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MENCIÓN INGLÉS

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

TRABAJO DE FIN DE TITULACIÓN

AUTORA: Bermúdez Guerrero, María Elisa

DIRECTORA: Benítez Correa, Carmen Delia, Dra.

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## APROBACIÓN DEL DIRECTOR DEL TRABAJO DE FIN DE TITULACIÓN

Doctora.

Carmen Delia Benítez Correa

DOCENTE DE LA TITULACIÓN

El presente trabajo de fin de titulación *The Influence of large classes in the English teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools* realizado por María Elisa Bermúdez Guerrero ha sido orientado y revisado durante su ejecución por cuanto se aprueba la presentación del mismo.

Loja, Abril de 2014

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Dra. Carmen Benítez C.

## DECLARACIÓN DE AUTORÍA Y CESION DE DERECHOS

Yo, Bermúdez Guerrero María Elisa declaro ser autora del presente trabajo de fin de titulación The Influence of large classes in the English teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools de la titulación Ciencias de la Educación mención Inglés, siendo Carmen Delia Benítez Correa 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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Bermúdez Guerrero María Elisa

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents who feel proud of me and love me the way I am, to my husband who is the person who has supported me from the very beginning of this project and along the years of college study and finally to my daughter who is the most beautiful gift I have received from God, whose heart, makes her a fantastic daughter and who has always showed me her comprehension and love.

## CONTENT

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA -----	i
APROBACIÓN DEL DIRECTOR DEL TRABAJO DE FIN DE TITULACIÓN -----	ii
DECLARACIÓN DE AUTORÍA Y CESION DE DERECHOS -----	iii
DEDICATION-----	iv
CONTENT -----	v
ABSTRACT-----	1
RESUMEN -----	2
INTRODUCTION -----	3
METHOD-----	5
DISCUSSION-----	7
Literature Review -----	7
Description, Analysis and Interpretation of Results -----	24
Conclusions -----	40
Recommendations -----	42
REFERENCES -----	43
ANNEXES -----	46

## ABSTRACT

Large classes and how they might affect learning have been an issue of research in many countries. This study titled, “The influence of large classes in the English teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools” is intended to determine whether or not large classes affect the English teaching-learning process.

The participants of this research were two hundred eighty seven students from 8<sup>th</sup> grade to 3<sup>rd</sup> senior year of two secondary schools in Quito who were the sample of this study. The research was designed with a quantitative and qualitative method. A likert questionnaire with 21 items was applied to participants in order to gather information about large classes and how they might influence on instructional, social and psychological aspects. The analysis of the data has been supported with graphics which display the results and the findings will describe the type of implications that large classes might cause.

It is concluded that a large class does not influence on academic, social or psychological aspects; on the contrary, there are several positive aspects which can become advantages to improve the English teaching-learning process.

Key words: language learning, large classes, communication, classroom, activities.

## RESUMEN

Las aulas numerosas y como podrían afectar el aprendizaje ha sido motivo de investigación en muchos países. Este estudio titulado “The influence of large classes in the English teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools (El efecto que las clases numerosas causan en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de Inglés en los colegios Ecuatorianos)” tiene como propósito determinar si las clases numerosas afectan o no el proceso de enseñanza –aprendizaje de Inglés.

Los participantes de esta investigación fueron 287 estudiantes desde octavo hasta tercero bachillerato de dos colegios en Quito quienes fueron la muestra de este trabajo. Esta investigación se diseñó con el método cuantitativo y cualitativo. Se aplicó un cuestionario de 21 items a los estudiantes cuyo propósito es recolectar información acerca de cómo podrían afectar las clases numerosas a los aspectos académicos, sociales y psicológicos. El análisis de los datos ha sido respaldado con gráficos que muestran los resultados y los hallazgos describen el tipo de repercusión que las clases numerosas podrían tener.

De esta investigación se concluyó que las clases numerosas no afectan a los aspectos académicos, sociales o psicológicos por el contrario, existen muchos aspectos positivos que pueden tomarse como ventajas para mejorar el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del Inglés.

## INTRODUCTION

High-school system has born negative results regarding the process of English teaching and learning throughout the 6 years students need to complete. A group of reasons is the cause of such counter-productive outcome which includes, among others, the weak teaching curriculum, the deficient educational management in schools etc. The latter aspect includes an important topic involving class size, which has influenced greatly in the results of such process.

The following work is intended to research on large classes and the influence they have in the English learning process in Ecuadorian high-schools, whose principal objective is to determine whether large number of students might affect this process which is going to be determined by answering the following research questions: what instructional implications large classes might have, what social implications large classes could have and what psychological implications large classes may pose and how this may involve the English learning process.

A great number of studies have been performed regarding class size with both, large and small classes with the purpose of identifying benefits and disadvantages in different EFL and ESL contexts around the world. Examples of such studies include, for instance, one by Khazaei, Zadeh & Ketabi (2012) who conducted a study to determine if class size affects the willingness to communicate in the class. This study presented no limitations.

Another related study was conducted by Harfitt (2012) who intended to demonstrate that class-size does not represent a disadvantage for the students to learn English. This study gathered teachers' perceptions when teaching large and reduced-size classes of the same level in order to verify differences between perceptions and actual practice. The limitation of this study was the size of the sample because it did not have a



significant number of participants.

A third study done by Khati (2011) was aimed to find out students' expectation in a large class when they are learning English. The expectations were studied based on six areas such as classroom management, collaboration, task range, feedback, classroom and home assignments. No limitations were found in this study.

The papers aforementioned are an important part to the success of the present study, and will directly benefit the students in high-schools in Ecuador as well as the country itself due to the fact that its subsequent results will contribute with valuable, updated data in relation to the reality of teaching English and the type of measures to be considered to improve the Ecuadorian education system for the benefit of students learning English as a foreign language since learning English is an important aspect of Ecuadorian high-school students' professional growth.

The findings of this study will also broaden the viewpoint toward large classes in order to determine what effects (instructional, psychological or social) large classes might have on students' learning. In addition, the findings might give teachers some useful insights to implement suitable strategies and in order to cope with the problems of large classes.

## METHOD

### *Setting and Participants*

The sample for this research has been 287 students from 8<sup>th</sup> of basic education to 3<sup>rd</sup> senior year in two secondary schools in Quito both of which are public institutions. The average of students in every classroom was ranging from 38 to 45 individuals.

### *Procedure*

This research has been sustained by a compilation of bibliographic material and a group of studies related to large classes.

For completing the research work, quantitative and qualitative methods were used. A Likert-scale questionnaire was designed in students' mother tongue. The questionnaire included 21 items all of which were classified into three aspects in order to analyze the instructional, social and psychological implications that larger classes might have on the English teaching-learning process. The twenty one item-questionnaire has been organized in the following way: items from one to nine correspond to the instructional aspects, ten to fourteen were assigned to the social aspects and fifteen to twenty one correspond to the psychological aspects which correlate to the research questions to be answered in this study and determine the effects of large classes by investigating students' attitudes towards this problem.

The participants were explained the purpose of the questionnaire and how to answer it by marking on any of the parameters in a scale of totally agree, agree, partially agree and disagree. The information collected was codified in an excel sheet thus, every parameter has been assigned a number; that is, totally agree was assigned number one (1), agree number two (2), partially agree number three (3) and disagree number four (4) and blanks number (5). The academic, social and psychological results have been displayed in charts with their corresponding percentages and supported with bar graphs to be analyzed.

Additionally, every single item has been sustained with information from the Literature Review.

## DISCUSSION

### Literature Review

The following section is intended to describe relevant information which is going to support the research questions in this study. It has been developed with updated information about the most relevant methods and approaches in language teaching and also with a group of studies all of which, describe different perceptions in relation to large classes. Additionally, related aspects such as management of large classes will be described as well in order to sustain this study.

