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

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN.

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Loja, julio del 2015

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Salas Zaruma Victor Hugo

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my dear God. He has been the biggest support of my entire life, with his blessings, he has allowed me to continue ahead. Likewise, this work is for all my family, for my beloved parents who have always encouraged me to study; as well for my sisters, Maribel and Doris, for taking good care of me. Besides, this achievement is dedicated specially to my precious wife and my little baby Mateo, they are the reason of my life and dreams. I could never have reached this goal without their support.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to determine what instructional, psychological and social effects do large classes have on the learning of English as a foreign language. In order to achieve this objective, a questionnaire was given to the students to know their opinions about the different statements presented in the survey. The research was conducted in Paute, in two of the biggest and most popular public high schools. The sample for this study included one hundred eighty six students. The classrooms selected were those having thirty five students or more; from eight of basic education to third of bachelor. For the quantitative analysis, the information from those students who agree and totally agree, in the survey, was compiled in order to be contrasted with the information of those who partially agree and disagree. The findings of the qualitative and quantitative research revealed that the instructional effects: lack of regular feedback and activities like competitions, debates or games, have the highest percentage over the not good enough relationship between students and the teacher which is the major social effect and the stress during the class as the major psychological effect on the English language teaching-learning process.

Key Words: large classes, English Language, teaching-learning, process.

RESUMEN

El objetivo del estudio es determinar los efectos pedagógicos, sociales y psicológicos que las clases numerosas tienen en el aprendizaje del inglés como lengua extranjera. Para alcanzar este objetivo, un cuestionario fue entregado a los estudiantes con el propósito de conocer sus opiniones sobre las diferentes preguntas de la encuesta. La investigación fue realizada en dos de los más grandes y populares colegios de Paute. La muestra para este estudio incluyó ciento ochenta y seis estudiantes. Las aulas seleccionadas fueron aquellas con treinta y cinco estudiantes o más, desde el octavo de educación básica hasta el tercero de bachillerato. Para el análisis cuantitativo, la información de los estudiantes que están de acuerdo y totalmente de acuerdo fue agrupada para ser contrastada con la información de aquellos que están parcialmente de acuerdo y en desacuerdo. Las conclusiones de la investigación cualitativa y cuantitativa revelaron que los efectos pedagógicos: falta de refuerzo efectivo y actividades como competencias, debates o juegos, tuvieron el porcentaje más alto sobre la no muy buena relación entre los estudiantes y el profesor el cual es el mayor efecto social y el estrés durante la clase como el mayor efecto psicológico en el proceso de enseñanza- aprendizaje del idioma inglés.

Palabras Clave: clases numerosas, idioma inglés, enseñanza-aprendizaje, proceso.

INTRODUCTION

English language teaching in Ecuador, from many years ago, has not given good results since the students who finish high school do not achieve the basic language communicative competence. After six years of studying English, high school students are not able to develop reading, writing, listening and speaking, the four most important skills, in order to show a fluent use of English as a foreign language.

In the last years, some important decisions have been made in Ecuador in order to solve this problem; the ministry of Education (2012) has implemented different policies and strategies such as improvement of the curriculum based on international standards, teachers' training, updating methodologies in order to help to increase the teaching quality of English in high schools.

However, there are other factors that influence English language teaching and learning, one of them is class size. The number of students in EFL classrooms is an important factor that deserves to be researched in detail since it may be in some cases, advantageous and disadvantageous in others. That is why the purpose of this study is to determine whether or not large classes affect the English language teaching-learning process by answering the three following questions: What instructional implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?, What social implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?, and What psychological implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?; from the perspective of English language learners of high schools in order to propose solutions to improve English teaching.

There is a lot of research on this issue, like for example Harfitt (2012) investigated over populated classes to see if stress can be reduced or eliminated by reducing the number of students. Questionnaires and class observations were used to collect the data and the results indicated that when the number of students were reduced in the classrooms, students felt more secure in participating and the anxiety of being critically evaluated by the teachers and classmates was reduced. Therefore, this research confirms that the stress can be diminished by significantly reducing the number of students in a classroom.

Additionally, Forero (2005) conducted a research to find out how large classes could be managed by using task-based learning to improve speaking skills. This author used peer observation to collect the data; so other two instructors were the ones who collect the information using a pro forma, recordings and questionnaires. A significantly change on student's behavior were observed, and two results were obtained from this investigation. First, students that at the beginning of this study preferred to work in individual activities like reading or writing, at the end they were more enthusiastic to work in pairs or groups. Second, at the beginning students were unsecure about having to do tasks involving speaking

production or speaking comprehension but at the end of the study, they showed more confidence when doing listening, speaking and reading tasks. Thus, according to Forero's study, students will be more active and interested in learning by using task-based activities in large classes.

Khati (2010) researched about students expectations in a large EFL classroom. The investigation was focused in feedback, collaboration, tasks, classwork, homework, and classroom management. A questionnaire with open ended questions was used to collect the data. Different levels of proficiency were found in the surveyed students and the results were that students like to be called by their first names, but teachers cannot remember all their names. Teachers should promote students participation by moving around the classroom. It creates an illusion of a smaller class. Students feel more motivated by pair and group work than straight individual book work. Finally, students expect challenging activities and informative feedback.

Consequently, the results of this research will benefit educational institutions in general, teachers and students who are involved in the teaching and learning process of English as a foreign language. It will give a clear idea of the aspects that should be considered when teaching large classes. The major limitations found in this study are the size of the sample and the fact that the results depend only on the opinion of the students.

METHOD

Settings and Participants

This study was carried out in Paute, in two of the biggest public high schools. The data was collected from five different classes which were from eight of basic education to third of bachelor. The total sample of this study was one hundred and eighty six students. The classrooms selected were those having thirty five students or more.

Procedures

In relation to the procedures followed for this study, different steps were accomplished before during and after the investigation. First of all, an intensive literature review about teaching approaches and methods, class size, class management, seating arrangements and levels of proficiency was done. Additionally, some studies on the influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process were reviewed in order to have a basis for this study.

The research was done through Qualitative and Quantitative approach, different schools were visited to decide which were suitable for the investigation. Two of the biggest public high schools in Paute were chosen and permission was requested to conduct the field research. After that, a questionnaire (annex A) with nine instructional, six social, and seven psychological statements was given to each one of the students in order to gather their opinions according to their level of agreement, by using the following scale: totally agree, agree, partially agree and disagree.

The data was tabulated and analyzed according to the three questions set for this study. Finally, based on the results, conclusions were drawn and recommendations were proposed to overcome the instructional, social and psychological implications.

DISCUSSION

Literature Review

Nowadays, being able to communicate with others in more than one language is very important since this ability will help people succeed at different levels and improve their life style and society. However, the main aspect we should contemplate is the reason why English is taught in Ecuador as opposed to any other foreign languages. The importance of English is based not just on how many people speak it but on what it is used for. English is the major language of news and information around the world. More than half of the newspapers published in the world, are published in English. Even in many countries where English is a minority language, there is at least one newspaper in English.

Moreover, English is the language of business, diplomacy, science and the professions. It is frequently the language of international conferences and international athletics. Throughout the world, many professional papers are published in English. Even papers that are published in other languages often have abstracts in English. Besides, American popular culture-primarily movies and music-carries the English language throughout the world. Therefore English is the most widely used language in the world and that is why it has become very important for us to teach and learn it.

In Ecuador, the Government has made innovations in the educational system aiming to provide students and teachers with both, the English language knowledge and the skills needed to succeed in a globalized world. These innovations have been made in curriculum, standards, and materials. The Communicative Language Approach has been adopted in the teaching learning process, in order to use the English Language for meaningful communication and as a tool to unlock doors to new opportunities. Moreover, the whole teaching-learning process in Ecuador is guided by the Common European Framework of Reference for Language as an international recognized standard. Finally, for the first time, the Ecuadorian Government is providing students with free English textbooks and teachers with scholarships abroad in order to improve their English Level.

Aside from the Importance of the English Language awareness and the innovations that have been made in the educational system, there are other aspects that should be taken into account in the teaching-learning process in order to reach a meaningful learning. Therefore, teaching methodology, class size, managing learning, managing large classes, activities for working with large classes, seating arrangements, classroom space, and different levels of proficiency are aspects that cannot be left aside by teachers.

Teaching Approaches and Methods

There are different methods and approaches for teaching English. One of the most commonly used method today is Communicative Language Teaching. This method

emphasizes communication in real life situations. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), The Communicative Language Teaching aims to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and develops procedures for the teaching of the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which are the basic skills students should acquire in order to use the language in a meaningful way. Therefore, this teaching method is centered in the students' performance in the target language and teachers become facilitators of the situations for students to develop communication.

The natural Approach

This approach is focused on communication skills for beginners; keeping formal sequencing of grammatical concepts to a minimum. According to Krashen and Terrel (2001), the theory of learning in The Natural Approach is based on an empirically grounded theory of second language acquisition which sees communicative competence progressing through three stages: **a)** aural comprehension **b)** early speech production **c)** speech activities, all fostering "natural" language acquisition, much as a child would learn his/her native tongue.

In this approach, the classroom becomes more student-centered with the teacher allowing for students to output the language more often on their own; only the target language is used in class and errors in speech are not corrected aloud. Grammar is considered to have only modest value in the language learning process. Moreover, lowering the affective filter is of great importance for students to acquire and use the language in a relaxed way.

Later, Garcia (2005), recapitulates the principles of the Natural Approach as follows: First, students will understand the target language before they produce it. Then language production will come after an initial silent period leading up to complex linguistic segments of speaking. After that, classes are based in communicative objectives; not in grammar. Finally, a friendly and calm class environment will maximize learning.

Cooperative Language Learning (CLL)

This approach is also known as Collaborative Learning (CL) and helps students develop conceptual reasoning and problem-solving skills. Likewise, it benefits to create a warmer relationship among students and a positive attitude towards the subject matter. According to Olsen and Kagan (1992), in this approach, learning a language is not viewed as an individual accomplishment, but rather as a collective experience; since learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups in which each learner is held responsible for his/her learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others.

Moreover, Richards and Rodgers (2000), indicated that cooperative language is an approach to teaching that makes maximum use of cooperative activities involving pairs and small groups of learners in the classroom. Cooperative Language Learning encourages holistic learning, personal growth, and self-development by providing opportunities for naturalistic language acquisition and providing teachers with a methodology to enable learners achieve this goal; providing opportunities for learners to develop successful learning and communicative strategies, enhancing learning motivation, reducing learner's stress and creating a positive, affective classroom environment.

Content Based Instruction (CBI)

This teaching approach is organized around the content or information students will acquire, rather than around a linguistic or other type of syllabus. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), the goal of students is to become autonomous in the use of the target language. Instructors; on the other hand, are responsible for selecting and adapting authentic materials that meet students' needs and allow them to acquire and use the language meaningfully. Moreover, materials should be authentic; meaning they should be closely related with students' lives: context, background, culture, interests, etc. In other words, materials should be about themes that are interesting or familiar for students so they will get engaged in the topic and not in the target language structures.

In addition, Striker and Leaver (1997) mentioned that the best way of learning any skills is by doing them, not just learning about them or practicing related exercises or drills. Therefore, CBI is a holistic and global approach since it implies the total integration of language learning and content learning by basing the curriculum on a subject matter core, using authentic language and texts and meeting the needs of specific groups of students. Thus, this approach can be refreshing and liberating for both students and teachers.

Task- Based Language Teaching

Task- Based Language Teaching (TBLT) refers to an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), a task is understood as an activity or goal which is carried out using language. Thus, in this approach real language is used to accomplish everyday tasks like giving directions, going to the market, eating in a restaurant, reading a map, writing a letter, etc. Then language is being used for a purpose. In addition, in the Task Based Language Teaching approach language performance is focused in a task and in that way the language used in the classroom becomes truly communicative. Moreover, for Leaver and Willis (2004), texts taken from real life sources are a very important part of a TBLT program.

Total Physical Response (TPR)

Total Physical Response is a language teaching method built around the coordination of speech and action. In this method, also known as TPR, both language and body movement are synchronized through action responses and use of the imperative (direct commands). According to Richards and Rodgers (2014), this method attempts to teach language through physical activity where students are the listeners and performers, and the teacher is the one who chose the materials, gives the commands (stand up, sit down, go to the door, etc.) and models the actions.

Moreover, Gordon (2007) stated that listening comprehension is the basis for TPR and being this skill also the basis for the mother tongue acquisition; using TPR in the English as a Second Language teaching learning process students will comprehend the second language with a higher level of confidence.

Finally, in this method, students' speech is delayed until they feel comfortable enough to give other students commands too. TPR is very effective in teaching temporal states, personal pronouns, and other deep grammatical structures.

Class Size

There are many factors that affect the teaching learning process. One of them is the size of a class; even though the idea of class size is generally understood by everyone, it is a matter of perspective since there is not an exact definition of a large class. Certain number of students can be considered as a large class in a country and the same number can be contemplated as a small class in other country. Thus, according to Byram (2004) A British classroom with thirty to forty students is considered large. In China; on the other hand, the average size of a classroom is between fifty to sixty students.

