | 31    | 16 | 33              | 17 | 102      | 51 | 198   | 100 |
| 19 | The teacher does not pay equal attention to                     | 54            | 27 | 20    | 10 | 32              | 16 | 92       | 47 | 198   | 100 |

|    |   |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |
|----|---|-----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|-----|
|    | all his/her students.   |     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |     |
| 20 | Students feel they can act competitively with other students. | 107 | 54 | 38 | 19 | 18 | 9  | 35 | 18 | 198 | 100 |
| 21 | Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed.          | 45  | 23 | 31 | 15 | 41 | 21 | 81 | 41 | 198 | 100 |

GRAPH 3



Autor: Josè Feliciano Farinango M.

Source: students' survey



Table three shows seven statements designed to quantify the psychological implications in classes with a large number of students. In order to get the best answers students were asked to select one option based on the following criteria: Totally agree, agree, partially agree and disagree respectively.

*The atmosphere is stressful.*

Students' responses whether the atmosphere is stressful in the classrooms, the students indicated that 25% which represents 50 out of 198 surveyed students totally agree with it. Moreover, 12% of the students agree. Furthermore, 25% of surveyed students partially agree. On the contrary, 38% of the surveyed students disagree.

In this case a class with more than 30 students is considered by Khati (2010) large classes, and large classes have some problems such as variety of abilities and proficiency, individual attention is reduced, students have fewer opportunities to practice speaking, and it is hard to provide feedback to students' written works and there is no alternative of developing a collaborative working atmosphere, providing a variety of works and making all students involved in different activities appropriate for different levels.

According to the result given by students, there is a first group 25% of learners are totally agreed because for them the atmosphere is stressful and some activities are reduced in large classes, a second group 12% of students are satisfied as the answer given by the first group.

While, a third group 25% of students are partially agreed because for them the atmosphere is not always stressful.

This fact was confirmed throughout survey because almost all classes had between 38 and 41 students as this author says above a class with more than 30 students is considered large classes.

On the other hand, there is a group 38% of surveyed students answered that the atmosphere is not very stressful, and number of students do not affect course content as Harmer (1998, p.129) states that “big groups have disadvantages of course, but they also have one main advantage – they are bigger, so that humor, for example, is funnier, drama is more dramatic, a good class feeling is warmer and more enveloping”. This author also adds that experience teachers use this potential to organize exciting and involving classes.

This information coincides with the situation in the observed high school because the majority of classrooms had over 38 students, therefore, authorities do not concern about the number of students, this is a problem that has affected Ecuadorian high schools for many years, and there is not a balance between the high numbers of students.

In addition, some studies have focused frequently in the relationship between class size and teachers’ ability to deal with disciplinary problems.

As a conclusion researcher can consider the stress is everywhere, teachers usually complain about the excessive number of pupils they have to deal with. However there are many ways to contribute the best manner to develop the class, like using gestures, good eyes contact, maintaining discipline and the most important part teachers have to know and understand each student’s behavior.

*Students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest.*

In statement number sixteen, regarding to the students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest, graphic three shows that, 27% which represents 53 out of 198 surveyed students totally agree. Additionally, 25% that represents 47 out of 198 surveyed students agree with it. Moreover, 24% that represents 49 out of 198 surveyed students partially agree. On the other hand, 24% which represents 49 out of 198 surveyed students selected the option disagree.

Maxom (2009, p. 52) reports “When teachers select information to teach lessons, teachers need to think about what level the students are at add how well your lesson fits into what they already know and what they need to know”. In other words this author also expresses that if the instructional pace is too rapid, students skills will be left behind. There are many ways to give instruction to students’ diverse needs, but each technic has obstacle.

In this case teachers have to give instructions according to the level because English is a little difficult to learn but it is not impossible. As this author says above, more than the half of students answered that they feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest, it is demonstrated by 27%, 25% in the survey done. Likewise, observations showed the same context because students had difficulties dealing with speaking in from of the rest. Specifically, teachers ask students if they understood the class and they answered yes, this is the typical answer from students because they do not have enough vocabulary to speak.

Furthermore, 24% of surveyed students replied that they sometimes fell very shy at the moment of speaking in from of their classmates; the reason could be that students prefer to form groups, and they share information between them or students like to talk in small group, rather than speaking in front of the class

On the other hand, 24% of surveyed students answered that they never feel uncomfortable when they speak in front of the class. To achieve this aim from students, the experience of the teachers play an important role and teachers have to know which approaches or techniques have to be implemented in the classroom, in order to motivate students to speak in the class.

In conclusion, there are some students with this problem but the solution could be as this author says above, when students do not have the same level as others students, teachers have to organize some specific programs as special education and remedial programs, those are a special form of ability grouping designed to provide special resources to accelerate the achievement of students with learning problems.