#### *Teaching Approaches and Methods*

Having an effective communication in a foreign language has always been the core in language learning therefore, the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has been one of the most implemented approaches lately. This method was born in the 70's as a solution to make language learners develop a communicative competence. The importance of communicative learning is defended by Harmer (2007) and Spratt, Pulverness & Williams (2011) who agree that CLT main purpose is communication. This approach is especially focused on language functions such as inviting, agreeing, suggesting, etc., which involve students in activities that imply opportunities for language usage within real situations. This realistic communication should go along with learners' focus on the content they are to communicate rather than an accurate usage of language forms or grammar-both in spoken or written way.

Learning a second language has been closely related to communication as its target. Transmitting information in a realistic way is one of the characteristics which makes Content-Based Instruction (CBI) ideal to introduce language to learning. The principle of CBI is teaching a second language by means of information and content. Krahnke (1987)

defines it as a way of teaching content or information within the language with no necessity to study both aspects separately. Spratt, Pulverness & Williams (2011) and Richards (2001) agree that CBI focuses on the content that learners need.

Regarding this method Richards says that CBI is used at different educational level in different program adaptations especially because the goal of CBI is for learners to become autonomous and independent along the learning process. On the contrary, Spratt, Pulverness & Williams consider CBI to be preferably used in primary and secondary levels in which language is presented through interesting topics related to school subjects that help learners to increase knowledge about the world. For that purpose, many common activities are to be related to current topics such as environment, education, science, etc. and additionally they imply the usage of material such as realia within the syllabus to make tasks meaningful.

Meaningful tasks are aimed to develop different aspects of language. One of the proponents of Task-based Language Learning (TBL) is Willis (1996) who says that tasks are central to language learning because they are aimed to stimulate language practice.

Harmer (2007) agrees with Willis that tasks are central to the learning process although he also thinks that there is confusion around TBL regarding tasks. There are two points of view about TBL; one point of view considers tasks as building blocks of a course in which students focus on language forms as they do the tasks whereas the second view shows tasks as building blocks of the course in which learners are provided with the language they need to perform the task. Despite the controversy, both processes are aimed to make students create a communication need.

Seedhouse (1999) cited by Harmer (2007) suggests that it is appropriate to base some learning on tasks, but not making tasks the basis of a pedagogical methodology.

Harmer (2007) suggests a typical TBL sequence must have three stages where the learners first are introduced to the topic then, they are explained what the task is and finally, they gather language and information to be analyzed and improved. Spratt, Pulverness & Williams (2011) recommend that classroom activities should be based around a series of problem-solving tasks in order to make learners feel the need to communicate.

Language production is a result of coordination of speech and actions which are derived from a physical motor activity, Asher (1977). Asher developed the Total Physical Response method (TPR). He refers to it as a process during which learners use a listening period the same way as children do before they can speak. Spratt, Pulverness & Williams (2011) say that TPR involves learners in a silent period during which they can hear the language rather than produce it; they also say that language can be learned better when it is accompanied by doing things physically; this means that when a language is learned by receiving, giving and executing simple commands it is easier for learners to acquire the language.

The way a second language is acquired has been the most controversial point along the years. In the nineteenth century Grammar Translation Method rose as an option to learn foreign languages the same way as Greek and Latin were learned. Harmer (2007) and Spratt, Pulverness & Williams (2011) describe the process of this method which is basically focused on the analysis and application of grammatical rules. Spratt, Pulverness & Williams (2011) explain that activities in Grammar Translation Method emphasize on accuracy and it also focus on learning vocabulary by heart. This method uses simple sentences with little study of long texts at early stages. Although spoken language was not considered of great importance in the Grammar Translation Method, the necessity to increase interaction in the target language was vital for learners; this was the reason why

this method was abandoned in order to boost the interaction between teacher and students in the classroom (Harmer, 2007).

### *Class Size*

As far as class size is concerned, there are different perceptions which have emerged about the ideal class size and advantages and disadvantages of small or large classes.

Teachers assume that learning occurs in proportion of class size although learning is not directly related to class size. The size of a class does not interfere in the quality of the teaching therefore, students can learn either in small or large classes due to the fact that students place more emphasis on the quality of teaching than class size (UNESCO, 2006).

Regarding the number of students and points of view of what a large class is; there are some opinions. For instance, Brown (2007) says that classes should be large enough to provide diversity and interaction or small enough to give students individual attention and opportunities to participate. For Locastro (1997) cited in Brown (2007) an ideal class should be comprised with an average of 12 to 15 students while Harmer (2007) adds classes are considered large in a range from 20 to 80 students depending on the education system where learners work in. However, UNESCO (2006) and researchers such as Hayes (1997) remark that there is not a fixed opinion about the exact number of a large class due to the perceptions of it varies from context to context.

As large classes are considered advantageous Hess (2001) and UNESCO (2006) refer to large classes as a great opportunity to improve interaction and interpersonal skills due to their variety of human resources and diversity of learning styles.

Regarding disadvantages of large classes UNESCO (2006) and Harmer (2007) describe large classes as challenging because teachers have difficulty in getting all students engaged in a task or moving them from one activity to a new one, etc. Brown (2007) adds

that large classes aggravate the individual teacher-students attention which tends to be minimized, students' speaking opportunities are lessened, teacher's written feedback is limited and proficiency or ability to communicate vary to a great extent. Brown also explains that teachers think large classes are difficult and that facing the conditions mentioned above can only result in an inefficient and an ineffective teaching.

### *Managing Learning*

A good environment for learning is not only comprised by space, resources and its appropriate management, it also goes along with the way a teacher applies certain strategies such as instructions, timing, discipline and feedback in order to develop a class successfully.

Ensuring comprehension is something that EFL and ESL teachers have to care for during the learning process. Scrivener (2011) says that teachers usually struggle when giving instructions in a foreign language when unclear instructions cause comprehension problems. Conveying correct instructions means giving information about the activities, explaining how to do the activities, making students understand the way of working during the activity for instance, putting students in groups of work and finally, telling students how much time they have for a task so that they can organize themselves to fulfill such activity (Harmer, 2007).

Harmer emphasizes on the importance of instructions as part of the class organization because instructions proceed as descriptors used by students to perform an action in the class. It's recommendable to carry out a demonstration of the activity that students have to do because in this way teachers ensure that students grasp better what they are supposed to do.

Regarding timing Stronge (2007) says that timing the class activities helps students improve the usage of time and allows learners to work at their own pace. Also timing



prevents that learners fulfill a task unfocusedly and miss its aim. Harmer (2007) and Stronge (2007) agree that students should be given the time limit they have to do a task and be warned of the amount of time they have for every activity. Jones (2011) emphasizes on the importance of timing in which an appropriate usage of time gives teachers the chance to organize their classroom activities in a better way. A good timing control not only keeps students focused on the tasks but also allows students to share their ideas and opinions in a more relaxed way and promotes a good learning environment.

An appropriate environment for learning and a class flowing is also possible by setting up clear disciplinary rules and maintaining discipline. Discipline in the classroom according to Couse (2011) and Peace Corps (1992) is something that requires planning, self-confidence and establishing rules from the beginning. Inside the classroom teachers set the rules and of course students can participate in the elaboration of that set of rules. Having students partake in the elaboration of the classroom rules is a good way of making learners aware of the way that they are expected to behave with others with the purpose of strengthening consideration and cooperation inside the classroom (UNESCO, 2006).

Many people think of discipline and its close correlation with punishment but the truth is that a balanced classroom is made up of rewards rather than punishment, therefore; rewarding good behavior provides motivation for students, it enhances their social skills and builds self-esteem (Peace Corps, 1992). Ur (2004) says that monitoring and moving around the classroom especially (not just) during pair or group work, talk closely to some students and specially move toward anyone causing trouble are tips to maintain a good control of the class.