Buller (2009) says that the definition of large classes is relative. It depends on the type of institution, the subject and the goal of the course. Therefore, fifty students in an intensive writing course on literature may be an uncontrollable large class. On the other hand, eighty students on a lecture course about music appreciation may be considered by its professor as attractively small. Finally, a foreign language course may be too small if the number of students does not allow them to interact in conversations simulations and discussions in the target language. Consequently, a class should be denominated large if it is bigger than the norm in certain subject and institution. Considering all what has been said, it is worthy to mention that the teaching and learning process in large classes faces difficulties for both students and teachers. According to Buller (2000) in large classes teachers know their students less than they do in smaller classes. This situation makes impossible for teachers to identify well all students' strengths and their individual needs. It will even be hard for teachers to learn all students' names. For students; on the other hand, it is difficult to

develop a good relationship with the teacher. Besides, they may be intimidated to speak in front of a lot of students.

Difficulty for discussion is another trouble that can be found in large classes and it may cause students to become excessively passive or they may stop paying attention making it hard for the teacher to fully engage them in the learning process. Moreover, sporadic oral and written contributions by students may distort the level of progress they are making so the teacher will spend more time covering a specific topic. This situation may also cause the teacher to believe students are acquiring the knowledge as they are expected to, but later he will find out that almost everyone failed the exam because of misunderstanding. Additionally, even taking attendance is a dilemma in large classes since the teacher will waste precious time making sure that everyone is present. In small classes it will be easy to identify who is missing just by taking a quick view.

According to Burns and Richards (2012), large class problems can be overcome if the teacher has a positive attitude about large classes. As a matter of fact, there are not curriculum models, pedagogical approaches, or materials designed especially for large classes but a teacher with a positive attitude about teaching large classes will take advantage of the class context and implement innovative pedagogical approaches more efficiently which will lead students to take more responsibility about their own and others' learning inside and outside of the classroom. In addition, Burns and Richards (2012, p. 99) pointed out the need of teacher training in adapting and developing teaching methodology for large-class teaching and the use of technology to avoid some problems in large classes.

Finally, in spite of all the large class problems that have been mentioned, Ur (2000) and Hess (2001) claimed that large classes also offer advantages since they can provide richer human resources and better opportunities for creativity.

Managing Learning

An important aspect to be considered when teaching large classes is learning management. A large class teacher should deeply contemplate instructions, feedback, discipline and timing in the teaching-learning process.

Instructions may determine the successful completion of an activity or its fail, especially in large classes. Carbone (1998, p.49) states that the instructions have to be clear and concrete; besides, they should be given in a written and oral way. If the instructions are just oral, they will be too ephemeral and it can cause confusion especially in big groups. Moreover, it is very important to go over the instructions at least twice and provide a clear example or two of how to accomplish correctly the tasks in and out of the classroom.

Scrivener (2012, p.128) agrees with the idea that instructions are crucial for the successful completion of any activity and makes the following suggestions in order to avoid

misunderstanding. First of all, teachers should make sure to get the students' attention. Then they should use easy grammar structures and vocabulary. The sentences must be short, simple and specific. It is important to speak slowly, clearly and in sequence. Therefore, instructions should be carefully planned before the task. Finally, the teacher should not allow students to start doing the activity before he finishes giving and checking the instructions with the whole class.

Feedback should always be given to students in order to support and encourage their further progress. It also helps the teacher to consider how good the lesson is being developed and to detect misunderstanding problems.

In large classes giving individual feedback may be impossible; however, Carbone (1998, p. 10) says that feedback, especially for large classes, is very necessary and it should be personalized in order to be effective. Some suggested ways to personalize feedback are to choose a certain number of papers each time an assignment is given and write some personal comments on them, to select the higher-scoring papers to write comments on or to use the "one minute paper" technique in which students are asked to write some kind of input at the end of the class; of course, they have only two minutes to do that. In addition, Goodwin and Hubbell (2013, p. 86) affirm, "When we personalize feedback to students, it becomes more helpful, and it shows students that we care about them as individuals to track their progress and offer personalized guidance".

Regarding discipline, it is worthy to say that it constitutes a main issue in the teaching and learning process; especially in large classes and there are two ways to keep a class controlled: the external way in which the teacher is who has and applies the power and the internal way where the students control their attitudes by themselves. According to Savage and Savage (2009, p. 8) discipline are actions that facilitate the development of self-control, responsibility and character. When teachers consider discipline from this point of view, it will become a process to create and maintain a healthy classroom environment. Therefore, this kind of discipline is an essential component of everyone's education.

Additionally, in large classes it is very important to manage time effectively since even a simple activity like handing out certain material or taking attendance can consume significant amounts of a lesson time. Moreover, there are students who are slow workers or the ones that need extra reinforcement; consequently, it is essential to plan carefully all the activities that will be done during the class period.

According to Hayes (2012) a characteristic of successful teachers is their ability to organize and manage their class time. A well-organized class period can lead to a greater achievement and contribute to reduce stress. A poor time management; on the other hand, is negative to the work as a teacher.

Woodward (2004) says that if a teacher has checked the task beforehand and has planned the timing realistically, he/she will avoid the desperate cry, so frustrating to students, "Stop now! It doesn't matter if you haven't finished"

Finally, in large classes, the correct management of instructions, feedback, discipline and timing play an important role for student's achievement and the successful completion of the given tasks. If teachers consider all these aspects and keep a positive attitude, the big number of students can be a strength instead of a weakness in the teaching-learning process.

Managing Large Classes

There is not a unique way to manage a class with a lot of students. The management of large classes will depend on the teacher and the context, since each class is different and not all teachers have the same attitude. According to Chadha (2008, p. 61) teaching large classes is really challenging and it requires a lot of time and effort from teachers. Thus, time management and organization are the main points suggested in order to succeed. For a large class teacher, organizing time should be an indispensable part of everyday life; without this, tasks accomplishment will be impossible. Moreover, curriculum organization becomes gradually important as the size of the class increases; since everything will take more time than in a small class, the instructions for example, which in a small class may be given orally, in a large class they must be written on the board, explained orally and written in a handout for students.

Ashman and Gillies (2003, p. 212) states, "Teaching large classes is a complex problem and requires complex solutions. Simple solutions will not solve complex problems. No one can build today's airplane in a carpentry shop!" In order to solve the problems a large class can present, they suggest to promote interactive cooperative learning in the classroom, arrange the students in small groups to work, and use technological resources for presentations to catch students' attention. Taking into account these tips teachers will be amazed at students' engagement in the learning process; remaining focused on the task and with no behavior complications.

In conclusion, the best ways to work with large classes are managing time appropriately, organizing the curriculum, promoting interactive cooperative learning, arranging students in small groups and taking advantage of technology.

Activities for Working with Large Classes

Aside from the general tips mentioned above, there are certain kind of activities which are suggested to work with large classes. Gross (2009) suggests to divide the class in pairs or small groups of three or four students and ask the groups to answer a question from a reading, to identify the major points of a lecture, to prepare two or three questions about a

theme, to identify the cause or effect of some incidence, to give two or three examples that illustrate a topic, and to give opinions about a subject. In addition, the following activities can be used with the whole class: brainstorming, questionnaires, posting questions or problems, informal discussions, and writing short summaries of the presented class.

Ferlazzo and Hull (2012) strongly recommend the use of technology in large classes since it can greatly enhance learning. A classroom blog, for example, is an easy, motivating and interactive way to practice the language with an authentic audience for students. In addition, they recommend to use warm up questions or journal topics to get students engaged.

Finally, as it can be seen, there are activities that can be used with the whole class and activities to be used when dividing the class into small groups of work. Additionally, activities using technology can be very engaging for students.

Classroom Space and Seating Arrangement

Teachers know that students' environment can affect learning. Consequently, classroom space and desks organization play an important role in the teaching and learning process. According to McLeod, Fisher and Hoover (2003) classroom space affects the instructional program directly since the students' experiences can be improved or reduced by their surroundings.

Additionally, the organization of space affects students' behavior and the attention they pay to instruction. For example, according to Bailey and Nunan (1996) large crowded classes are divided in two groups, the students at the front and the students at the back, being impossible to arrange the desks in other ways to change it. This situation affects the opinion students have about their classmates and the teacher's opinion about the students. Thus for teachers and students as well, students who sit at the front of the class are the ones who like to study. Students sitting at the back; on the other hand, are who do not like to study. Therefore, students in big classes are judged by the place where they sit. Smart students are at the front and lazy students are at the back. Consequently, for the correct development of the teaching-learning process, a classroom should have enough space for students to work alone, in groups and with the teacher.

Regarding to desks organization, the type of seating arrangement to be used in the classroom will depend on the kind of furniture, classroom space and teaching style. According to Unger (2011) students' desk arrangements can make a huge difference on instruction and suggests four useful ways to arrange the desks in a classroom. First, arranging desks in pods format with groups of four to six students will promote cooperative learning and a sense of community in the classroom. Second, arranging the desks in rounded rows promote conversation among students. Third, there is the modified row

arrangement. This arrangement allows students to work in groups of two or three facing the front of the room. Fourth, U shaped or horse shoe arrangement. It promotes conversations, discussions, or debates which are appropriate for a variety of lessons.

Finally, according to Farrell (2009) there is no a single arrangement that is ideal for all classes. However, it is mentioned that in classes that are student-centered, informal desk arrangements like circular or U shaped are very common. In subject-centered classes; on the other hand, more traditional formats are used like, for example, students sitting in rows directly facing the teacher.

Different Levels of Proficiency

In any large or small class, it is very common to have different proficiency levels which is an issue that should carefully be considered by teachers. According to Saraswathi (2005) the main difficulty in a class with mixed ability groups is attention. All classes have weak and bright learners and if the teacher do not consider that, the bright learners will be often bored and the weak learners will be confused; as a result both groups will stop paying attention. However, it is stated that mixed ability classes are not considered as a problem to be solved but a reality teachers should learn to live with. Additionally, the solution presented to work efficiently with mixed ability classes is streaming. By streaming, learning will take place and students will get involved in the learning process. No one will feel bored or confused. It is also a good idea not just to stream the learners but the activities.

Burns and Richards (2012) agree that group work is a valuable tool for mixed-level teachers and recommend to group the students not just based on their proficiency level but based on the purpose of the activity. Thus students should be allowed to work as a whole class group, in groups of students with the same abilities, in groups of students with different abilities and alone.

According to Farrell (2006) students in a group of different proficiency levels will help each other to solve the task according to their abilities. On the other hand, in a same proficiency level group, students will challenge each other at their own level.

Finally, having to work with different levels of proficiency in a class must not stress teachers. They just have to be positive and to choose carefully the way students will work and the tasks they will accomplish.

The influence of class size upon students, teachers and the teaching learning process, is not a new field of research. Large classes unfavorable effects have been reported by students and teachers in various studies conducted about this issue. Some of those studies will be considered in order to have a clear idea of the real influence of large classes in the teaching and learning process.

Mayer (2000) researched about the reasons why some schools may be better than others in helping students to learn finding thirteen indicator related to students' learning. Among them, the indicator number eight refers to class size. Analyzing this indicator, it is mentioned that the number of students in a class influence how teachers implement the course content, the use of technology and the instructional pedagogy. Therefore, class size influences instructional behavior. Then instructional behavior and class size impact students' engagement. If there is a great level of student engagement, a high level of achievement occurs. On the contrary, low levels of engagement lead to little achievement.

Finally, it has been said that there are much more studies that must be done on class size. However, there is evidence that supports the fact that teachers in small classes have few disciplinary problems, spend more time on instruction and enrichment activities, offering more opportunities for student participation.

Ruiter and Dang (2005) investigated about the aspects ESL teachers should consider before they start teaching and one of them is the size of the class. They stated that teachers should be aware that large classes affect students and teachers. In large classes, many students feel afraid of speaking in a foreign language in front of a big crowd and also give minimal responses. Moreover, a great deal of students feel anonymous and do not pay attention to the class. Students also do not speak in English with their classmates during group or pair work unless the teacher is monitoring them. Lastly, students' circulation around the class is difficult for interactive tasks. Teachers; on the other hand, have problems creating a solid teacher-student learning relationship. They cannot even remember all students' names in large classes and taking attendance consumes a lot of time. Moreover, large in classes, teachers require a lot of time for planning appropriate activities to reach all students.

Finally, the authors said that "Anticipating and taking preventative measures to avoid problems that would negatively impact the learning environment of your classroom will go a long way in assisting your students' language acquisition skills".

Todd (2012) studied the relationship between class size and learning. The study considered the syllabus, number of students and students' grades, and a straight connection between class size and grades was found. Consequently, from 984 classes studied, large classes tend to have lower grades than small classes. Regarding to the syllabus, the classes objectives planned in the programs of study did not have major effects in defining the result of the grades since they were alike. Therefore, the determining aspect for the obtained grades was the number of students in each class.

Finally, the author claimed that to minimize the low learning results a limit from twenty five to forty five students per class are appropriate until further studies are done.

Bahansal (2013) studied the impact of large classes on English teaching and learning on Saudi secondary schools. The study aimed to determine the impact of large classes on teaching and learning results and to suggest strategies that facilitate teaching and learning in large classes.

The findings of the study were that students in large classes seem demotivated most of the time and do not get individual attention. Not all students have the chance to participate using the target language effectively and it leads to lose interest in the language. Teachers; on the other hand, have to focus on behavioral problems instead of using the time on instruction due to unpleasant manners of some students. Moreover, teachers do not have enough time to correct student's oral or written production, or give them useful and constructive feedback. Teachers, cannot even move freely to monitor students during the activities.

