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MENCION INGLÉS**

**Teachers and students' perceptions of teaching English in small classes  
in Ecuador**

**TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN.**

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## **APROBACION DEL DIRECTOR DE TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN**

Magister.

Gina Karina Camacho Minuche.

DOCENTE DE LA TITULACION

De mi consideración:

El presente trabajo de titulación: “Teachers and students’ perceptions of teaching English in small classes in Ecuador” realizado por Baño Sánchez Ángel Gabriel, ha sido orientado y revisado durante su ejecución, por cuanto se aprueba la presentación del mismo.

Loja, Abril de 2016.

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## **DECLARACION DE AUTORIA Y CESION DE DERECHOS**

“ Yo Baño Sánchez Ángel Gabriel declaro ser autor del presente trabajo de titulación : Teachers and students´ perceptions of teaching English in small classes in Ecuador, de la Titulación de Ciencias de la Educación mención Ingles, siendo Gina Karina Camacho Minuche directora del presente trabajo; y eximo expresamente a la Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja y a sus representantes legales de posibles reclamos o acciones. Además certifico que las ideas, conceptos, procedimientos y resultados vertidos en el presente trabajo investigativo, son de mi exclusiva responsabilidad.

Adicionalmente, declaro conocer y aceptar la disposición del Art. 88 del Estatuto Orgánico de la Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja que en su parte pertinente textualmente dice: “ Forman parte del patrimonio de la Universidad la propiedad intelectual de investigaciones, trabajos científicos o técnicos y tesis de grado que se realicen a través, o con el apoyo financiero, académico o institucional(operativo) de la Universidad ”

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God; to my parents Estuardo and Olimpia, who have been my guidance and example; to my wife Lourdes and my son Elias, who are my motivation to continue in spite of difficult times.

With all my love, I thank God for all the support from my family.

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## ABSTRACT

The title of the study is “Teachers and Students perceptions about teaching English in small classes in Ecuador”. The purpose of the study is to discover if there are effects of teaching in small classes. Also, the results of this research are important to make decisions about future studies. The research was conducted at Centro Ecuatoriano Norteamericano in Guayaquil. This binational center has students from beginners to high intermediate levels. All the classes at this institution have less than 20 students. The population was all students in high intermediate levels. The sample was 5 courses which makes up a total of 50 students. The study was oriented to see if there are benefits of teaching and learning in small classes. Also, the strategies that teachers implement in their classes and students’ feelings in small classes. Finally, the study objectives were to find out if there are limitations in the teaching and learning process in small classes. To conclude, one of the benefits of learning English in small classes is that more participation is encouraged as a result of having fewer students.

Key words : small classes, teachers, students, benefits, feelings, perceptions.

## RESUMEN

El título de la investigación es: “Percepciones de estudiantes y profesores sobre enseñar y aprender en clases pequeñas en Ecuador”. El propósito del estudio es descubrir si hay consecuencias de la enseñanza del inglés en clases pequeñas. Adicionalmente, los resultados de la investigación son importantes para tomar decisiones sobre estudios futuros. La investigación se la efectuó en el Centro Ecuatoriano Norteamericano en Guayaquil. Este centro binacional tiene varios niveles, desde básico hasta avanzados. Todas las clases en esta institución tienen menos de 20 estudiantes. La población para este estudio fueron los estudiantes de niveles alto intermedio. La muestra consistió en 5 cursos que en total contabilizaron 50 estudiantes. El estudio estuvo orientado a la búsqueda de beneficios de enseñar y aprender inglés en clases pequeñas. Adicionalmente, se investigó sobre las estrategias que los profesores aplican en sus clases, lo que los estudiantes sienten al estudiar en clases pequeñas. Finalmente, se analizó acerca del proceso de enseñanza- aprendizaje del idioma Inglés en clases pequeñas. Para concluir, uno de los beneficios de aprender Inglés en clases pequeñas es que se maximiza la participación de los estudiantes.