Strong responses to misbehavior are sometimes necessary and teachers' personal policies should reflect sensitivity to school norms and expectations. Those personal policies should be based on these three principles to handle discipline: be fair, be clear and

be consistent; with these rules a class is lead through respect and self-control because well-managed classrooms need the firm guidance of a respected teacher (Peace Corps, 1992).

Consequently, promoting positive discipline helps students learn good behavior (UNESCO, 2006). To conclude, managing a good discipline promotes a healthy classroom psycho-social environment.

Ensuring a good environment for high-quality learning is a day by day compromise in which every class period must guarantee learners are acquiring information properly.

Feedback is considered by many authors a key factor which determines better learning. Feedback allows teachers and even students to see how well they are doing and whether or not they understand what they are being taught (UNESCO, 2006). The magnitude of feedback has a serious effect on students' achievement because it has to be immediate to be effective, otherwise leaving a long breach in time will decrease feedback effectiveness (Stronge, 2007). Harmer (2007) also emphasizes on the importance of feedback and its crucial role in the learning process because it has to match the students' concerns and be appropriate to the activities they are carrying out; for Hill & Flynn (2006) feedback must be comprehensible, useful and relevant.

Hill & Flynn mention four types of feedback: corrective, timely, criterion-referred and self-evaluation. Corrective feedback means modeling the correct language without focusing on the error by providing information of what is correct and what is not. Timely feedback has to do with the amount of time between an activity and its immediate feedback. Teachers must find a suitable moment to give feedback because it might play a critical effect on productive learning (Stronge, 2007). Criterion-referred feedback suggests the use of rubrics to provide a criterion and focus on the learners' progress and skills rather than on scores. Self-evaluation feedback encourages learners to monitor their own progress in learning, this is the reason why, Hill & Flynn (2006) say student-led feedback is more

beneficial than teacher feedback.

### *Managing Large Classes*

Working with large classes might be a challenge for many teachers, so, a useful tip suggests teachers should meet other teachers and ask for suggestions, discuss techniques and even visit other colleagues who are also teaching large classes to interchange ideas, materials, etc. (UNESCO, 2006).

Creating a friendly learning atmosphere might boost the interaction between teachers and students in large classes with very simple tips. Hess (2001) and Ur (2004) say that teachers can create a good learning atmosphere by using the names of students and trying to learn at least some of them, due to this action demonstrates teachers interest in learners as individuals. If recalling students' names is still something complicated to do, there is a multi-purpose tip to work with large classes in which teachers ought to be constantly moving and monitoring the class while talking (UNESCO, 2006).

Boosting Students Talking Time (STT) in large classes is somehow challenging for some teachers. Jones (2007) remarks that the amount of pressure students feel during speaking or conversation activities in English may lead students to panic. Therefore, teachers ought to promote activities in which students have fun as they communicate with one another so that those tasks become rewarding experiences for students.

Using a variety of activities and different ways of interaction are key elements when working with large classes. For instance, a variety of activities is useful not only for boosting interaction but also for avoiding distraction due to limited attention span for which a teacher needs to have a variety of routines such as role plays, group work, etc. (UNESCO, 2006). Jones (2007) adds that arranging pairs and groups differently for diverse activities, putting weaker and stronger students in different groups, sometimes mixing weaker and stronger students is productive to make the classroom flow.

### *Activities for working with Large Classes*

In large classes students learn in many different ways and their active participation encourage an active learning, thus a variety of strategies should be used such as, in-class or out-class exercises and group exercises (UNESCO, 2006). Jones (2007) says that activities, like discussion and role play, are quite clearly suitable as working-together activities. Writing tasks or multiple-choice and fill-the-blank exercises may be effective and enjoyable when done in pairs or groups.

Working with large classes allows teacher use flexible activities which can be applied individually, in pair group, in groups or as a whole class and the following sections contain some activities which Jones (2007) considers useful to work with large classes.

For instance, reading can be a very useful activity because teachers can start it as an individual activity and be led to a small group discussion.

Listening activities are mostly individual, however it can turn into group work and even become a whole class activity in which learners discuss and give opinions about the topic.

Discussions are suitable for small group work or a whole class activity where students exchange points of view. Setting a time limit can ensure students use time for speaking.

A role play for instance demands natural language that can be monitored. Students have the opportunity to practice the dialogues again and there is a flexible number of participants.

Gap fill or writing tasks are used to make students work together. Writing tasks make students brainstorm ideas, analyze the text, marshal their thoughts, make notes and even read and react to another's work.

Problem solving activities encourage students to work together in pairs or groups.

These activities boost language use because learners need to communicate in order to solve the situation. By solving problems English gives students the opportunity to share personal feelings and private experiences, to step back, reflect, find out about other people, and even share their secrets. Jones (2007) adds that sharing is a two-way process consisting on: explaining to others and listening to them, and reacting to them. Students need to be armed with suitable ways of reacting to one another in English, so, smiles, laughter, and supportive body language are important.

#### *Classroom Space and seating arrangement*

Ideal and comfortable classrooms are uncommon; the majority of schools around the world suffer from overcrowding. This overcrowding is characterized by heat, noise and small classroom overflow which only result in a poor learning setting for teachers and students.

Regarding poor learning settings McLeod & Jan Hover (2003) say that past researches about seating arrangement demonstrates that overcrowding affected students conduct and attitude having as a result lack of attention, aggression and dissatisfaction; while current researches have shown that the effects of class size are related to students' achievement.

Teachers as the ones responsible for generating a good learning environment are in charge of finding solutions to the problems, however, managing the classroom space can be an activity where students also can get involved. Students' partaking can develop their responsibility and active participation in creating a good environment for learning (UNESCO, 2006).

McLeod & Jan Hover (2003) say that there are possible solutions to improve those difficult conditions by arranging seats in a way that the contact with peers and teacher is not lessened. What they consider important is the teachers' position, so, whatever the seat

arrangement teachers choose, the teachers' desk must have a strategic position depending on the activity to be performed; there must be also walkways to permit the teacher to have access and monitor the whole class.

Regarding student's seats Jones (2007) recommends moving students' positions regularly so that students at the bottom sit in different places such as the middle of the row and thus, they can get engaged and also can receive attention from the teachers.

As large classes allow different types of interaction during classroom activities, Jones (2007) lists some ideas to interact in the class. Jones says that pair work might turn into a trio; a third talkative student could fit perfectly within it. Ideal groups have from 3 to 5 members because larger groups tend to minimize the participation.

Arranging the groups will always have a solution in overcrowded classrooms. For instance, for pair work, students who are sitting side-by-side can move their upper bodies to face each other. A student who is sitting in front can turn around to face the one behind. With groups of three the middle student can move back slightly, so that the ones on the left and right can see each other.

Groups of four could consist of two students from the row in front and two from the row behind. Jones says that it is important that all the pairs or groups are accessible to teachers as they go around the class while students are working together. Jones also recommends using group work with peers that they sympathize; although in some situations it might generate poor interaction due to boredom as a result of knowing well the other person. To conclude, it's recommended changing seats on a regular basis to promote interaction with different people within the classroom.

#### *Different Levels of Proficiency*

Language abilities inside a language class both in a small or large class might be quite varied. Harmer (2007) describes to this type of class as mix-ability classes where there are

different levels of proficiency. Brown (2007) adds that there is a wide range of proficiency levels in the same class, especially if this is a large class; even in small classes teachers can find different proficiency levels.

Working with mix-ability classes demands time for planning the best strategy. Harmer (2007) says that setting apart activities can be useful in some situations but it might be really complicated in others especially in large classes. Giving different content is extremely problematic not only for requiring more teacher's preparation but also for finding feedback even more complicated to fulfill. Under these circumstances Harmer says that the teacher's role is selecting activities in which content can be adapted for all levels, but even with the adaptations, sometimes the activities will not simply be appropriate. Thus, Harmer mentions that teachers have to be realistic if willing to apply differentiation in the classroom especially in terms of content and they have to find suitable moments to implement it.