Finally, it has been stated that large classes cause more demands and actions from the English teachers. Therefore, it is important for teachers to explore various methods and apply effective strategies to minimize the effects of large classes and elevate the teaching and learning level.

Carbone and Greenberg (1998) investigated the problems large classes have to face which do not allow to improve the teaching and learning process. Teachers and students from the University of Maryland were surveyed for this study, and the following results were found: Students agreed that in large classes, there is a general discontent with the quality of learning and a lack of interaction with teachers in and out of class. Moreover, there is a lack of structure in instruction and discussion sections. The classroom facilities and environment are inadequate and there is not frequent testing or graded assignments.

Teachers expressed that there is a conflict between large class format and learning goals. There is not accessibility to students and personal contact. Besides, there is a lack of student motivation and preparation for large classes, of reward structure for successful large class teaching and of accountability in student classroom performance.

Finally, the authors suggest teaching training and improving the physical teaching environment as solutions for large classes problems. For improving teaching training, workshops about the mentioned topic must be planned.

Description, analysis, and interpretation of results

One of the issues that English Language Teachers in Ecuador have to face is the large classes; that is why this analysis focuses on describing and interpreting the results regarding the instructional, social, and psychological implications of large classes in the English teaching learning process.

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

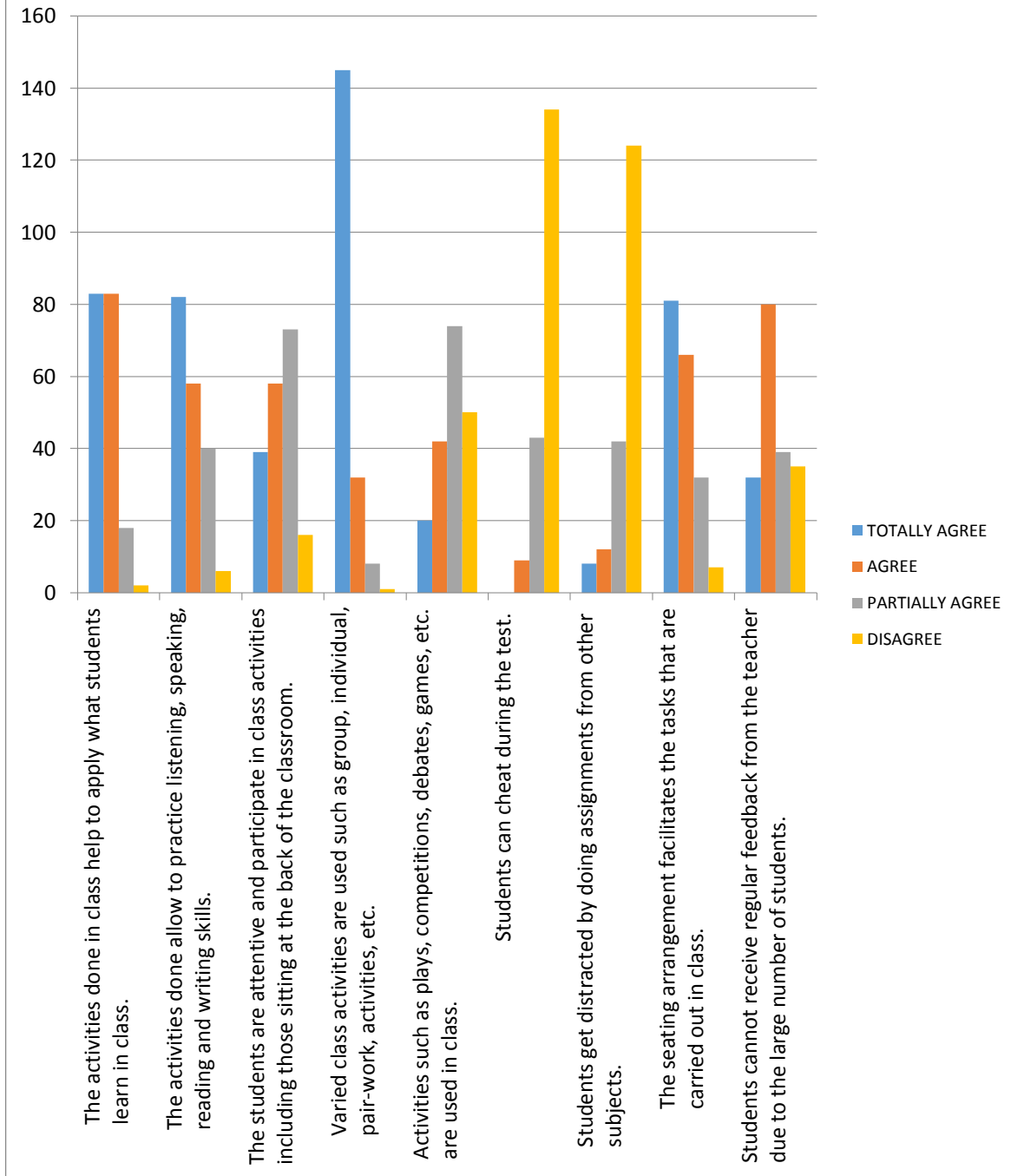
Table 1 Instructional Implications Results											
N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially Agree		Disagree		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
1.	The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class.	83	44.62%	83	44.62%	18	9.68%	2	1.08%	186	100%
2.	The activities done in class allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.	82	44.09%	58	31.18%	40	21.51%	6	3.22%	186	100%
3.	The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those sitting at the back of the classroom.	39	20.97%	58	31.18%	73	39.25%	16	8.60%	186	100%
4.	Varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc.	145	77.96%	32	17.20%	8	4.30%	1	0.54%	186	100%
5.	Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class.	20	10.75%	42	22.58%	74	39.79%	50	26.88%	186	100%
6.	Students can cheat during the test.	0	0%	9	4.84%	43	23.12%	134	72.04%	186	100%

7.	Students get distracted by doing other subjects assignments.	8	4.30%	12	6.45%	42	22.58%	124	66.67%	186	100%
8.	The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class.	81	43.55%	66	35.48%	32	17.20%	7	3.76%	186	100%
9.	Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students.	32	17.20%	80	43.01%	39	20.96%	35	18.82%	186	100%

Author: Victor Salas Z.

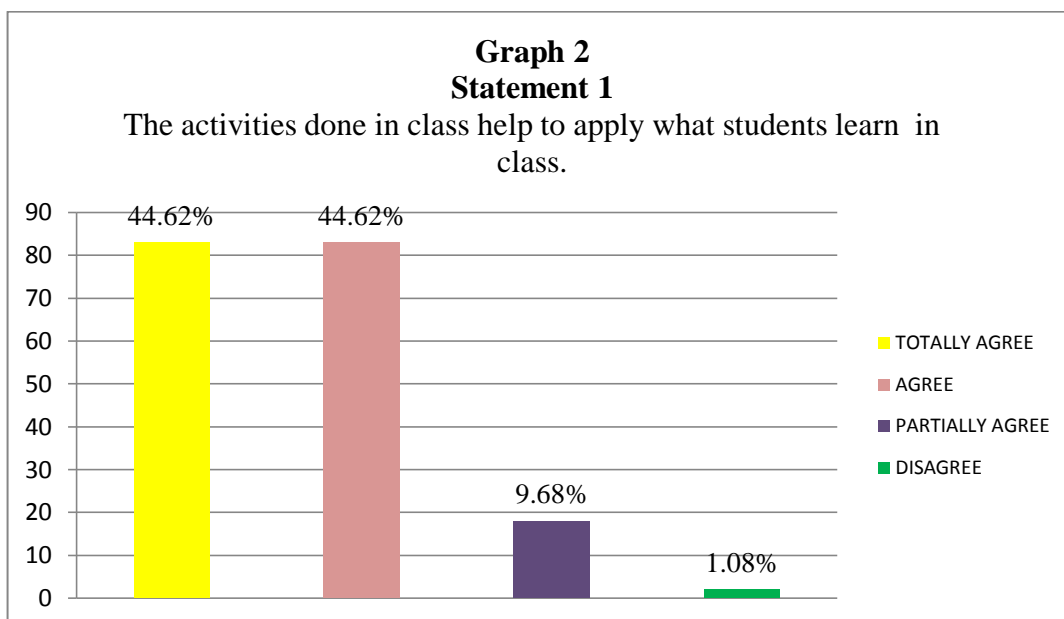
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Graph 1
Instructional Implications Results



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

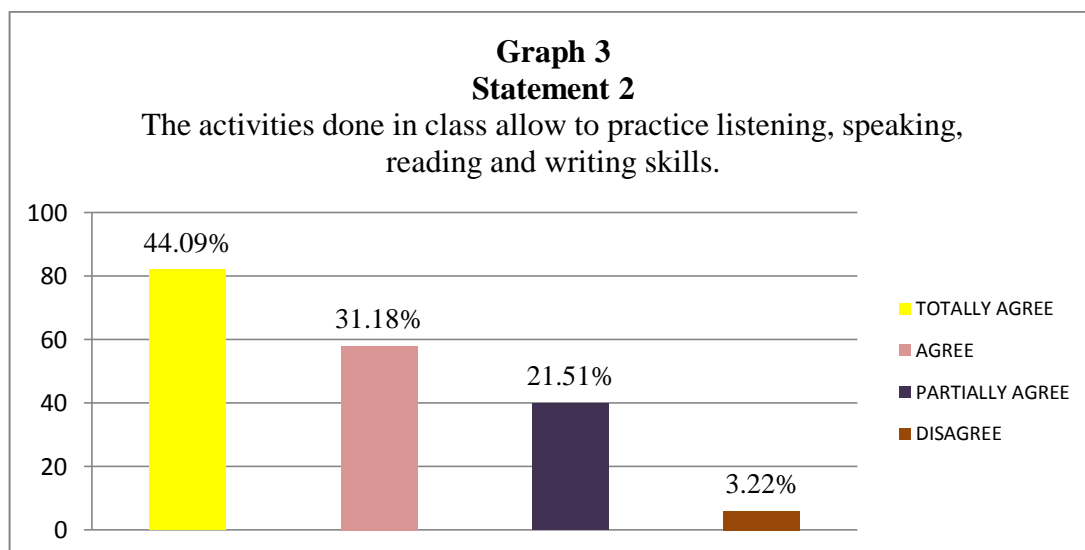
Chart one and graph one show a general view of the students' opinion about the nine instructional aspects that were surveyed which are expressed in the following scale: totally agree, agree, partially agree and disagree.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Regarding statement one: *The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class*, it can be observed that the 44.62% of the students surveyed totally agree and an equal percentage agree on the fact that the activities done in class help to apply what they learn in class, while a very low percentage of them, 9.68%, partially agree, followed by 1.08% who disagree in this statement; graph 2.

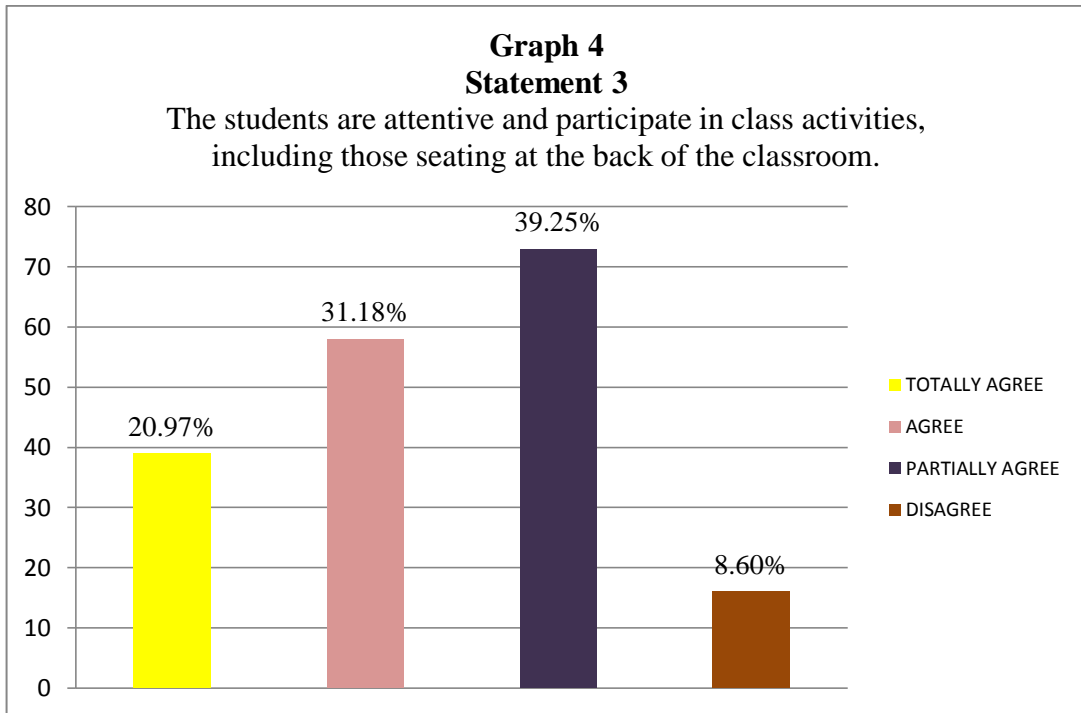
Consequently, considering the results of those who agree and totally agree, there is a percentage of 89.24%; so the majority of the students expressed that the activities proposed in the large classes do help them to practice and enrich their learning. This indicates that the teacher has successfully adapted activities which are suitable for large classes needs and gives the students the chance to practice the target language collectively, getting them engaged in the tasks; taking the number of students as an advantage for the teaching-learning process which agrees to Olsen and Kagan (1992) who considered that learning a language is a collective experience depending on the socially structured exchange of information between learners and the activities used to make that interaction happen in the classroom are fundamental.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement two: *The activities done in class allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills*, graph three shows that that 44.09% of the students surveyed totally agree and 31.18% of them agree in the fact that they can practice the four basic skills of the target language through the activities developed in class. As well, there is a low percentage 21.51% of students who partially agree. Followed by 3.22% of them who disagree in this statement.