Palabras clave: clases pequeñas, profesores, estudiantes, beneficios, sentimientos, percepciones



## INTRODUCTION

It is well known that most English students who finish their studies at High school or University do not have a good English level. One of the reasons that students have for their failure is that their teachers are not good.

To improve the English levels of teachers, many strategies have been adopted. The Ministry of Education started evaluating teachers to know the level of all English teachers in the educational system. Based on the information from these evaluations, the government started training teachers in the public system by creating some programs such as “Go Teacher” to improve their level and enhance teaching standards in comparison to other countries.

Training teachers might be the solution; however, there are many other factors that influence English teaching and learning. One of these factors is class size. For this reason, the title of this study is “Teacher’s and Students perceptions about teaching English in small classes”. This study is aimed at searching on teachers and students’ perceptions of teaching and learning English in small classes. It is important to investigate and analyze how this factor affects English education in the country. In addition, it is vital to determine the benefits of teaching and learning in small classes, identify the strategies and resources that benefit students in small classes, recognize students’ feelings in small classes, and determine the limitations when teaching in small classes. The results will let the community of teachers make the right decisions after working in small classes.

Previous related literature has focused on the effects of teaching and learning in small classes from different points of view. Konstantopoulos (2013) in his study about larger teacher’s effects in small classes states that the reduction of the number of students in

class can change the way they success. The results show some relationship with the idea that teacher instruction changes more in small classes than in regular size classes. The differences between teacher instruction in small and large classes also affect students achievement and performance. There is the possibility that teachers change and modify the activities to reinforce or improve because they have fewer students in the classroom and there is probably more space for practicing.

Another research about the effects in small classes was done by Nye (2004), who found that policies of simplifying class size will reach the objectives of increasing success in students from big and small classes at the same time. The model used in the research showed student success as a dependent factor of: students' characteristics, the size of classes, the way students interact in tasks, the way students interact in different classes with different students. The results showed that there is no proof of the benefits for a long time in small classes.

In Konstantopoulos (2012) the attention was focused on the importance to examine the increasing effects of students' success in early grades. Konstantopoulos analyzed the advantages in one grade, and then associated it with the previous grade. The results suggested that the benefits in small classes continue in different courses and the extra benefits in small classes for many years are considered small in general. To conclude, the findings did not give specific evidence about the not dependent benefits of extra years in small classes in early courses. The class benefits lose effectiveness when these benefits and success are limited.

This research is a source of important information to school directors, teachers, parents and students to help them overcome the possible consequences and to make decisions in their institutions about possible alternatives to manage this situation. In

addition, this study can help government authorities to create programs to improve the quality of education in public schools, as long as to create a model that other institutions can adapt to their reality.

Some limitations found in the present study are the limited population sample (5 teachers in five classes less than 20 students); a few classes observed ( 5 classes in total); the small amount of time some students took in order to answer the questionnaires; the institution chosen (private institution); a few teachers who were told about the observation. In future investigations, authors should consider a comparison between public and private institutions to get a clearer picture of this issue. In addition, more information should be taken from teachers. Finally, increasing the number of teachers as the population sample can avoid problems when interpreting results.

## METHOD

### *Setting and participants.*

This study was conducted at Centro Ecuatoriano Norteamericano de Guayaquil, a Binational center in Guayaquil, capital of the province of Guayas. The institute was located downtown the city and it belongs to an urban area. The population sample consisted of 5 teachers; all of them were teaching high intermediate courses in the institution during the morning. Also the 5 teachers have more than 10 years experience in the teaching field. There were 3 male and 2 female teachers. 60% of the teachers participating in this study have a university degree, the other 40% are studying Education at university.

Moreover, 50 students were taken as the sample population from the institution. All of the students have more than one year studying in this institution. The age of students is from 16 to 45 years old. All the students belong to the Adult program from the institution. There were 20 male and 30 female students in the sample population.

### *Procedure*

The first procedure for this study was the literature review related to its theme (Teachers' and students perceptions of teaching English in small classes) as well as five previous journal studies on similar and related topics in order to get the correct information that would be the basis of this study.