The disadvantage of making the above mentioned differentiation lays on fairness. Dinnocenti (1998) cited in Harmer (2007) explains the major concern at this point is supplying learners' needs, that is; students who have difficulties at lower level and the gifted ones. Under these circumstances teachers face the problem of challenging higher-level students, not overwhelming lower-level students and at the same time keeping the middle-level students steady on their achievements. Harmer also says that teachers' language is affected as well depending on students' level; for instance, with beginners the language to be used is simpler than the one used with intermediate or advance groups.

The light on this way comes up with a set of recommendations to work with these groups. Harmer (2007) suggests giving students' different roles, identifying students' abilities (linguistic or non-linguistic), etc. Brown (2007) proposes group work tasks and laboratory material which provide opportunities to solve multi-proficiency needs. Hess

(2001) says that a dictation in large multilevel classes might become a listening cloze dictation itself, because several versions of the passage can be created; a version with a few blanks would be suitable for beginners; the other versions include more blanks according to learners' ability levels.

All the theories, concepts and opinions about large classes displayed in the section above allude creating an appropriate learning environment under any circumstance no matter how large a class is, the teachers will be the ones who play the most important role in order to guarantee a high quality teaching-learning process. Besides, this research has been supported with some studies regarding large classes and how perceptions about them play a surprising effect on teaching a second language.

Khazaei, Zadeh & Ketabi (2012) conducted a study to demonstrate whether or not Willingness to communicate (WTC) diverges in different class size in Iranian EFL learners. The participants were selected from three separate classes; the first one regarded as small with five students and named class A, the second one consisted of ten students and called class B, finally, the third one considered as a large class composed of fifteen students and called class C. The information was gathered through an observation sheet which was used in order to determine talking time and participation of each student during one hour-period class. The information was taken during a period of time of 6 weeks. To analyze the data descriptive statistics was used and one way ANOVA in order to determine the effects of large classes in the willingness to communicate.

The results of this study revealed that learners decrease their talking time and willingness to communicate when the number of students in a classroom increases. This study concludes that class size affects learners' participation and willingness to communicate when the number of students in a classroom is bigger.

Another study on the issue of class size is the one of Harfitt (2012) whose purpose



was to demonstrate whether or not teachers' perceptions are different from their performance in both large and reduced classes. This research analyses how a group of teachers respond when they are teaching small and large classes of the same school year.

A qualitative research was applied; 22 semi-structured interviews and 48 lesson observations were used. Three experienced teachers participated in this study case. The teachers were observed and video-recorded during the 40-minute class periods. The 3 teachers also participated in an interview from 20 min to 50 min which was audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim. The results were divided into three modes of interaction: teacher class, class teacher, and student-student. After that, the data was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

This study concludes that teachers' perception of teaching large classes has changed due to they realized that they were not able to make transcendental changes when teaching and interacting either with a large or a small class. The limitation of this study was the small number of teachers who participated in the research because it doesn't represent a big sample which can contribute enormously to this area of study.

Consequently, the author recommends further investigation on teachers working with large and small classes in order to capture the reality and more details of the classroom context.

Teachers are not the only ones who can submit their perception about class size. Students' points of view are deeply analyzed by Khati (2011) whose study aims to find out what common expectation students have inside a large multilevel classroom when they are learning English. Her study analyses six important areas such as classroom management, collaboration, range of tasks, feedback, classroom English and home assignment. The research focused on two secondary schools; thirty students were the population which was selected by using purposive non-random sampling procedure. A structured questionnaire containing nineteen closed ended questions was applied to students. Students had to mark

a scale going from 0 (not expectations at all) to 3 (most liked expectation). Within the six areas on research the first one was Classroom management regarding discipline, seating arrangement and teachers' attitude. The second area analyzed interaction and L1 and L2 usage in class. The next area focused on classroom activities. Another area implied teachers' frequency of L2 in the classroom. Another section was devoted to feedback. The last area was about home assignment.

The results were presented in individual tables followed by discussion of each theme of research question. This study reveals many findings regarding the expectations of students in large multilevel classes. Students perceive interest from the teacher when they are called by their names and also when the teacher moves around the classroom. Students feel comfortable working in groups and receiving personal feedback during the class. They feel motivation with additional and challenging activities according to their pace, that is neither too easy, nor too difficult; they prefer to receive L2 with new vocabulary within simple and short expressions. The researcher concludes that in a large heterogeneous class, there is no possibility of developing a collaborative working atmosphere and involving students in appropriate activities for different levels.

The analysis of teachers' and students' perceptions about large classes needs to be supported by contrasting points of view about small classes. Galton & Pell (2012) conducted a four year-study to determine the benefits of teaching in small classes. Thirty seven primary schools volunteered to participate and 720 teachers were selected. The students were observed for three years in their cycle from P1 to P3 and they were considered in three groups, one with small classes, the second one moving from small P1 to normal P3 and the third one in a normal class. Two observation sheets were used, the Teacher Record and the Student Record. The Teacher record was meant to note down teachers' questions, statements they made, silent interaction taking place when teachers

listen to students reading or report on their work, and teachers' attention (individual, group or whole class). Students' record reported facts like interaction among students, whether they are on or off the task, and consequently, whether this involves interaction with an adult or peers.

The three year observations demonstrated that there is a minimal difference not only in teaching small classes but also in the individual attention received by the students in normal classes. The teachers admitted that they have to adapt to classroom conditions although, it is easier to apply certain teaching techniques in small classes.

The following study is going to focus on English as a second Language (ESL) and achievement through different aspects.

Oberg (1993) conducted a study to determine achievement regarding class time in ESL large classes with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students. This project was performed with the participation of ESL first grade students from two elementary schools with the largest LEP populations. One school worked 45 minutes ESL classes daily while the other one worked with its LEP students 90 minutes daily. The 45-minute program sample consisted of 13 first grade students with different first languages: Korean, Chinese, Spanish, Persian, Hindi, Serbo-Croatian, and Polish. The 90-minute program sample consisted of 17 first grade students with the following L1: Chinese, Korean, Spanish, Bulgarian, and Hebrew. A questionnaire was applied to nineteen first grade teachers in order to identify issues about general teaching experience, experience with ESL students and ESL methods, and teacher preferences on subjects and the amount of time for ESL instruction. The data were disaggregated to provide information on the regular classroom achievement.

The author concluded that neither class size nor pull-out time can be connected to achievement on the ITBS reading and language tests. Nevertheless, the 45-minute program

students achieved higher grades than the 90-minute program students in oral language.

## Description, Analysis and Interpretation of Results

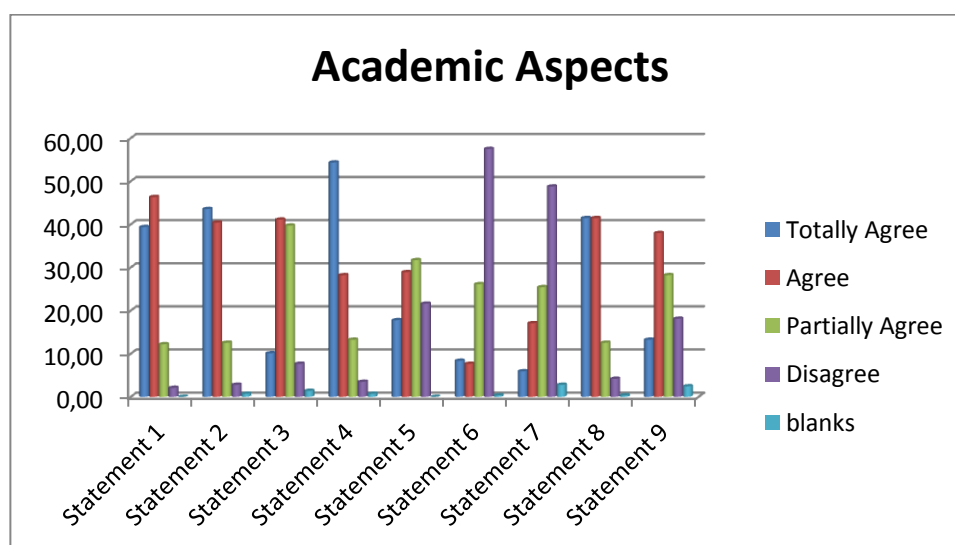
This section includes the analysis of the data. The data has been presented in individual tables followed by a discussion of the three research question: What academic implications do large classes have on the English teaching-learning process? What social implications do large classes have on the English teaching-learning process? and What psychological implications do large classes have on the English teaching-learning process?. Every item of the questionnaire was analyzed in relation to the research question in order to how large classes influence the English teaching-learning process.