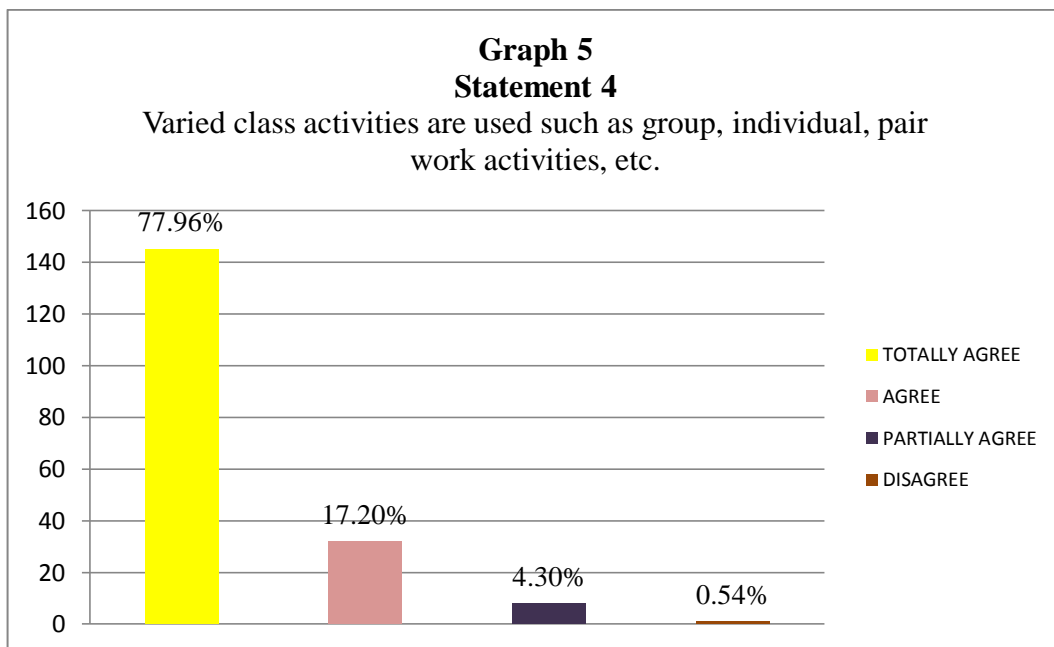
Thus, it is clearly shown that the majority of the students, 75.27%, agree that the activities developed in class certainly help them to practice the four basic skills to acquire any language: reading, writing, listening and speaking. This indicates that even though the large number of students, the techniques used in the researched classrooms reached the four basic skills of the target language showing that communicative teaching occurs; Richards and Rodgers (2001) stated that the goal of communicative teaching is to develop procedures to teach the four basic skills.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

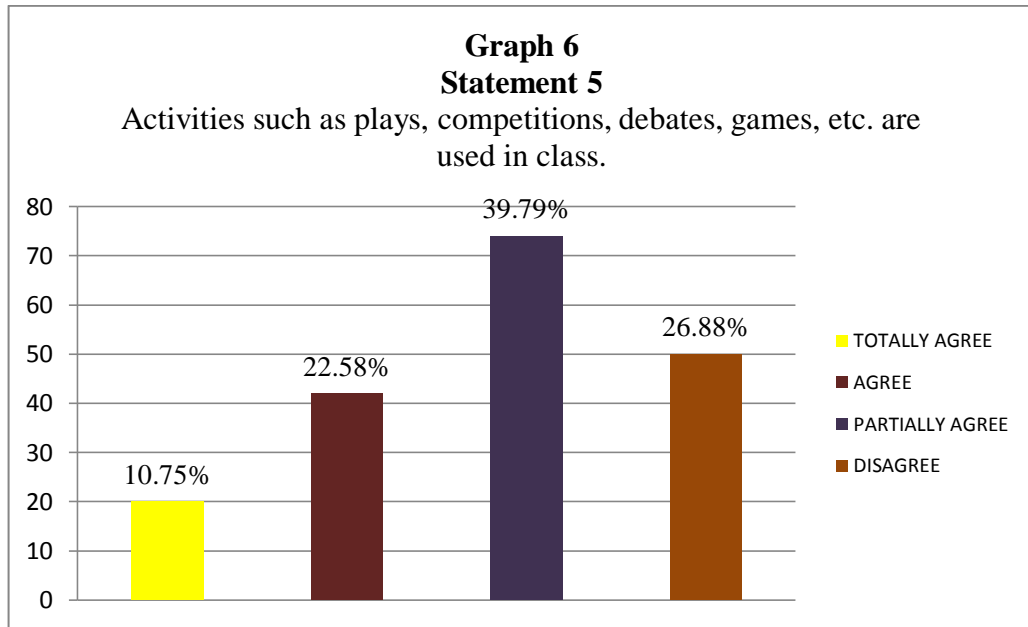
About statement three: *The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those seating at the back of the classroom.* Graph four shows that that 20.97% of the students surveyed totally agree and 31.18% of them agree in the fact that they all participate in the class activities. On the other hand, there is a high percentage 39.25% of students, who partially agree. Followed by 8.60% of them who disagree in this statement.

However, considering those who totally agree and those who agree, the results show that 52.15% of the students said they actively participate in the activities proposed by the teacher, which demonstrates that students lack of participation in the class activities as one of the problems found in large classes by Bahansal (2013) who stated that not all the students have the chance to participate, is not considered as a problem in the researched classes since the majority of the students agree that they participate in the different activities.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

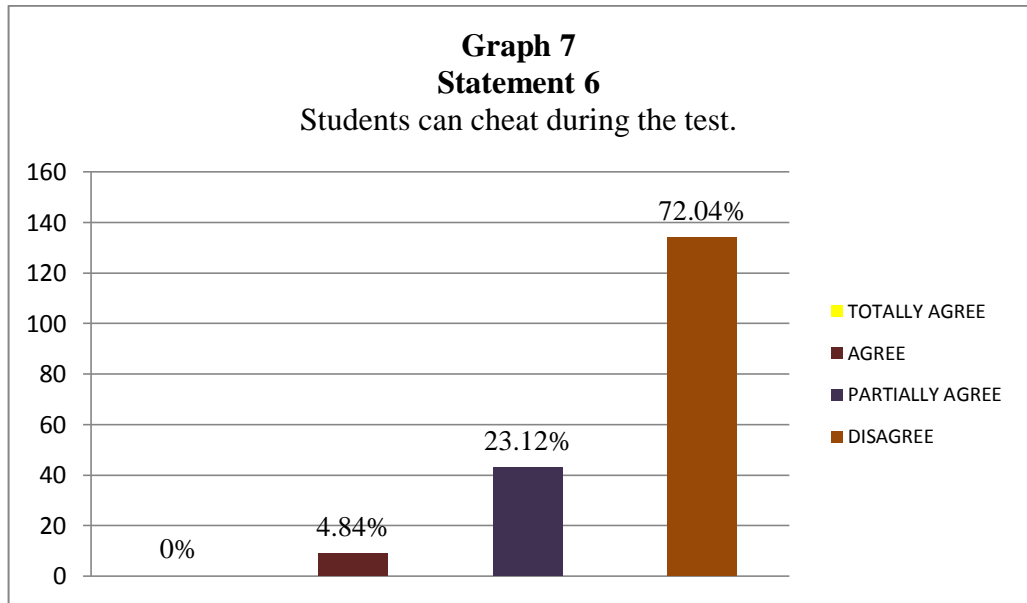
In relation to statement four: *Varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair work activities, etc.* Graph five clearly shows that 77.96% of the students surveyed totally agree and 17.20% of them agree; giving these the 95.16% of agreement in the fact that a variety of activities are developed in class. Besides, there is a very low percentage 4.30% of students who partially agree. Followed by 0.54% of them who disagree in this statement, this demonstrates that it is possible to work with different activities in large classes. It is clearly seen that the great majority of the students accept that they develop a variety of group, pair, and individual activities during class in order to acquire the language which is a positive aspect since they are activities recommended by Davis (2009) for working with large classes.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement five: *Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class*, it is clearly seen in graph six that a very low percentage, 10.79% of the students surveyed totally agree and just 22.58% agree, resulting these in a level of agreement of 33.33% in the fact that plays, competitions, games, etc. are used in class. On the contrary, there is a high percentage 39.79% of students who partially agree and 26.88% of them who disagree in this statement with a total of 66.67%.

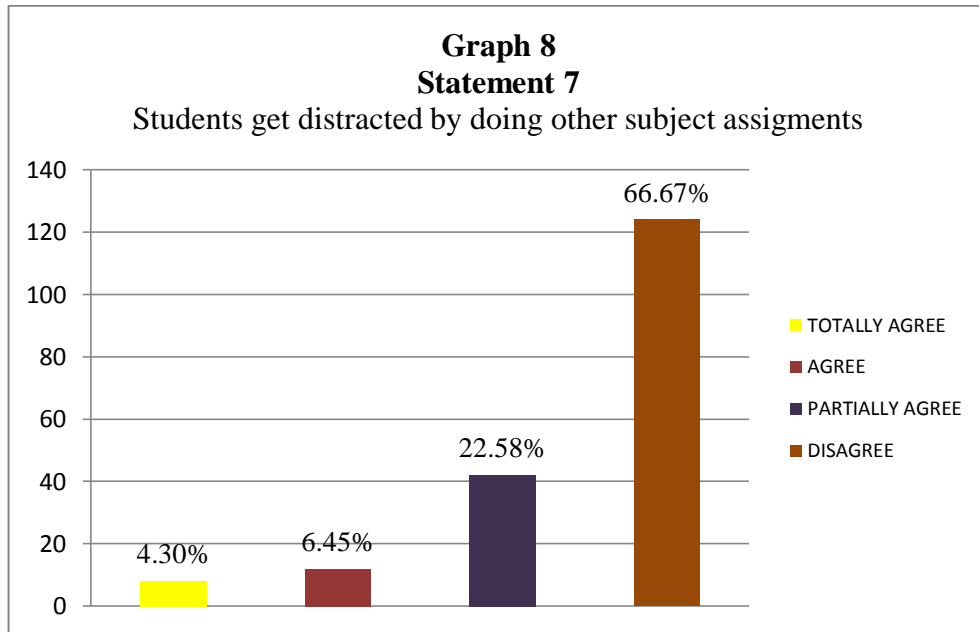
Therefore, based on the results showed by graph five, it is worthy to say that plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are hardly used in the researched classes which indicates that there is a difficulty for discussion, one of the large classes problems identified by Buller (2000). Besides, interactive cooperative learning is not being promoted as Ashman and Gillies (2003) recommended.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

About statement six: *Students can cheat during the test*. Graph seven shows that despite of the fact that no one agrees totally, there is a minimal percentage of students, 4.84%, who agree about the possibility of cheating during tests; followed by 23.12% of students who partially agree and an overwhelming 72.04% of them who disagree.

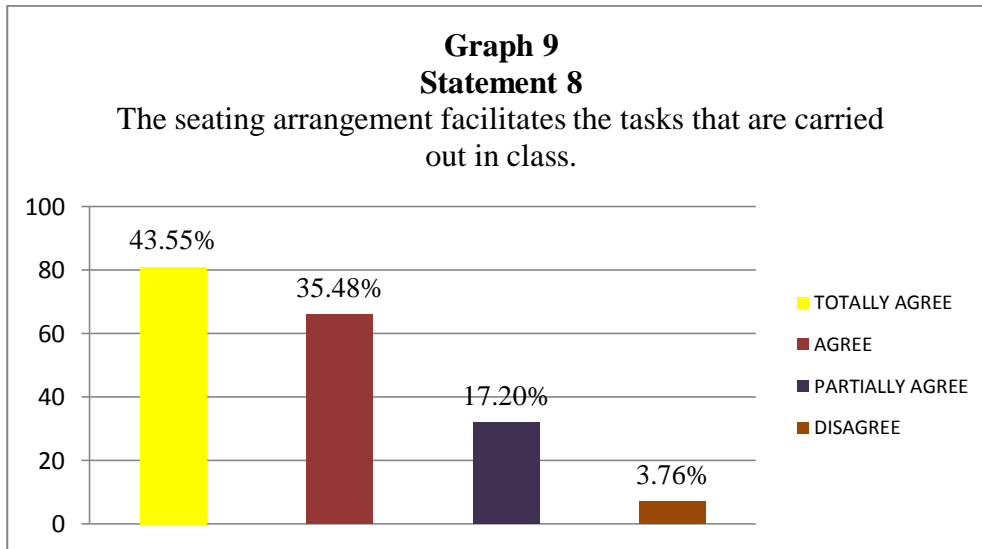
Therefore, it can be affirmed that almost all the students in the class, 95.16%, do not cheat during tests which shows their self-control and responsibility. This is an indicator of good learning management on discipline since according to Savage and Savage (2009, p. 8) discipline are actions that facilitate the development of self-control, responsibility and character. Therefore, having such a great percentage of students who do not cheat in the researched classes, shows that discipline is considered in an internal way where students control their attitudes by themselves.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement seven: *Students get distracted by doing other subject assignments*. Graph eight shows that just 4.30% of the students surveyed totally agree and 6.45% of them agree in the fact that they get distracted by doing other subject assignments. Moreover, 22.58% of the students partially agree and 66.67% of them disagree.