*Students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions.*

Statement number seventeen indicates that 20% of the surveyed students totally agree. Moreover, 18% of students selected the option agree. Additionally, 23% of surveyed students partially agree about this statement. On the other hand, 39% surveyed students disagree about this statement.

Jones (2007, p. 7) who affirms that “Some activities like discussion and role play are quite clearly suitable as working together activities. Others, such as writing tasks or multiple-choice and fill-the-blank exercises, may not seem suitable at first glance”. This author mentions that those activities may be just as effective and enjoyable when done in pairs or groups, when there are a lot of students brainstorming and comparing answers can lead to very lively discussions, but they have to be in English, and teachers may have to convince students that this is desirable.

There are two groups of surveyed students 20% and 18% that they have enough opportunities to speak or express their opinions in front of the class.

Even though learners considered that students have the opportunity to express their opinions for their learning process. However, 23% of surveyed students make possible to confirm that in large classes students rarely have the opportunity to express their opinions and it was possible to observe that classrooms with more than 38 students looked overcrowded, and students' seats were too closed each other allowing students to talk between them while teachers were teaching the classes.

On the contrary, 39% of surveyed students answered that students never have the opportunity to express their opinions. Because in large classes noise impedes reading, thinking, or listening other students who tried to pay attention to listen to the teacher; specifically, those who sit at the back of the class.

In conclusion, in large classes less than half of students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions, for many reasons some students reject to participate and teachers have to work to implement interesting activities or tasks and teachers have to organize an appropriate style of grouping or make a good seating arrangement in order to make the class more dynamic.

*Students do not like to participate because they feel afraid.*

In relation to statement number eighteen, 16% of surveyed students totally agree with it, as the same percentage, 16% of surveyed students are in agreement. Moreover, 17 % of surveyed students partially agree. On the other hand, 51% which represents 102 out of 198 surveyed students selected the criteria disagree.

According Gibbs & Jenkis (1992) shy students, who may have the confidence to contribute in small groups, tend to keep quiet in large class. In fact,

these authors claim that large class is one of the factors that influence teachers-student interaction and the effects on students' performance can vary among learners group.

In relation to this statement there is a first group 16% of surveyed students feel shy or students do not want to participate and talk to the class due to the fear to make mistakes and become the center of attention. Furthermore, there is a second group 16% of surveyed students fell the same way as the first group.

But, there is a third group of students 17% answered that in some cases they do not like to participate because students laugh when they speak in English or make joke about them, most of the time students put nicknames for everybody including teachers this behavior was observed in the observation classroom. In addition as these authors state the effects on students' performance can vary among learners group as we can see in graph above.

In this case the problem could be for different level of proficiency as Zehler (1994) who claims that as classroom teachers are able to work with students who have different levels of ability, in areas of strength and in special skills or aptitudes. English language learners bring all times to the classroom new ideas or different questions. In this case teachers' experiences in working with diversity among English speaking students have to understand and give a possible solution.

On the other hand, there is a fourth group 51% of surveyed students answered that for them it is not a problem to participate because they do not feel afraid because in the coast region almost all people do not have shame to talk in from of the rest.

As a result for this statement, students in large classes like to participate because they do not feel afraid. But not all the students have the same behavior.

*The teacher does not pay equal attention to all his/her students.*

It can be observed in statement number nineteen, 27% of the surveyed students selected the criteria totally agree. Moreover, 10% of the surveyed students agree with it. Additionally, 16% of the students partially agree with this statement. On the other hand, 47% of surveyed students disagree.

About this theme Achilles, Finn & Bain (2002) report that attention in large class size, teachers were unable to give individual attention and instructions, that is the reason in classes more than thirty students, they did not have the time to provide individualized attention to students who need to help academically as a result of this study, it was quite evident that the large class size affected some students, most of the students need more attention during the class.

There is a first group 27% of surveyed students who complain that some teachers do not pay equal attention to all students when they are working because in large classes is too difficult for teachers to make contact with the students who are sitting at the back as Harmer (1998) states that in large class it becomes difficult to use a lot of individual repetition and controlled practice, a second group 10% of surveyed students answered in a similar way as the first group. Additionally, as in the observation classrooms students prefer to do another activity because it is difficult for students to ask for and receive individual attention.

There is a third group 16% of surveyed students that sometimes teachers tend to pay more attention to some students more than they do to others. It might be due

to the different levels of proficiency or the attitude towards the teacher from the students.

On the other hand, there is a fourth group 47% of surveyed students who answered that the teachers' pay equal attention to all students and it may also be due to the atmosphere created in each classroom or the respect every students have for the teachers . The percentages change also from class to class, it means that the students are in a similar number in each course but they do not feel the same way towards the teachers' attention to each one of them.