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

N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		Blanks		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class.	113	<b>39,37</b>	133	<b>46,34</b>	35	<b>12,20</b>	6	<b>2,09</b>	0	<b>0,00</b>	287	100
2.	The activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.	125	<b>43,55</b>	116	<b>40,42</b>	36	<b>12,54</b>	8	<b>2,79</b>	2	<b>0,70</b>	287	100
3.	The students are engaged with classroom activities, including those sitting at the bottom of the classroom.	29	<b>10,10</b>	118	<b>41,11</b>	114	<b>39,72</b>	22	<b>7,67</b>	4	<b>1,39</b>	287	100
4.	A variety of classroom activities are used such as group, individual or pair-work activities, etc.	156	<b>54,36</b>	81	<b>28,22</b>	38	<b>13,24</b>	10	<b>3,48</b>	2	<b>0,70</b>	287	100
5.	Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class.	51	<b>17,77</b>	83	<b>28,92</b>	91	<b>31,71</b>	62	<b>21,60</b>	0	<b>0,00</b>	287	100
6.	Students can cheat during the test.	24	<b>8,36</b>	22	<b>7,67</b>	75	<b>26,13</b>	165	<b>57,49</b>	1	<b>0,35</b>	287	100

7.	Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects.	17	<b>5,92</b>	49	<b>17,07</b>	73	<b>25,44</b>	140	<b>48,78</b>	8	<b>2,79</b>	287	100
8.	The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class.	119	<b>41,46</b>	119	<b>41,46</b>	36	<b>12,54</b>	12	<b>4,18</b>	1	<b>0,35</b>	287	100
9.	Students cannot receive appropriate feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students.	38	<b>13,24</b>	109	<b>37,98</b>	81	<b>28,22</b>	52	<b>18,12</b>	7	<b>2,44</b>	287	100

Author: Bermúdez, M.  
Source: Student's questionnaire



Author: Bermúdez, M.  
Source: Student's questionnaire

Activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class. According to the results it is seen that 39.37 % of the students have answered they totally agree while 46.34 % have marked that they agree. This means that in large classes it is possible to perform activities that permit to reinforce what students learn. On the other hand, 12.20 % of students have responded that they partially agree and 2.09 % answered they do not agree.

The findings of this item indicate that large classes allow to do activities which apply what students have learned. The activities are focused on the application of learners'

knowledge and they can be done in a class with a lot of students. The number of students in a classroom does not affect the performance of activities all of which are aimed to put into practice the knowledge that students have acquired because teachers have an appropriate classroom management in which timing is one of the strategies that best help teachers monitor whether students are focused on the tasks.

The activities allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing. The results drawn in this question show that 43.55 % of students responded totally agree, while a 40.42 % of students marked their answers as agree. On the contrary, 12.54 % of students answered partially agree, while 2.79 % marked disagree and 0.70 % did not answer. These results demonstrate that in large classes it is possible to practice the four skills due to the fact that the activities are varied and most of them follow a sequential pattern where students are to practice the different skills through activities such as pair or group work. Jones (2007) supports these results by saying that reading, listening, writing and speaking can be done in large classes because the number of students might be an advantage to break down the tasks into multiple activities, for instance; from a reading task a speaking activity may come up, etc.

Students are engaged with classroom activities, including those sitting at the bottom of the classroom. Regarding this question it is seen that 10.10 % of the students marked totally agree; whereas 41.11 % answered they agree. The chart shows that in large classes the activities are likely to embrace the whole class even students sitting at the bottom of the room. It is seen a 39.72 % of students who partially agree with this item while 7.67 % does not agree and 1.39 % did not answer.

The findings demonstrate that large classes permit the active participation of the whole class due to the fact that activities are attractive, students are being monitored during the activity and also certain types of activities require students moving changing their

seating arrangement in order to accomplish the activities. The participation of students in the activities especially the ones who are sitting at the bottom of the classroom is reduced when they feel unnoticed. Learners who are sitting at the bottom of the classroom show more interest in the activities only when the teachers are monitoring and moving around the classroom to make sure everybody is engaged in the activity. Managing all students to acquire knowledge effectively and getting the necessary attention from all the class especially from the students sitting at the bottom is the hardest part of teaching large classes; thus, Jones (2007) recommends moving students' positions regularly so that students who are at the bottom sit in different places for instance, those students might sit in the middle of the row, etc. Doing this in a regular basis generates more possibilities that students not only at the beginning or in the middle but also the one at the bottom can actively participate in the classroom activities and also receive the required attention from the teachers.

A variety of classroom activities are used such as group, individual or pair-work activities, etc. According to these results, it is seen that 54.36 % of the students responded that they totally agree while 28.22 % of students answered that they agree. These results denote that in large classes the application of varied classroom activities, which permit interaction with peers, is practicable.

Contrary to the results above, 13.24 % of students marked they partially agree whereas 3.48 % of students marked that they don't agree and 0.70 % of students did not answer.

These results demonstrate that for a small number of students classroom activities might be monotonous or predictable at the moment of carrying out certain tasks. This may be because teachers use different but not varied activities, that is, teachers work with different techniques-work group- but they never try a different alternative e.g. pair work,



etc. consequently, students already know what the teacher wants.

The findings demonstrate that in large classes it is possible to use a variety of activities; these results confirm what Jones (2007) says about large classes and how flexible they can be for instance; a whole class activity can easily turn into group or pair work, etc. Hess (2001) also says that large classes are advantageous due to the fact that they can boost interaction.

Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class. Based on the results from the chart, it can be seen that 17.77 % of students marked that they totally agree while 28.92 % of student agree. Opposing those results 31.71 % of students marked partially agree, while 21.60 % of students do not agree. These findings reveal that large classes do generate a high percentage of opportunities to perform activities which are not done on a regular basis; however a 53.31% indicate that large classes do not allow the implementation of activities such as games, competitions or debates, etc. The factors that influence these results may be caused because most of the time teachers follow the pattern of the course book in which all the activities are already assigned and fully detailed. On the other hand, when teachers follow more flexible programs they have the opportunity to execute those sorts of activities more often.

Students can cheat during the tests. Regarding students academic performance, it can be seen that 8.36 % of students marked totally agree while 7.67 % of students responded agree. These minor results indicate that large classes sometimes allow students to cheat during tests. On the contrary, 26.13 % of students marked they disagree while 57.49 % answered that they do not agree and 0.35 % did not answer. These results indicate that in large classes it is not possible to cheat during tests. Avoiding problems in large classes such as cheating during tests can be easily solved through permanent teachers' monitoring. On the other hand, cheating itself might occur both in large or small classes

considering that much of it depends on how a teacher manages a class. Couse (2011) says that teachers must be firm in order to avoid appearing to be poor at controlling the class, so, when teachers' attitude is acknowledged the number of students might not mean a challenge and students will know that academic dishonesty might not be accepted in the class.

Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects. Concerning this item, it can be seen that 5.92 % of students responded to this item as they totally agree while 17.07 % of students answered this item as they agree, which means that in large classes it is possible to do other assignments during English classes. Opposing to that point of view, 25.44 % of students have answered that they partially agree while 48.78 % of students marked the answers as disagree and 2.79 % did not respond. These results reflect that large classes do not allow students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects; on the contrary, they are focused on the task that they are performing in the class. Maintaining students engaged and focused on the activities in a classroom with a lot of students requires teachers' permanent monitoring. Regarding monitoring UNESCO (2007) makes reference to having teachers constantly moving and monitoring the class while talking due to the fact that this might considerably reduce distraction. Jones (2007) adds that teachers ought to monitor students' works discreetly, not only during pair or groups work but during any activity.

The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class. On the subject of seating arrangement the results indicate that students' answers on both parameters totally agree and agree have been scored with 41.46 % each; which means that in large classes the seating arrangement does not affect students' performance and they can carry out tasks without any problem. In contrast, 12.54 % of students have answered that they partially agree while 4.18% of students have marked the item as disagree and 0.35%

did not answer.

The findings reveal that in large classes the seating arrangement is not considered a factor that can interfere in learners' performance despite the difficulty to move the seats because of their weight. On the contrary, the individual desks permit to do flexible classroom activities and facilitate activities such as pair or group work. If seating arrangement became a challenge or obstacle for classroom activities, teachers would find solutions to solve such problems (Jones, 2007 and UNESCO, 2006). For instance, Jones suggests moving students' seats in multiple ways so that they can easily participate in pair work discussion, group work, etc.

Students cannot receive appropriate feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students. As far as feedback is concerned, it can be seen that 13.24% of students answered they totally agree while 37.98 % of students marked this item as they agree. These findings revealed that students feel that in large classes they cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher since there are a lot of students in the classroom. Some students have answered this item as partially agree with 28.22% while 18.12% of students have marked as disagree and 2.44% did not answer.

These results point out that large classes affect on the way feedback is given to learners because a 51.22% of students consider that feedback in a large class is not properly provided. Most of the times, teachers give a general feedback at the end of every class period in order to clear up or reinforce certain topics previously checked during the past class, consequently, giving feedback at the end of the class does not satisfy most of the doubts learners have during the class. Sometimes, teachers stop the class flow to give feedback about a topic that is causing difficulty to a majority of students, however, it does not clear up all the doubts students can have either. Harmer (2007) and Stronge (2007) consider feedback to be of great importance in learning because it helps to estimate how

much students have learned, thus, feedback must comprise relevant content in order to match learners' needs. Hill & Flynn (2006) support this idea by suggesting the application of different types of feedback which can be adapted to learners' needs.

On the topic of academic instructions in the section above the overall findings display the multiple students' insights about large classes. Large classes do not affect students' learning to a great extent; students' perceptions for instance, put on view that classroom activities in which acquired knowledge is applied, the four skills are developed and different interaction is utilized can be achieved successfully. Also, students demonstrate that seating arrangement is not considered a weak point that might affect leaning.

According to the findings, the disadvantages of large classes have been portrayed to the limited usage of activities such as plays, contest, etc. and also how the lack of proper feedback has not caused dissatisfaction in learners. To sum up, large classes do not affect sufficiently the teaching-learning process in reference to the academic aspects.

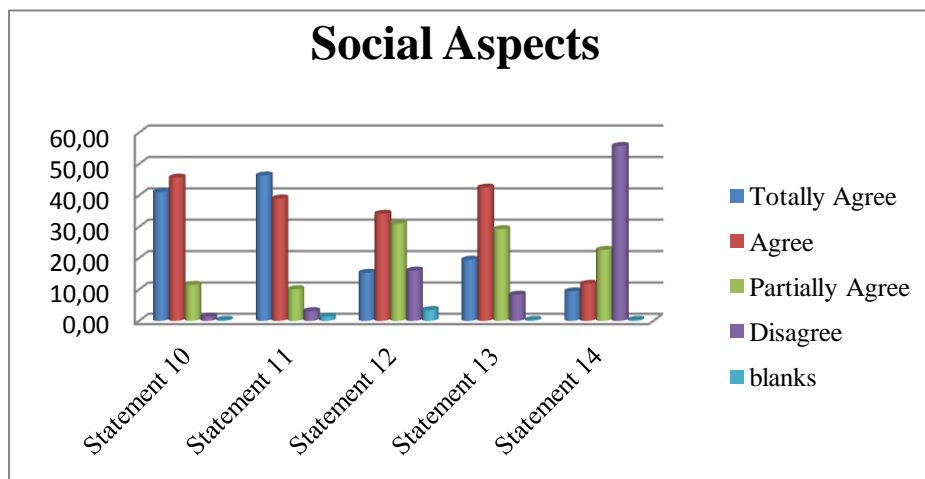
The next section is intended to analyze whether or not large classes affect the social aspects in language leaning.

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

N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		Blanks		TOTAL	
		f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
10.	There is interaction between the teacher and students	118	<b>41,11</b>	131	<b>45,64</b>	33	<b>11,50</b>	4	<b>1,39</b>	1	<b>0,35</b>	287	100
11.	I have the opportunity to socialize with more people.	133	<b>46,34</b>	112	<b>39,02</b>	29	<b>10,10</b>	9	<b>3,14</b>	4	<b>1,39</b>	287	100
12.	The teacher does not remember the name of all the students.	44	<b>15,33</b>	98	<b>34,15</b>	89	<b>31,01</b>	46	<b>16,03</b>	10	<b>3,48</b>	287	100

13.	The environment is less stressful due to the fact that possibilities to be asked questions constantly by the teacher are reduced.	56	<b>19,51</b>	122	<b>42,51</b>	84	<b>29,27</b>	24	<b>8,36</b>	1	<b>0,35</b>	287	100
14.	I can use my mobile phone or any electronic device without being noticed by the teacher.	27	<b>9,41</b>	34	<b>11,85</b>	65	<b>22,65</b>	160	<b>55,75</b>	1	<b>0,35</b>	287	100

Author: Bermúdez, M.  
Source: Student's questionnaire



AuthAutor: Bermúdez, M.  
Source: Student's questionnaire

There is interaction between the teacher and students. According to the results it is observed that 41.11 % of students have answered that they totally agree while 45.64% of students marked the answers as agree which means that learners in classrooms with large number of students feel an appropriate environment for learning and interaction to take place. There is a good level of interaction in the classroom; however, 11.50 % of students partially agree while 1.39 % of students marked disagree and 0.35 % did not answer. These results in the chart show that dissatisfaction regarding interaction between teachers and students is hardly noticeable in large classes.

The percentage in which students referred to interaction in the class confirms what Hess (2001) says concerning to how advantageous a large class might be to generate

interactive classrooms. Interaction takes place during the whole class period for example, after peer communication students need to clear doubts, solve problems or receive feedback from their teachers; therefore teachers are the ones whose function is promoting an adequate environment to work (Jones, 2007).

I have the opportunity to socialize with more people. Regarding social skills the table displays 46.34 % of students who marked totally agree while 39.02 % of students answered agree. These percentages reflect that large classes increase the opportunities to socialize with more people because there are multiple activities in which interaction creates the perfect environment to socialize. On the contrary, 10.10 % of students partially agree while 3.14 % disagree and 1.39 % did not respond. This means that a very low percentage of students think that socialization inside large classes does not occur. Interaction inside a classroom takes place in many ways although students do not notice it they are interchanging information permanently and thus, socializing. The findings reveal that large classes generate 85.34 % of interaction among peers which is a very positive result; this result supports the previous item regarding interaction between teacher and students which also shows a positive response. The simple act of asking questions to the teacher or peers is promoting social skills, these skills are boosted even more when students are to participate in different classroom activities, do certain task that involve interaction with others, etc. so, the results of the chart only confirm that large classes are a perfect scenario for socialization.