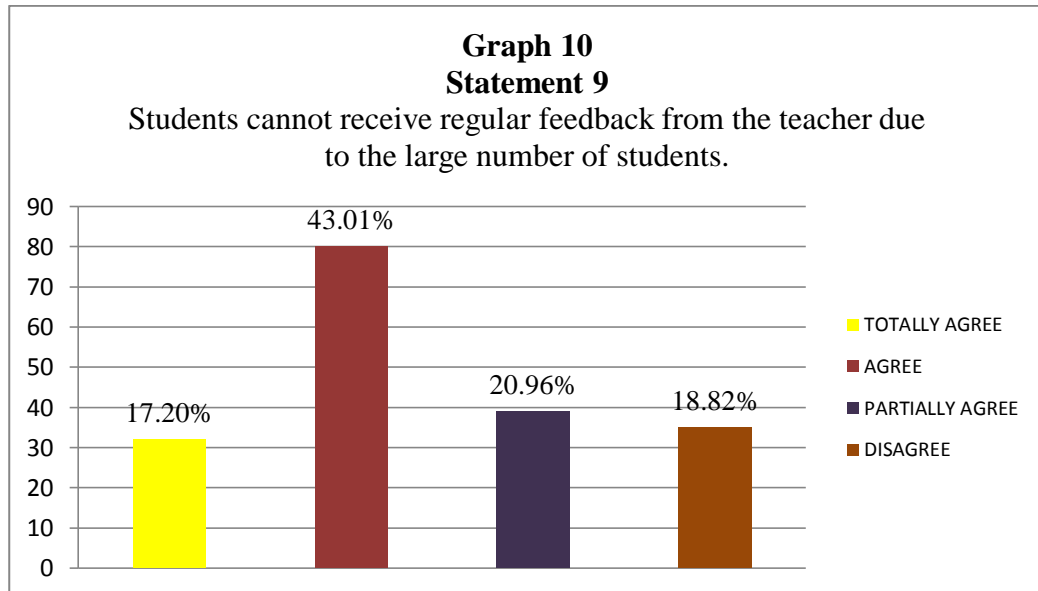
The results clearly show that the majority of the students, 85.25%, disagree about getting distracted by doing other subject assignments; being this an indicator of good management of internal discipline, since according to Savage and Savage (2009) discipline are actions that facilitate the development of self-control, responsibility and character. Aside from the students' responsibility, this also shows that the activities used in class catch students' attention and maintain them engaged in the different tasks.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Regarding statement eight: *The seating arrangement facilitate the tasks that are carried out in class*. Graph nine shows that 43.55% of the students surveyed totally agree and 35.48% agree in the fact that the seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class. Additionally, 17.20% of students partially agree and 3.76% of them disagree in this statement.

As a result, it is clearly observed that most of the students, 79.04%, consider that the seating arrangements do facilitate the good development of the class activities which according to Unger (2011) is an important aspect to be considered on large classes since it can make a huge difference on instruction.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement nine: *Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students*. Graph ten shows that 17.20% of the students surveyed totally agree and 43.01% agree in the mentioned assumption. In spite of these, 20.96% of the students partially agree and 18.82% of them disagree.

Thus, it is clearly shown that the majority of the students, 75.26%, agree that they do not receive regular feedback from the teacher because of the number of students. It is considered as one of the main problems in large classes and according to Carbone (1998) and Goodwin and Hubbell (2013), it is very important to give feedback to the students in order to support and encourage their further progress and to help the teacher to consider how good the lesson is being developed and to detect misunderstanding problems.

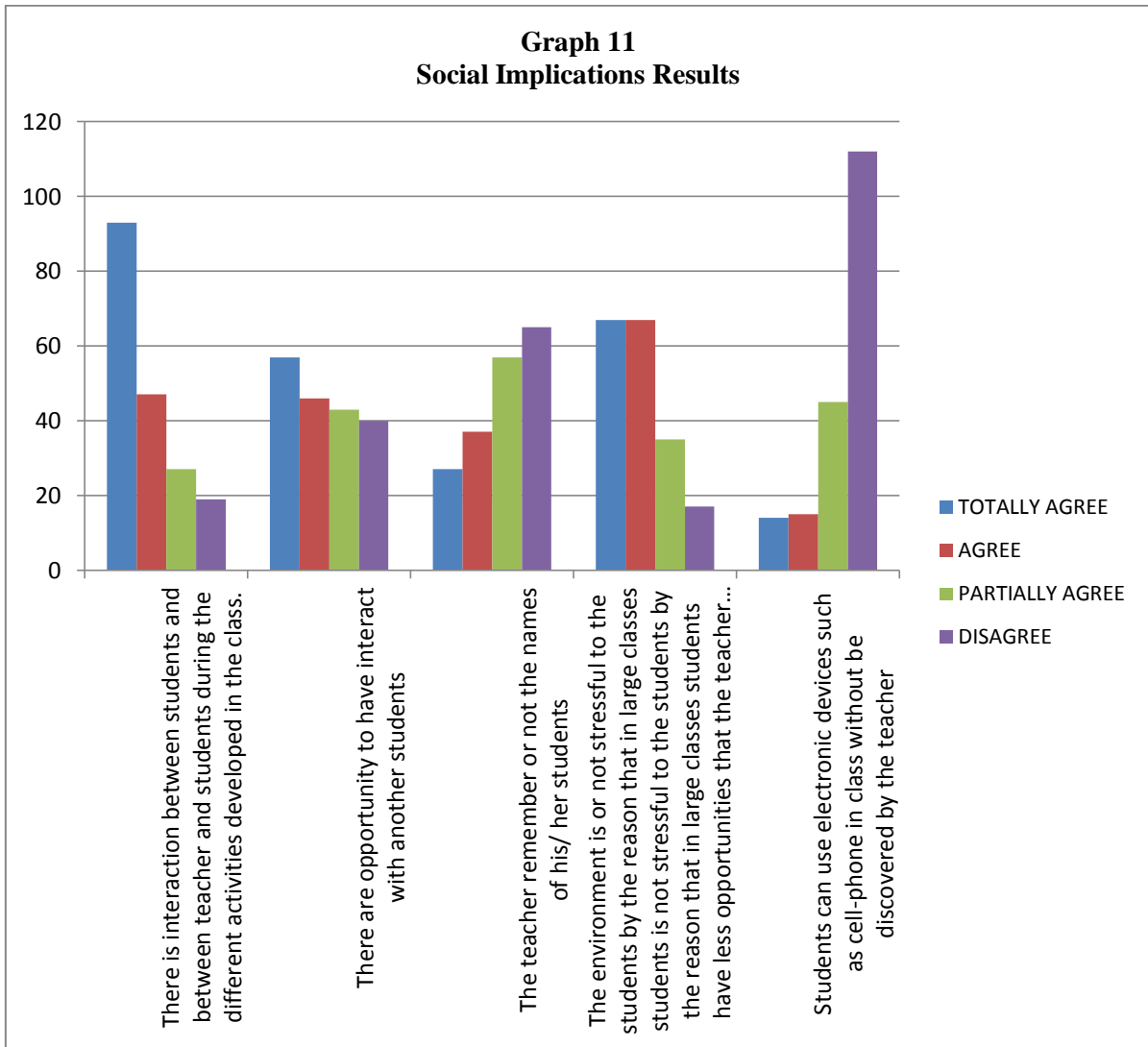
Generally speaking, the most remarkable instructional effects that the researched large classes cause in the English language teaching-learning process according to the 60.22% of the students' answers, are that teachers cannot give them regular feedback and the problem that activities like plays, debates or games are not being used according to the 66.67% due to the class size and classroom space.

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

Table 2 Social Implications Results											
N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially Agree		Disagree		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
10	There is interaction between students and between teacher and students during the different activities developed in the class.	93	50%	47	25.26%	27	14.51%	19	10.21%	186	100%
11	There are opportunities to interact with another student.	57	30.64%	46	24.73%	43	23.11%	40	21.50%	186	100%
12	The teacher remember or not the names of his/her students.	27	14.51%	37	19.89%	57	30.64%	65	34.94%	186	100%
13	The environment is not stressful to the students by the reason that, in large classes, students have less opportunities that the teacher regularly ask them questions.	67	36.02%	67	36.02%	35	18.81%	17	9.13%	186	100%
14	Students can use electronic devices like their cell-phone in class without been discovered by the teacher.	14	7.52%	15	8.06%	45	24.19%	112	60.21%	186	100%

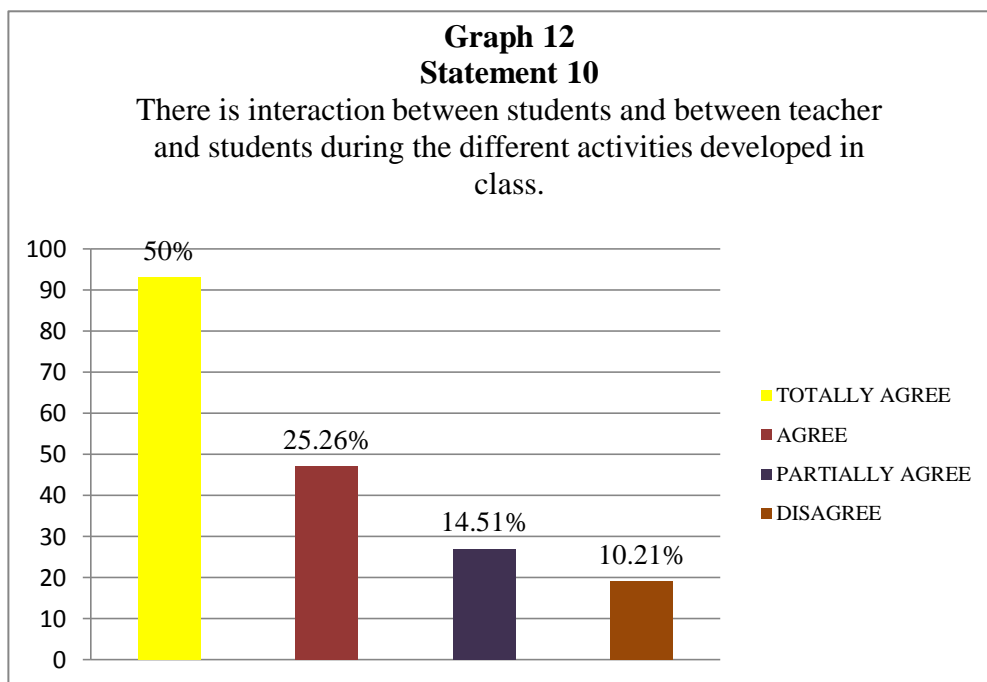
Author: Victor Salas Z.

Source: Students' Questionnaire



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

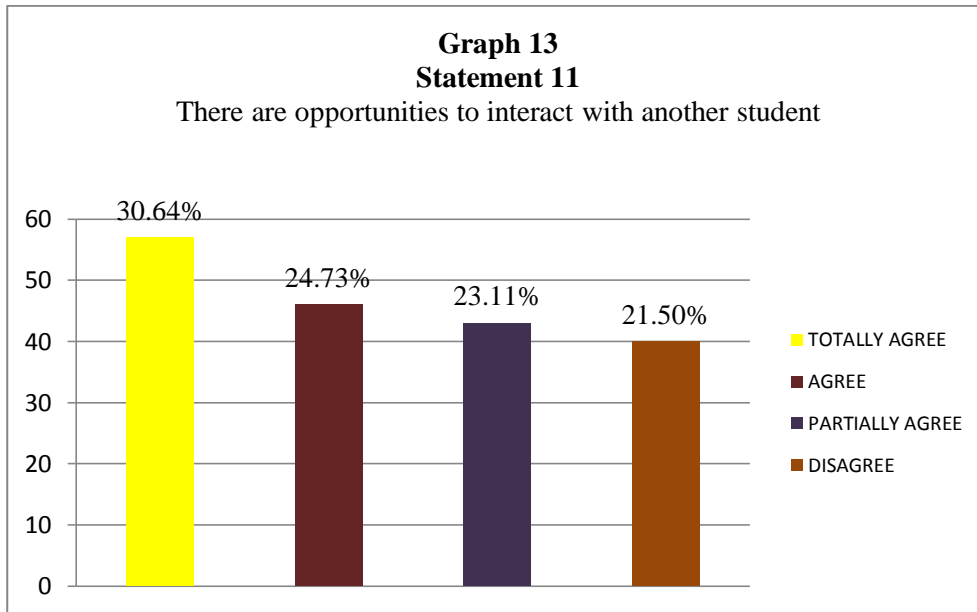
Chart two and graph 11 globally show the students' opinion about the five social aspects surveyed. The scale used for the survey was expressed according to the students' grade of agreement: totally agree, agree, partially agree and disagree. Likewise, in the chart and graph can be seen that students agree in some aspects and disagree in others. Each statement will be analyzed individually to interpret the results precisely.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement ten: *There is interaction between students and between teacher and students during the different activities developed in class.* Graph twelve shows that 50% of the students surveyed totally agree and 25.26% agree in the mentioned statement. In spite of these, 14.51% of the students partially agree and 10.21% of them disagree.