In conclusion, almost half of students answered that in large classes the teacher does not pay equal attention to all students, for this group of students teachers should try to give individual attention to the students for example: practice repetition, practice for the whole group, chorus repetition, etc.

*Students feel they can act competitively with other students.*

Regarding if students feel that they can act competitively with other students, 54% of the participants totally agree with it, while 19% of students are in agreement. Additionally, 9% of the students partially agree. On the other hand, 18% of the surveyed students disagree.

Again, it is important to remember what Gibbs & Jenkis (1992) explain that work space for 18 students are the best and they share in with others , working with 40 students is totally transformed that is the reason , the shy students, who may have the confidence to contribute in small groups, tend to keep quiet in large class.

The majority of students who answered positively 54% and 19% answered that they can act competitively with other students because teachers help all time to



acquire the best learning process, as in the observation everybody wanted to participate in different activities that teacher shows every class.

Moreover, there is a group of students 9% who chose the option partially agree, according to this percentage, most of the students feel that they cannot compete in a healthy way because for this group most of the time there were other students are not as good at English who were rejected and students prefer to remain in silence and unnoticed.

On the other hand, just a few students 18% answered that they cannot act competitively with other students and they prefer to keep quiet in large class. This is one of the most difficult areas to control when conducting second language research and the level of success in English learning may be determined by students' aptitude or intelligence as Lou & Shekhtman (2002, p.20) who suggest that "At the lower levels, students need to acquire the basic linguistic system and some understanding of culture. At the higher levels, they need to acquire the uncommon, as well as the common".

This affirmation in some cases are different because nobody has the same skills to learn foreign language, in that case teachers have to take a placement test in order to know what the real knowledge from them is.

As a result of this statement, in large classes the majority of students feel they can act competitively with other students but this answer is not for everybody and teachers should be flexible because not all of the students have the same abilities to learn foreign language.

*Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed.*

As it is showed in statement number twenty one, 23% which corresponds to 45 out of 198 surveyed students totally agree with it because they can go unnoticed. Besides, 15% which represents 31 out of 198 surveyed students are in agreement. Additionally, 21% that depicts 41 out of 198 surveyed students are partially agreed with it. On the contrary, 41% which represents 81 out of the 198 surveyed students disagree.

Anderson (2004, p 51) who states “When students are expected to engage in discussion with other students, the physical arrangement of the classroom should facilitate (e.g. circular arrangements) rather than inhibit (e.g. static row and column arrangements) this discussion.” In other words, well planned seating arrangement and placement of students who need help maintaining their attention in the front and center of the seating arrangement and teachers have to make an effort to give students an attractive and comfortable environment in order to enhance the best learning process. Classroom space also determines the way students will move inside the class.

According to the result obtained in this final statement it is possible to notice that there are groups 23%, 15%, and 21% of students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed as in the observation classroom teacher did not manage the class, teachers did not prepare lesson plan, there was a lack eyes contact between teachers and students, students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions.

About this statement it is possible to notice that students are in agreement that in large classes students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed because most of the time the same students do not participate in the task or activity.

However, most of the students represented by 41% of students want to learn and this can only be reached by participating during the class and learners tend to participate more when they are working in groups or in pairs and this merely action will help students to become an active part of the teaching learning process.

In conclusion, in order to avoid this problem teacher should form groups, teachers should organize the furniture to make a good use of the classroom according to the activities, and teachers should be encouraged to make all the students participate in the class. Therefore teachers should realize what specific technic should be used according to the class and students.

In general, the psychological effect of large classes is important to be taken into consideration when dealing with large classes. The teacher should have more attention of individual students to help to have control in the class and should interchange good teacher-student relationships by addressing the students by names in order to solve the problem of teachers' behavior especially when the students feel that they are neglected or unsatisfied, teacher are the first who should create a safe and friendly learning environment.

## Conclusions

- According to the results obtained in this research large classes interrupt students' attention and teachers cannot develop their class activities. Likewise, teachers have to make a strong effort to get students attention in a large class.
- All the surveyed classes had more than thirty eight students and it made it difficult teachers to work adequately, especially in group work activities. Noise caused by students' talking while teachers were working interrupted the teaching process frequently.
- Even though the classroom space was adequate in each class surveyed, it was not good enough for the amount of students. Students' seats were too closed together and it made difficult to arrange seats in groups. This situation caused also a hot and noisy environment.
- The results showed that large classes did not allow students or teachers work efficiently and reach a meaningful learning.
- Seating arrangement was usually related to the type of learning activity, and teachers do not feel comfortable working with a large number of students in a class because they cannot make a short group that is why only a few students get involved during the class.
- According to the survey students in large classes cannot practice the language in class because they feel afraid when taking in English and they feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed. Students felt very shy at the moment of speaking and some of them never appeared uncomfortable when speaking in English.