The teacher does not remember the name of all his/her students. Regarding this item there is 15.33 % of students who totally agree while 34.15 % of students marked agree, this means that in students' opinion in large classes teachers do not remember the name of all the students in a classroom. There is a 31.01 % of students who partially agree while 16.03 % of students marked disagree. These results indicate in large classes teachers

are able to call students by their names.

The table shows little variation in the percentages for instance, 49.48 % of students marked as agree and 47.04 % of students responded as disagree which means this item does not illustrate any significant result, thus, this item is left under discussion. Students' perception about this item might vary due to the fact that not all teachers interact with students in the same way. Some teachers would rather use students' last names than their names, in other cases teacher would call them by using the number of enrollment, etc. These kinds of attitudes have to do with teachers' personality although most of the teachers in these current days prefer to be more personal with students and create a warm atmosphere for learners. Regarding this item UNESCO (2006) and Ur (2004) suggest using the names of students to stimulate a positive class environment, to demonstrate interest especially in large classes, also to maintain discipline and mainly to give positive feedback; the challenge for the teacher is trying to learn the names as soon as possible in order to demonstrate students are important. Hess (2001) adds that calling students by their names promotes basic human relations and makes students feel they are individuals and that they are treated as such.

The environment is less stressful due to the teacher might not ask questions to the same student. The results of this item are 19.51 % of students who marked their answers as totally agree while 42.51 % of students have answered that they agree. This signifies that students think that in large classes the possibilities to be asked questions regularly by the teacher reduce the stressful environment. On the other hand, 29.27% of students answered partially agree while 8.36 % of students marked disagree and 0.35 % of students did not respond. These results are evidence for stating that a considerable number of students think that large classes do not decrease the chances to be repeatedly asked questions by the teacher during a class period. Regarding this item the fact that teachers

will always be interested in interaction results in having teachers always monitoring students and trying to keep them focused and engaged in classroom activities, therefore teachers will repeatedly make students partake in the activities and that sometimes implies calling students to participate more than once.

I can use electronic devices during class without being noticed by the teacher.

Concerning the use of devices in class the results illustrate 9.41 % of students who answered totally agree while 11.85 % of students marked that they agree, which means that, in large classes students sometimes have the opportunity to use devices without being noticed. Opposing those results, 22.65 % of students partially agree while 55.75 % of students disagree and 0.35 % did not answer. The results illustrate that discipline is emphasized and successfully applied in large classes.

Concerning the results of this section about social aspects the percentages demonstrate that interaction between teachers and peers in the classroom is successful. The only disadvantage of working with a large number of students is that teachers are lacking interest in using students' names while interacting in the class. It's necessary that students feel a warm environment for learning. Having a healthy psychological learning environment is going to be analyzed in the following section which is related to the psychological aspects and how students undergo in a class with a large number of students.

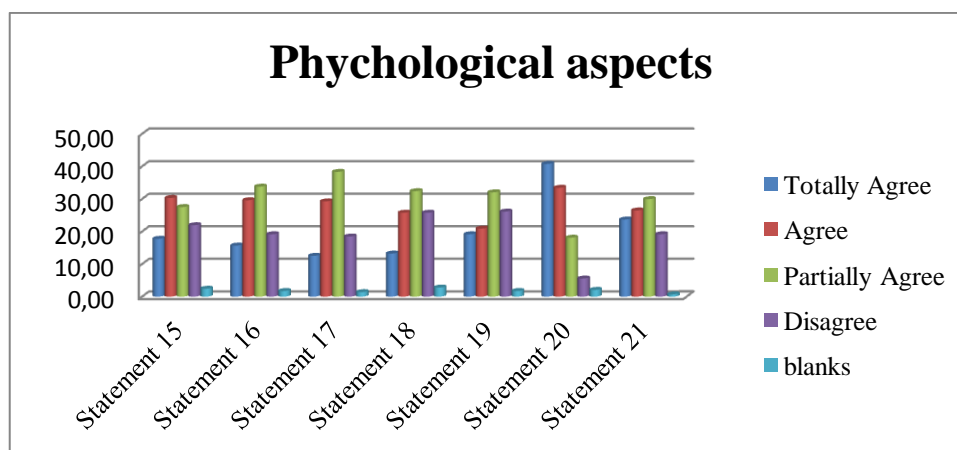
*What psychological implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?*

N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		Blanks		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
15.	The environment is stressful	51	17,77	87	30,31	79	27,53	63	21,95	7	2,44	287	100
16.	Speaking in front of the class makes me uncomfortable.	45	15,68	85	29,62	97	33,80	55	19,16	5	1,74	287	100



17.	My opportunities to speak are reduced.	36	<b>12,54</b>	84	<b>29,27</b>	110	<b>38,33</b>	53	<b>18,47</b>	4	<b>1,39</b>	287	100
18.	I do not like to participate because I am shy.	38	<b>13,24</b>	74	<b>25,78</b>	93	<b>32,40</b>	74	<b>25,78</b>	8	<b>2,79</b>	287	100
19.	The teacher does not give individual attention to all students.	55	<b>19,16</b>	60	<b>20,91</b>	92	<b>32,06</b>	75	<b>26,13</b>	5	<b>1,74</b>	287	100
20.	You can compete with other students.	117	<b>40,77</b>	96	<b>33,45</b>	52	<b>18,12</b>	16	<b>5,57</b>	6	<b>2,09</b>	287	100
21.	You feel relaxed because it is easy to be unnoticed.	68	<b>23,69</b>	76	<b>26,48</b>	86	<b>29,97</b>	55	<b>19,16</b>	2	<b>0,70</b>	287	100

Author: Bermúdez, M.  
Source: Student's questionnaire



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Source: Student's questionnaire

The environment is stressful. According to the results 17.77 % of students have answered totally agree while 30.31 % of students marked the answers as agree which means in large classes the environment is stressful. A 27.53 % of students answered that the partially agree while 21.95 % of students do not agree and 2.44 % did not respond. These results demonstrate that in large classes the environment is not stressful.

Surprisingly there is a slight difference in the answers because 48.08 % of the answers were marked agree whereas 49.48 % of the answers were marked disagree which signifies that opinions are split. This results confirm what Jones (2007) says regarding stress because he remarks that speaking activities and conversations in English imply a lot of pressure and even lead students to panic or stress, however; if students have fun as they communicate with one another there will be a rewarding experience for students. Jones states that motivation is important consequently the more successful the activities students' participate in, the more confident students will become.

Speaking in front of the class makes me uncomfortable. In relation to results in this table it is observed that 15.68 % of students answered they totally agree while 29.62 % of students answered they agree. This means that in large classes students feel uncomfortable when speaking in front of the class. On the contrary, 33.80 % of students responded they partially agree while 19.16 % of students answered they do not agree and 1.74 did not answer; this indicates that in large classes students feel comfortable when speaking to peers in front of the classroom.

The overall results illustrate that in large classes a great number of students do not feel uncomfortable when they have to speak in front of the class. Shyness to speak in front of people happens to almost everybody even in mother tongue; this might result in a similar or even worse feeling when students have to do it in English and in front of the class. Jones (2007) states that a good attitude toward speaking in a foreign language could be persuading students that they will need English to communicate with others in their future lives. This strategy might be useful to increase a good learning environment and comfort when speaking in front of large number of people; additionally, UNESCO (2006) and the Peace Corps (1992) refer to teachers as the promoters of a good learning environment in order to encourage students to communicate.