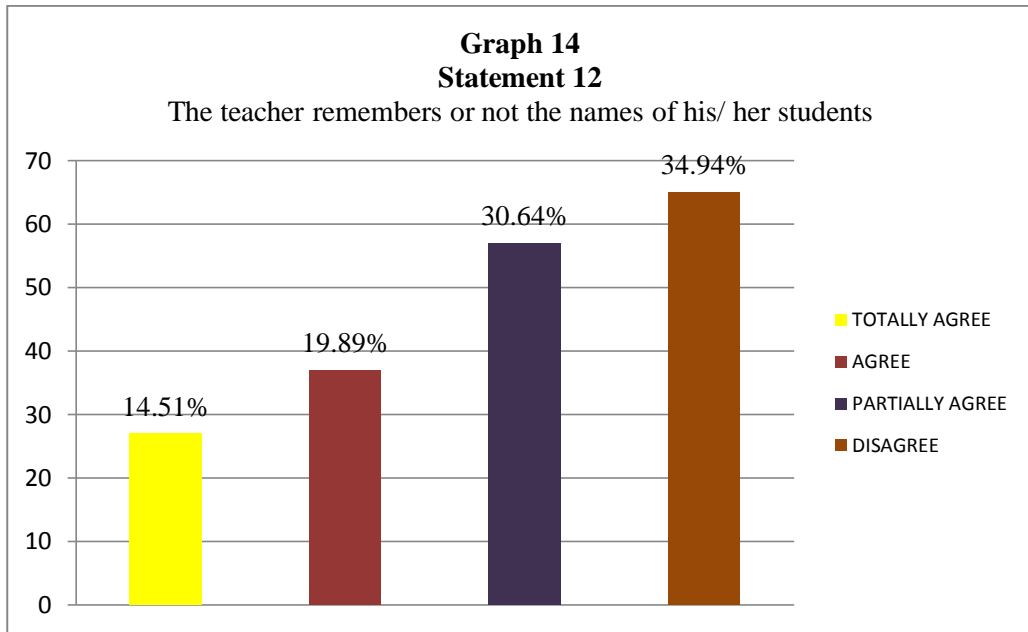
As a consequence, it is clearly shown that almost all the students, 75.26%, agree that they interact between them and with the teacher during class which shows that interactive cooperative learning is being promoted as Ashman and Gillies (2003) suggested.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

About statement eleven: *There are opportunities to interact with another student.* Graph thirteen shows that that 30.64% of the students surveyed totally agree and 24.73% agree in the fact that there are opportunities to interact between them. There is also 23.11% of the students who partially agree and 21.50% of them disagree about this statement.

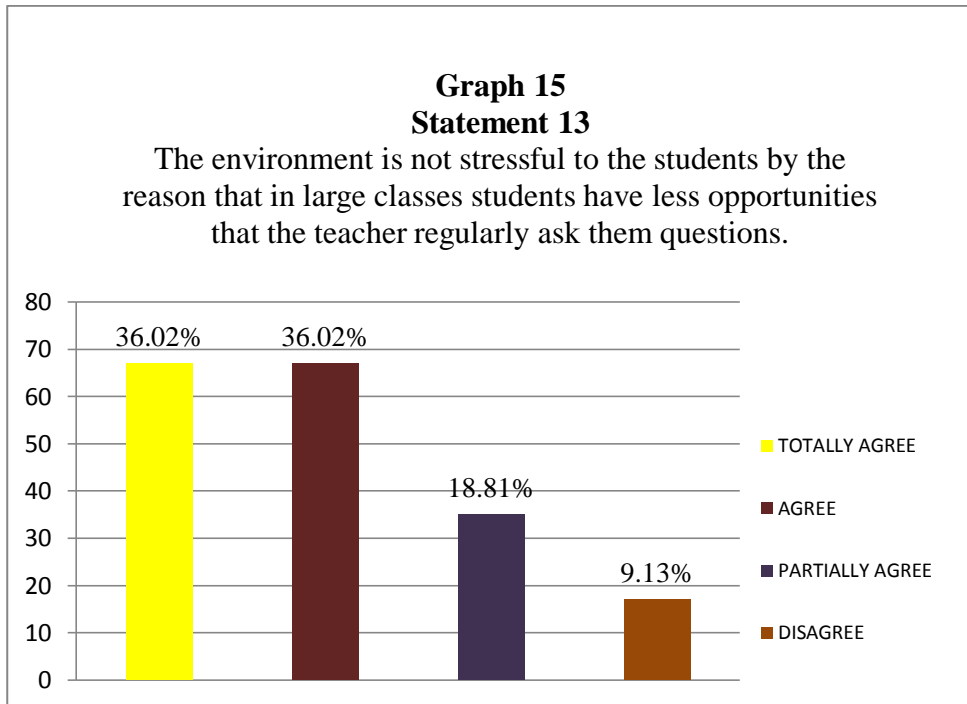
Accordingly, it is clearly shown that the majority of the students, 55.38%, agree that they have opportunities to interact with each other which shows that in spite of the large number of students, interactive cooperative learning is being promoted by using interactive activities, as Ashman and Gillies (2003) suggested.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement twelve: *The teacher remembers or not the names of his/ her students*. Graph fourteen shows that that 14.51% of the students surveyed totally agree and 19.89% agree in the fact that the teacher can remember all their names. However, 30.64% of the students partially agree and 34.94% of them disagree in this statement.

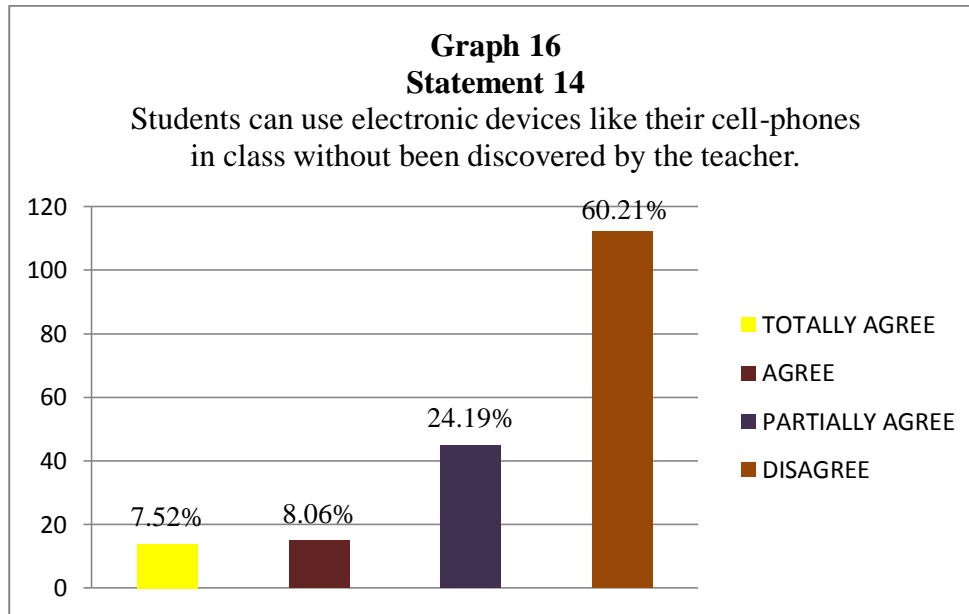
As a result, it is clearly seen that according to the 65.59% of the students, it is very hard for teachers to remember all their names. This affects the relationship between most of the students and the teacher of the researched classes. As Buller (2000) mentions, this is one of the big problems that teachers and students of large classes face.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement thirteen: *The environment is not stressful to the students by the reason that, in large classes, students have less opportunities that the teacher regularly ask them questions.* In graph fifteen, it can be observed that the 36.02% of the students surveyed totally agree and an equal percentage agree on the fact that they do not feel stressful because the teacher rarely ask questions to all of them, while a low percentage of them, 18.81%, partially agree, followed by 9.13% who disagree in this statement.

Therefore, it is clearly shown that the majority of the students, 72.04%, agree that the teacher is not able to ask several questions to all of them, so they do not feel worried about having to answer questions all the time. In other words, they stay almost anonymous most of the time which is identified as one of a large class problems by Ruitter and Dang (2005) since because of the number of students, most of them do not pay attention to the class.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Regarding to statement fourteen: *Students can use electronic devices like their cell-phones in class without been discovered by the teacher.* Graph sixteen shows that 7.52% of the students surveyed totally agree and 8.06% agree in the mentioned assumption. Besides, 24.06% of the students partially agree and a great percentage of them, 60.21% disagree in this statement.

Accordingly, it is clearly shown that the majority of the students, 84.41%, disagree that they can freely use electronic devices in the class which shows good discipline management since according to Savage and Savage (2009) discipline are actions that facilitated de development of self-control, responsibility and character. However, by doing this, the teachers are not taking advantage of the technology to get the students engaged in learning as Ferlazzo and Hull (2012) recommended.

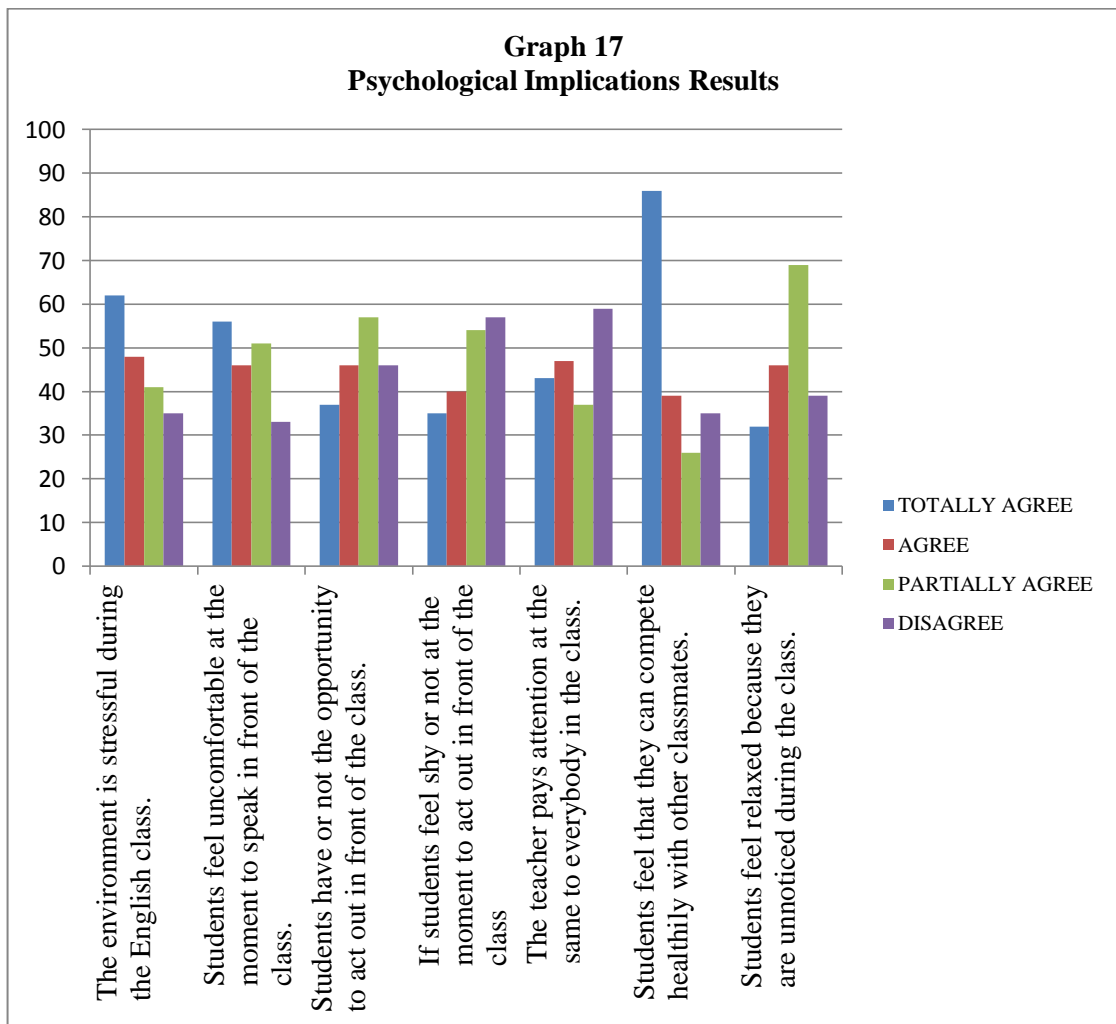
Consequently, in the social aspect, according to the 65.59% of the students' answers, the teacher does not remember all the students' names. Likewise, teachers cannot make several questions to the same students according to the 72.05%. These two social effects are presented in the researched classes because of the large number of students and influence on the success of the English language teaching-learning process.