- Psychological implications such as the atmosphere in the classroom, feeling afraid to participate in class, lack of attention from the teacher affected the learning process significantly.
- In this study students answered that in large classes feedback is hard to achieve due to the large number of students per class
- Almost half of students answered that in large classes the teacher does not pay equal attention to all students. Teachers tend to pay more attention to some students than others; therefore students can get passed unnoticed and comfortable in this silent way.

## Recommendations

- Teachers must give clear instructions in large classes because most of them do not understand what kind of activities they are going to do and teachers have to repeat many times if it is necessary to get better results.
- Teachers should develop good skills in managing large classes since students need to learn to work effectively in order to progress in their language skills.
- It is important that authorities take into a count that the number of the students in the class should be reduced between 15 and 20 in order to have better results, also teachers and students feel comfortable with group and this could enhance the teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools.
- It is advisable that teachers develop more strategies to manage large classes concerning feedback, time, instruction and discipline.
- The government should organize workshops to provide teachers strategies about the last trends in teaching methods and approaches in teaching English as a foreign language in large classes.
- Teachers should set up new rules for class participation in order to encourage their students to speak and think in English when they are in class.

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# ANNEXES

## INSTRUMENTS



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

*La Universidad Católica de Loja*

OPEN AND DISTANCE MODALITY

ENGLISH DEGREE

Dear student,

The aim of this brief questionnaire is to obtain information concerning the: *influence of large classes on teaching and learning English*. The following information will only be used for academic/research purposes. Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible based on the following criteria.

|                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Very satisfactory     | Totally agree   |
| Satisfactory          | Agree           |
| Somewhat satisfactory | Partially agree |
| Unsatisfactory        | Disagree        |

Informative data: Please fill in the information below

Name of institutio \_\_\_\_\_

Type of institution Public ( ) Private ( )

Year of study: 8<sup>th</sup>year. ( ) 9<sup>th</sup>year ( ) 10<sup>th</sup>year. ( )  
 1<sup>st</sup>seniorhighschool . ( ) 2<sup>nd</sup>seniorhighschool. ( ) 3<sup>rd</sup>. seniorhighschool. ( )

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: place an (X) in the box that best reflects your personal opinion:

A. Academic issues

|    |  | Totally agree | Agree | Partially agree | Disagree |
|----|--|---------------|-------|-----------------|----------|
|    | In classes with a large number of students:  |               |       |                 |          |
| 1. | The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class.                                   |               |       |                 |          |
| 2. | The activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.                     |               |       |                 |          |
| 3. | The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those sitting at the back of the |               |       |                 |          |

|    |  |  |  |  |  |
|----|--|--|--|--|--|
|    | classroom.   |  |  |  |  |
| 4. | Varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc.         |  |  |  |  |
| 5. | Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class.                |  |  |  |  |
| 6. | Students can cheat during the test   |  |  |  |  |
| 7. | Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects.                              |  |  |  |  |
| 8. | The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that put in class.                               |  |  |  |  |
| 9. | Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students. |  |  |  |  |

B. Social issues

| N°  | In classes with a large number of students:  | Totally agree | Agree | Partially agree | Disagree |
|-----|--|---------------|-------|-----------------|----------|
| 10. | There is a proper balance of student-student and teacher-student interaction.                                  |               |       |                 |          |
| 11. | Students have the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates.                                    |               |       |                 |          |
| 12. | The teacher has problems remembering all the students' names.  |               |       |                 |          |
| 13. | The atmosphere is less stressful since the teacher does not ask several questions to the same student.         |               |       |                 |          |
| 14. | It is easier for students to use their cellphone or any other mobile device without being seen by the teacher. |               |       |                 |          |

C. Psychological issues:

|     | In classes with a large number of students:                 | Totally agree | Agree | Partially agree | Disagree |
|-----|---|---------------|-------|-----------------|----------|
| 15. | The atmosphere is stressful.                                |               |       |                 |          |
| 16. | Students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest. |               |       |                 |          |
| 17. | Students do not have the opportunity to                     |               |       |                 |          |

|     |   |  |  |  |  |
|-----|---|--|--|--|--|
|     | express their opinions.   |  |  |  |  |
| 18. | Students do not like to participate because they feel afraid.     |  |  |  |  |
| 19. | The teacher does not pay equal attention to all his/her students. |  |  |  |  |
| 20. | Students feel they can act competitively with other students.     |  |  |  |  |
| 21. | Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed.              |  |  |  |  |

*Thank you for your collaboration!*