My opportunities to communicate are reduced. According to the results, it is seen that a 12.54 % of students answered they totally agree while 29.27 % of students responded they agree; this signifies that students believe that in large classes opportunities to speak are reduced. Opposing to those results, it is seen that 38.33 % of students partially agree while 18.47 % of students answered they do not agree and 1.39 % did not answer. These results indicate that in large classes students' opportunities to speak are not minimized in large classes.

Teachers try different types of activities such as group work or pair group which are the most common; those activities are intended to create a balance during the communicative activities. Jones (2007) says that English gives students the chance to share personal feelings and private experiences, to step back, reflect, find out about other people, and even share their secrets. Sharing information is a two-way process, in which first students explain something to others then, the others listen to them and finally, they react to one another by giving their opinion, etc.

I do not like to participate because I am shy. Based on the following results, it can be stated that 13.24 % of students responded that they totally agree while 25.78 % of students answered they agree which means that in large classes students do not like to participate because they feel shy. On the other hand, 32.40 % of students answered they partially agree while 25.78 % of students responded they do not agree and 2.79 % of students did not respond. These results show that in large classes the majority of students do not mind participating in classes with large number of students. Shyness is an issue related to characteristics of personality but it is a matter influenced by the environment lived in a certain moment; this is confirmed by UNESCO (2006) and the Peace Corps (1992) regarding the importance of teachers as the promoters of a good learning environment in order to encourage students to communicate unreservedly.

The teacher does not give individual attention to all students. In relation to these results, it can be observed that 19.16 % of students responded that they totally agree while 20.91 % of students answered that they agree; this means that in large classes students think that the teacher does not give individual attention to all student. The table also shows 32.06 % of students who responded with partially agree while 26.13 % of students answered they do not agree and 1.74 % did not answer. These results demonstrate that in large classes students feel that teachers' attention is not dramatically affected.

Teachers' regular monitoring allows to give individual feedback to a great number of students, however, that is not enough to supply individual personalized attention that students might demand, most of the time doubts, questions and answers are explained toward the whole group instead of giving explanations individually.

You can compete with other students. According to the results 40.77 % of students answered that they totally agree while 33.45 % of students have marked they agree. These results show that large classes are suitable to create a competitive atmosphere, so, participating actively in a good environment is a tip to increase learning motivation. Opposite to those points of view, 18.12 % of students answered that they partially agree while 5.57 % of students answered that they do not agree and 2.09 % did not respond. These results demonstrate a minority of students who do not think that completing with other students is possible in a large class.

The findings reflect 74.22 % of students who marked agree this means, that large classes are perfect for interaction with peers due to there are different activities that can promote a competitive learning environment.

You feel relaxed because it is easy to be unnoticed. According to the results, 23.69 % of students have answered totally agree while 26.48 % of students agree which means that in large classes students think that it is easy to be unnoticed. On the other hand,

29.97 % of students who responded partially agree while 19.16 % of students answered they do not agree and 0.70 % of students did not answer. These results indicate a 50.17 % which means that it is possible for students to be unnoticed in the class due to attention given to students is reduced in large classes. Teachers try to monitor students by moving around the classroom; however they do not do this periodically due to the reduced classroom space. In consequence, students are aware of teachers' unavailability to monitor all the spaces in the classroom during the class period.

Regarding the psychological aspects in this section the findings demonstrate that large classes do not create a stressful environment to students. On the contrary, students are willing to participate; they can even compete with their peers and so, generate an adequate learning environment.

## Conclusions

- As far as academic aspects is concerned, large classes does not have an effect on the development of a variety of activities in the class although it is necessary to apply that variety of activities more frequently.
- Classroom activities can successfully develop the four skills and apply the acquired knowledge as demonstrated in the results with 83.97 % which confirms large classes permit the performance of the four basic skills in language learning.
- The quality of feedback that students receive is affected with a 51.22 % in large classes regarding the academic aspects due to the lack of individual attention from the teacher.
- Regarding social aspects large classes influence positively to generate interaction, which cause desirable social behaviors between peers and teachers as described in the results in which 86.75 % shows that interaction is possible in large classes.
- Concerning the psychological aspects the research has demonstrated that the environment in large classes is not stressful; thus, learners are able to develop their learning in a comfortable healthy setting.

## Recommendations

- Regarding the academic aspect it is recommended to vary and adapt the activities to the student's needs in order to create a more interactive environment which makes students feel more motivated to learn English by using activities like games, plays, etc, more frequently.
- A permanent monitoring and walking around the classroom can increase the individual attention to students which can generate the possibility to give a personalized feedback and supply learner's needs.
- It is recommended to boost the interest in students as individuals of the class by giving a more personal and warm teaching.

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## ANNEXES



**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA**  
*La Universidad Católica de Loja*

Estimado Estudiante:

Este cuestionario tiene como objetivo conocer la influencia de las clases numerosas en el proceso de enseñanza aprendizaje de inglés.

La información que usted brindará a continuación se usará únicamente con fines académicos investigativos. Le rogamos contestar honestamente de acuerdo a la siguiente escala de referencia:

<b>Muy satisfactorio</b>	Totalmente de acuerdo
<b>Satisfactorio</b>	De acuerdo
<b>Poco satisfactorio</b>	Parcialmente de acuerdo
<b>Nada satisfactorio</b>	En desacuerdo

### DATOS INFORMATIVOS:

Nombre de la Institución: \_\_\_\_\_

Tipo de institución: Pública ( ) Privada ( )

Curso: 8vo ( ) 9no ( ) 10mo ( ) 1ro. Bach ( ) 2do. Bach ( ) 3ro. Bach ( )

Ciudad: \_\_\_\_\_

**Instrucción:** Marque con una X según su criterio.

#### A. Aspectos académicos

<b>En clases con bastantes estudiantes</b>		<b>Muy Satisfactorio</b>	<b>Satisfactorio</b>	<b>Poco Satisfactorio</b>	<b>Nada Satisfactorio</b>
<b>1</b>	Se realizan actividades que ponen en práctica lo aprendido				
<b>2</b>	Se realizan actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades de escucha, habla, lectura y escritura.				
<b>3</b>	Todos lo estudiante están atentos y participan en las actividades realizadas en clase, inclusive los estudiantes de la última fila.				

4	Se utilizan actividades variadas dentro de la clase; como por ejemplo, actividades en grupo, actividades en pareja, etc.				
5	Se utilizan actividades como, dramatizaciones, concursos, debates, juegos, etc.				
6	Se puede copiar durante los exámenes				
7	Se puede realizar tareas de otras materias				
8	El espacio de la clase te permite desarrollar adecuadamente las actividades asignadas por el profesor.				
9	No puedo recibir una retroalimentación adecuada por parte del profesor debido al número elevado de estudiantes				

### B. Aspectos sociales

En clases con bastantes estudiantes		Muy Satisfactorio	Satisfactorio	Poco Satisfactorio	Nada Satisfactorio
10	Existe interacción entre los estudiantes y entre el profesor y los estudiantes				
11	Tengo la oportunidad de relacionarme con más personas				
12	El profesor no recuerda el nombre de todos los estudiantes				
13	El ambiente es menos tenso ya que hay menor posibilidad de que el profesor realice preguntas constantes al mismo estudiante				
14	Puedo usar mi teléfono celular o algún dispositivo electrónico sin ser descubierto por el profesor.				

### C. Aspectos psicológicos

En clases con bastantes estudiantes		Muy Satisfactorio	Satisfactorio	Poco Satisfactorio	Nada Satisfactorio
15	El ambiente es estresante				
16	Me siento incómodo al momento de hablar frente a mis compañeros				
17	Tengo menos oportunidades de expresarme				
18	No me gusta participar porque me siento tímido				
19	El profesor no presta atención por igual a todos los estudiantes				
20	Siento que puedo competir sanamente con otros estudiantes.				
21	Me siento relajado porque puedo pasar por desapercibido				

**¡GRACIAS por su colaboración!**