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

Table 3 Psychological Implications Results											
N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Totally Agree		Agree		Partially Agree		Disagree		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
15	The environment is stressful during the English class.	62	33.33%	48	25.80%	41	22.04%	35	18.81%	186	100%
16	Students feel uncomfortable at the moment to speak in front of the class.	56	30.10%	46	24.73%	51	27.41%	33	17.74%	186	100%
17	Students have less opportunities to express themselves.	37	19.89%	46	24.73%	57	30.65%	46	24.73%	186	100%
18	Students feel shy at the moment to act out in front of the class.	35	18.82%	40	21.51%	54	29.03%	57	30.65%	186	100%
19	The teacher does not pay the same attention to everybody in the class.	43	23.11%	47	25.27%	37	19.89%	59	31.72%	186	100%
20	Students feel that they can healthily compete with other classmates.	86	46.24%	39	20.97%	26	13.98%	35	18.82%	186	100%
21	Students feel relaxed because they can be unnoticed during the class.	32	17.20%	46	24.73%	69	37.10%	39	20.97%	186	100%

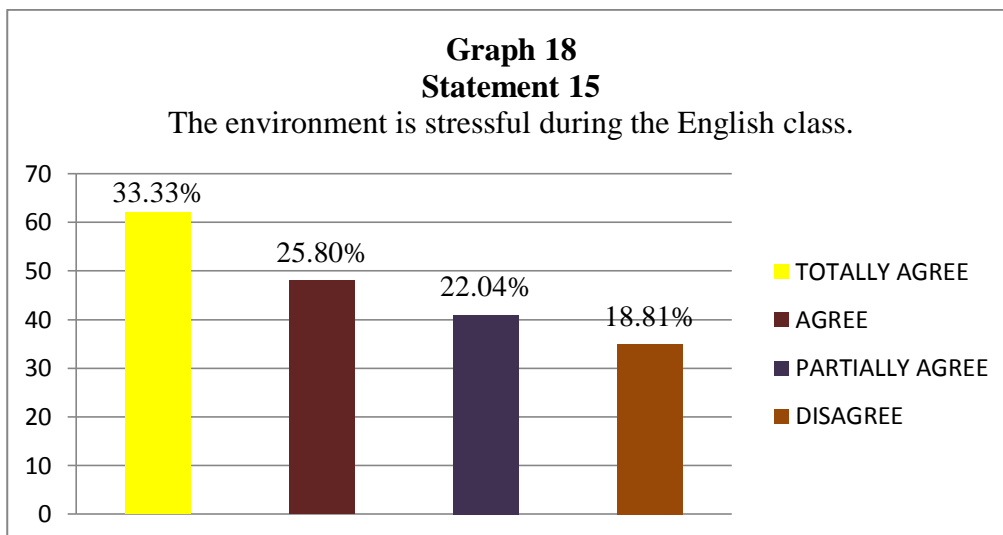
Author: Victor Salas Z.

Source: Students' Questionnaire



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

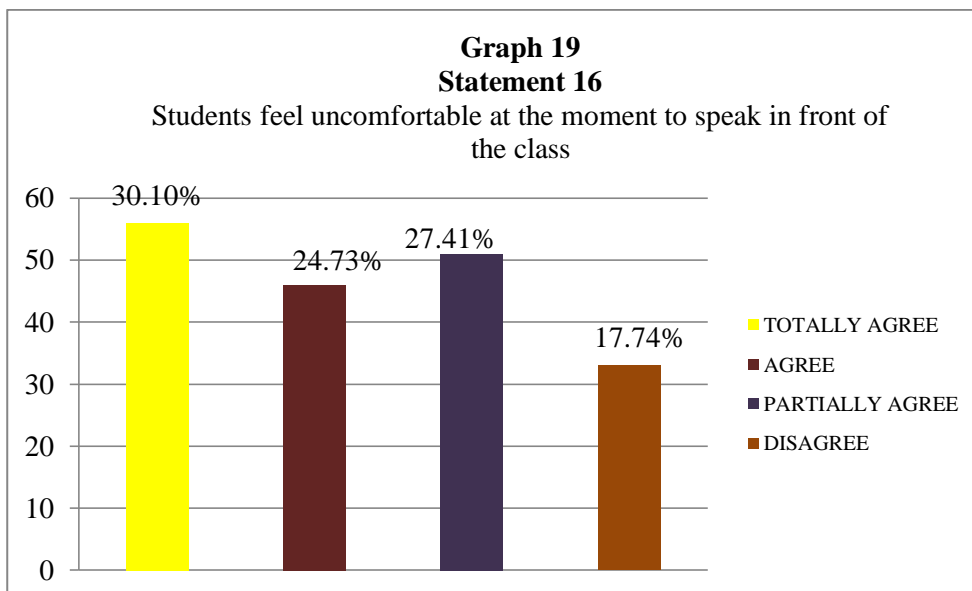
Chart three and graph 17 globally show the students' opinion about the seven psychological surveyed aspects. The scale used for the survey was expressed according to the students' grade of agreement: totally agree, agree, partially agree and disagree. Similarly, in the chart and graph can be seen that there is a different level of agreement and disagreement in the psychological aspects. Therefore, each statement will be analyzed individually to interpret the results precisely.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement fifteen: *The environment is stressful during the English class.* Graph eighteen shows that 33.33% of the students surveyed totally agree and 25.80% agree in the fact that there is a stressful environment during the English class. There is also a percentage of 22.04% of the students who partially agree and 18.81% of them who disagree.

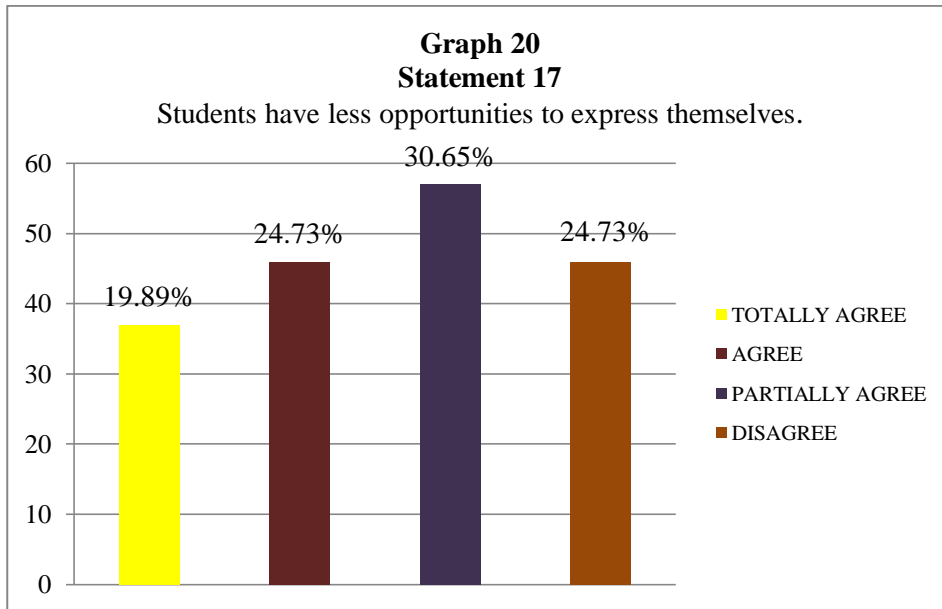
Thus the majority of students, 59.14%, agree that they feel the class environment stressful which coincides with one of the large class problems specified by Buller (2000). The teacher can solve this problem by identifying students' strengths and weaknesses in order to adapt the activities to all the students' needs to create a relaxed environment and help students get a meaningful learning.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

In relation to statement sixteen: *Students feel uncomfortable at the moment to speak in front of the class*. Graph nineteen shows that 30.10% of the students surveyed totally agree and 24.73% agree in the mentioned statement. Likewise, 27.41% of the students partially agree and 17.74% of them disagree.

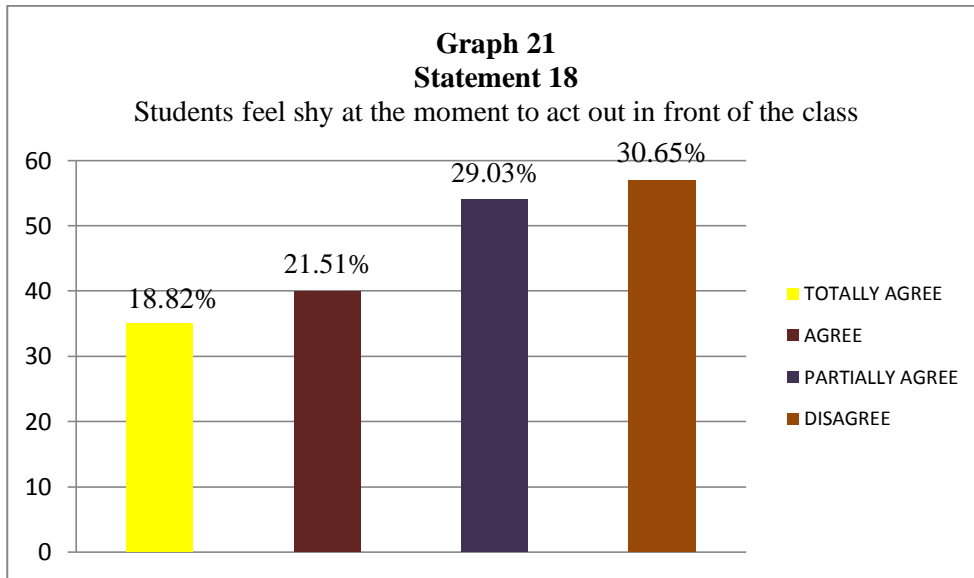
The results shown that the majority of the students, 54.84%, do not feel well speaking in front of the class and this coincides with Buller (2000) statement, which said that students in large classes feel intimidated of speaking in front of a lot of classmates. Therefore, the teacher should identify the reason why the students feel uncomfortable speaking in English and look for the best method or technique to avoid the problem.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement seventeen: *Students have less opportunities to express themselves*. Graph twenty shows that that 19.89% of the students surveyed totally agree. Additionally, 24.73% of the students agree and in an equal percentage students disagree in the fact that they do not have the chance to act out in front of the class. Finally, 30.65% of students partially agree in this statement.

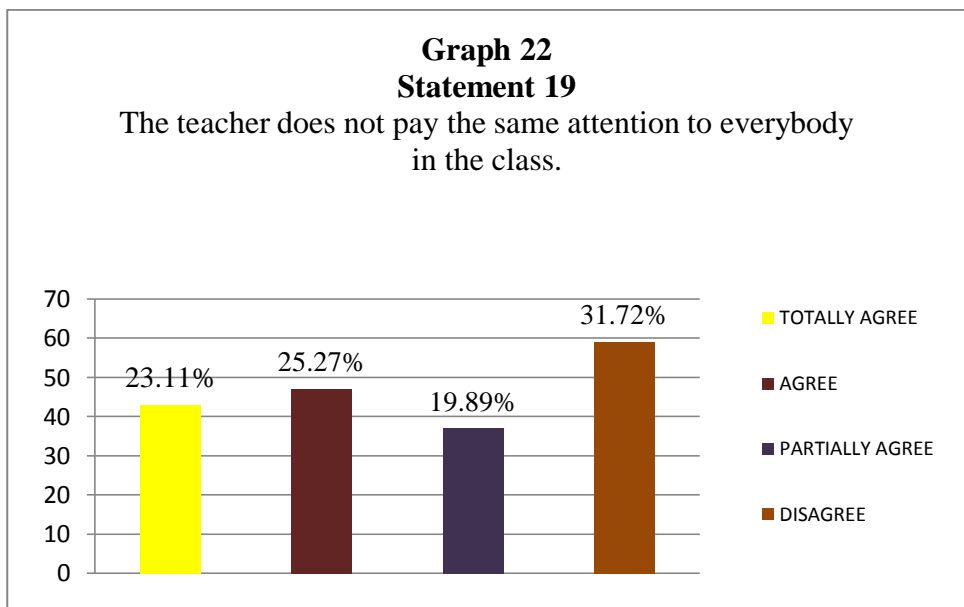
Consequently, it is clearly seen that the 55.38% of the students in the researched classes disagree about not having enough opportunities to express their opinions which indicates that one of the large class problems identified by Buller (2000) has been eliminated.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement eighteen: *Students feel shy at the moment to act out in front of the class*. Graph twenty one shows that that 18.82% of the students surveyed totally agree and 21.51% agree in the fact that they feel shy at the moment to perform the tasks in front of the class. In spite of these, 29.03% of the students partially agree and 30.65% of them disagree in this statement.

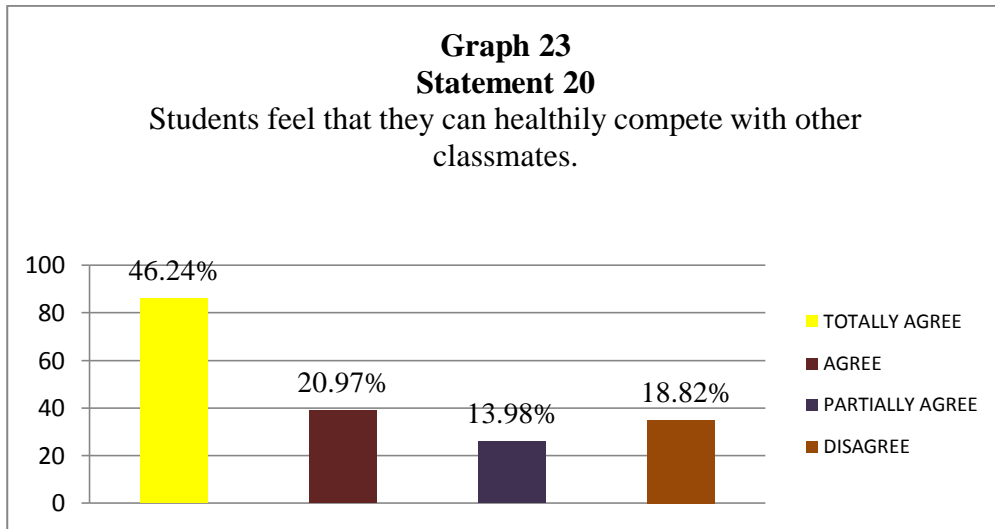
As a result, it is clearly shown that the 59.68% of the students do not feel shy acting out in front of the class. Buller (2000) stated that in large classes, students feel timid acting out in front of too many classmates; however, in the researched classes this almost does not happen.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement nineteen: *The teacher does not pay the same attention to everybody in the class.* Graph twenty two shows that 23.11% of the students surveyed totally agree and 25.27% agree in the fact that the teacher does not pay the same attention to everyone. In spite of these, 19.89% of the students partially agree and 31.72% of them disagree.

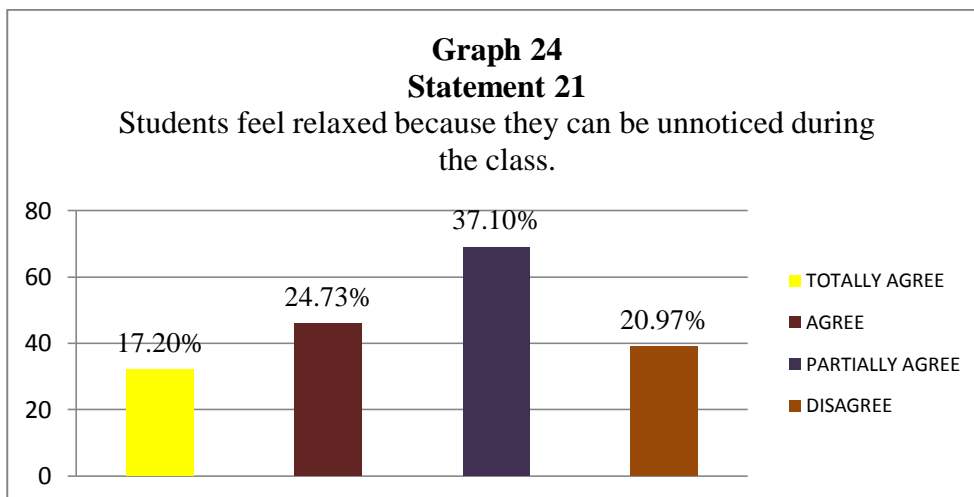
Thus, it is clearly shown that the 51.61% of the surveyed students stated that all of them get the same attention from the teacher. However, there is also a great percentage, 48.38%, of students who claim that the teacher do no give them the same attention which coincides with one of the problems found by Bahansal (2013), where teachers cannot give the same attention to all the students because of the great number of them.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement twenty: *Students feel that they can healthily compete with other classmates*. Graph twenty three shows that 46.24% of the students surveyed totally agree and 20.97% agree in the fact that they can healthily compete with each other. There is also a percentage of 13.98% of students who partially agree and 18.82% who disagree in this statement.

It can clearly be seen that the majority of the students, 67.20, feel that there can be a healthy interaction and competence between them. Therefore, interactive cooperative learning is being promoted as Ashman and Gillies (2003) suggested in order to overcome large classes problems since working together cooperatively, students will maintain focused on the task and engaged in the learning process.

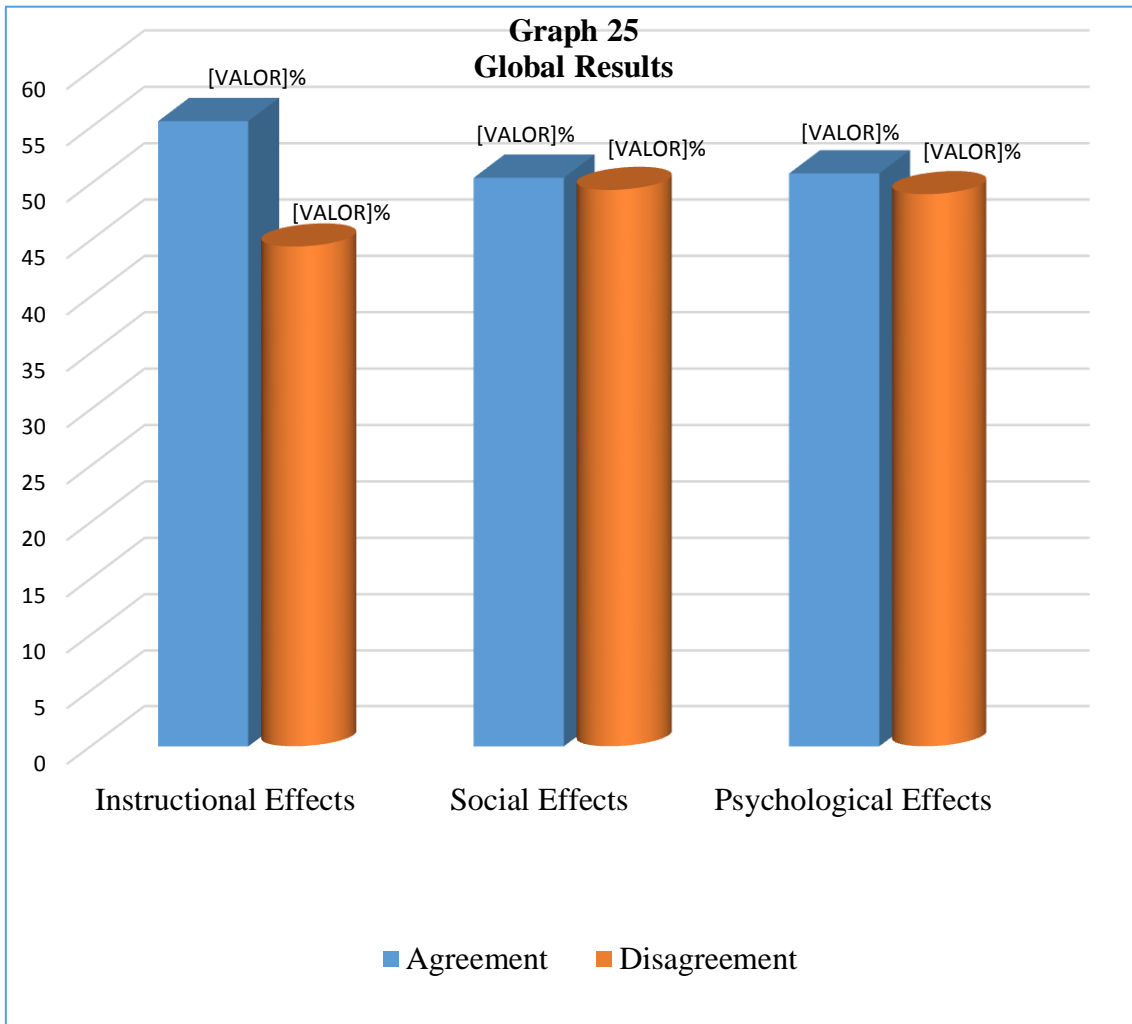


Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Concerning statement twenty one: *Students feel relaxed because they can be unnoticed during the class.* Graph twenty four shows that 17.20% of the students surveyed totally agree and 24.73% agree in the mentioned statement. In spite of these, 37.10% of the students partially agree and 20.97% of them disagree.

In consequence, it is clearly shown that the majority of the students, 58.07% do not feel relaxed since they are noticed in class. Consequently, they do not stay anonymous most of the time. But, the 41.93% of the students say they stay unnoticed in class which is identified as one of a large class problems by Ruitter and Dang (2005)

In the end, the psychological effects found in the researched classes are that according to the 59.14% of the information, the environment during the English class is stressful, and according to the 54.84% of the information, students feel uncomfortable at the moment to speak in front of the class.



Author: Victor Salas Z.
Source: Students' Questionnaire

Graph twenty five above, is a compilation of the results divided in two aspects: the results of the students who agree and totally agree are represented with the title agreement. In the same way, the results of the students who partially agree and disagree are represented with the title disagreement; and the instructional, social and psychological effects that large classes have in the teaching-learning process of English as a foreign language in Paute are clearly seen.

According to the answers of the nine questions about instruction, there is 55, 56% of agreement and 44.44% of disagreement, On the other hand, the five questions about social implications show an agreement of 50, 54% and a disagreement of 49.46%. Finally, in the seven questions about psychological implications the agreement is of 50, 92% and the disagreement is of 49.08%.

The results about instructional issues show that students' agreement is 12.12% over disagreement. Thus the majority of the interviewed students agree that teachers present activities that allow students to practice the four basic skills of the English language: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Moreover, those activities also help students to apply what they have learned in class. Even though the classes are large, most of the students are attentive and participate in the class activities which indicates that the chosen activities catch the students' attention and engage them in the learning process. It is also seen that the class activities give students the chance to work individually, in pairs or groups. Additionally, the seating arrangements used help for the successful development of the different activities, students do not get distracted by doing other subject assignments and they are not allowed to cheat during the tests, so there are not major disciplinary problems in the researched classes. However, it is worthy to mention that students do not get regular feedback, and the activities that require whole class participation such as plays, competitions, debates or games are not being used because of the large number of students.

About social effects, the opinions are almost divided. The level of agreement is just 1.08% over the level of disagreement, but the results show that students are able to interact between them and with the teacher and there are enough opportunities for interaction during the different lessons. Besides, students cannot use electronic devices without being discovered by the teacher. On the other hand, the teacher cannot remember all students' names, and the same student is rarely asked to answer several questions because of the large number of them.

Concerning to the results about psychological effects, the level of agreement is 1.84% above the level of disagreement. These results show that even though the English class environment is stressed, students have enough opportunities to express themselves and all of them can get the same attention from the teacher. Students also manifest that they do not feel comfortable speaking in English in front of their classmates but it is not because they are shy. Moreover, students feel that they can healthy compete with each other and no matter the large number of students they cannot go unnoticed during the class.

In conclusion, to teach English as a foreign language, the teachers of the researched classes use a variety of activities and adapt them in order to fit the students' needs, manage the classroom arrangement and the discipline well. These demonstrates that the attitude of the teacher plays an important role in overcoming large classes instructional and disciplinary problems which coincides with what Burns and Richards (2012) stated about the teacher's attitude being the fundamental factor in giving solutions to the large classes problems. . However, there is a lack of effective feedback as Carbone (1998, p. 10), and Goodwin and Hubel (2013, p. 86) recommend in order to track students' progress and offer personalized

guidance. Likewise, there is not an interactive cooperative learning like Ashman and Gillies (2003) suggest since activities such as plays, competitions, debates and games are not being used.

Moreover, even though there is good interaction between students and teachers in the classes which according with Ashman and Gillies (2003) is a way of promoting interactive cooperative learning; the issues of students not having to answer several questions as they should and the teachers not remembering all students names persist as large classes problems identified by Buller (2000). These make impossible for teachers identify well all student's strengths and their individual needs.

Psychologically speaking, there is stress during the English classes and students feel uncomfortable about speaking in English in front of the class which according with Buller (2000) are normal large classes problems, but students have the opportunity to express themselves, and definitely do not go unnoticed in class because teachers give the same attention to all of them. These demonstrates one more time that the attitude teachers have toward large classes is fundamental in overcoming problems, Burns and Richards (2012).

Lastly, the two major instructional effects found in the researched classes are that students do not receive effective feedback from the teacher and that there is not interactive cooperative learning by the use of activities like plays, debates or games. The major social effects are that teachers do not remember all students' names, so there cannot be a good student and teacher relationship with most of the students. Likewise, teachers cannot ask enough questions to all the students in order to help them in the learning process. The psychological effects are that there is stress in the English class and students feel uncomfortable speaking in English in front of their classmates.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results presented previously, the following conclusions have been reached:

- Regarding instructional implications, students do not receive effective feedback from the teacher because of the large number of students in the English class which makes it impossible to track their progress and identify their weaknesses in order to enhance their learning.
- Interactive cooperative learning is not promoted in the large class since activities like plays, games, competitions or debates are not frequently used in the researched classes due to the amount of students and space.
- Speaking of social implications, the relationship between the teacher and all the students in the large classes researched are not good since teachers have difficulty identifying all student's needs which make it difficult personalize teaching and offer the correct direction to all of them. In large classes, teachers cannot even remember all students' names.
- The individual participation of the students is limited because of the large number of them, they are rarely asked to answer a question more than once.
- Concerning psychological implications, students feel uncomfortable at the moment of speaking in front of all their classmates. Then their oral production and the English learning process are being restricted.
- The environment is stressful during the English class because of the number of students which affects the effective acquisition of the knowledge.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Now that this research has been carried out, there are some recommendations that can be based on the obtained results.

- In order to have a meaningful teaching-learning process, an English class should not have more than twenty five students.
- In large classes, it is necessary to use activities like plays, games, debates, competitions, etc. more frequently in order to promote all students participation and give them more opportunities to express their own opinions.
- Teachers should be frequently trained in the current methodologies and techniques to be applied in large classes in order to improve the teaching and learning process and avoid the fact that most of the students go unnoticed all the time.
- Teachers and students should get together after the normal class period, if it is necessary, for effective feedback in order to improve the students' learning.
- Educational authorities should reduce the number of students in English classes in order to achieve better results in terms of English as a foreign language teaching in Ecuadorian high schools.

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