The instruments used to collect data were 2 questionnaires, and an observation sheet. The teacher's questionnaire consists of 21 questions which inquired teachers about 4 different areas: benefits of learning English in small classes(7 questions), strategies and resources for teaching English in small classes(8 questions), students feelings about

learning in a small class(4 questions), and limitations of teaching English in a small class(2 questions). The student's questionnaire contains 22 items asking the learners about their perception about the benefits, strategies and resources, feelings, and limitations when learning English in small classes. The observation form is made up 22 items interrelated with the teacher's questionnaire.

Once obtained the permission from the Academic Director of the institution to continue with the research, the collection of the information began. The 5 teachers were first administered the questionnaire. One class per teacher was observed, and the relevant aspects were recorded in the observation sheet; and finally each teacher's group responded the student's questionnaire. All the participants received the right information about the purpose of the test, and the confidentiality of the information provided. The approach used in this study is mainly quantitative, and the instrument to gather all information was the survey. In order to present the results; the 5 teacher's responses for each question of the Teacher's questionnaire, and the 50 student's responses were tabulated and placed in a chart. The information on the charts was described and analyzed, and complemented with the observation sheet information. In addition, information from the literature review supports the analysis.

## DISCUSSION

### Literature Review

The necessity of studying a foreign language is an issue that all learners have to face. Due to globalization, there is more emphasis in the use of English because it is the language of News, Media, Culture, and the Internet. Teaching is also affected by this tendency. There are many different factors inside the classroom that can become really a big problem if teachers do not pay attention to them. There are several studies that can help us understand the importance and the impact of different external and internal factors that affect teaching and learning. There are some textbooks that provide insight and understanding on what had been done in the past and what needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching in classrooms. In this section, there are the supporting concepts and definitions used in this research .

#### *Managing Learning*

Harmer (2007) states that the way we give instructions is vital in terms of learning. If students are lost during a set of instructions such as the ones for Activate sections of the Engage, Study and Activate model, the output activities will not be meaningful neither correct. Therefore, the goals will not be reached. There exist two special needs when stating instructions. First, instructions need to be easy to understand. Second, instructions must make students think rationally and come to a conclusion based on facts. To start stating instructions, it is necessary to think about different factors. For example, what kind of information I want to communicate, what students should do to reach the goal of the activity, what kind of data students need to start with, what will happen later. Teachers should make sure that students find instructions clear. The best way to assure this

is to check understanding of given instructions to different students by making questions .Another way is to tell one student to demonstrate what he or she is going to do to complete the task .

Moreover, Harmer suggests not cutting fluency by correcting immediately after they listen to a mistake in production tasks such as conversations or role-plays. This constant interference can discourage students from expressing their ideas naturally and it can also affect student's attitude in a future task. One idea he suggests is to identify common mistakes and errors during practice activities because students must correct their mistakes in the target language during those specific moments in the class. When correcting students mistakes, we should respect students' dignity. Offending students might bring serious problems with students and it can also affect the quality of instruction. Students are not the same, and they can also react differently to correction. The teachers' duty is to make students conscious of their errors and provide opportunities for self-correction.

In addition, Gower (2005) claims that providing feedback is part of a teacher's duty. By doing this, teachers make sure that students are going in the right way. Feedback is not only a synonym of correction, it can also include to reflect and congratulate students' achievement and the constant pursuit of goals. The kind of feedback should be established on the following rationale: The first factor to consider is that learners have different ways of thinking about feedback. Some students like to be corrected because they will probably have to take a standardized test soon. As a result, they are usually attentive to more opportunities to receive correction. However, other group of students do not see feedback as beneficial as the other group. The second factor to analyze is the place or country where a person is teaching and the obligations acquired according to that specific area. The next factor to consider is the process of the lesson and the particular task to perform. In activities

whose principal focus is structure, feedback tends to be different than guided activities. The purpose of feedback is also to consider students' achievement and to be optimistic about their progress.

*Teacher – student interaction .*

Harmer (2001) states that a teacher's duty is to arrange learners to work in class. The process starts when students receive the input. Then, students receive information about the process of the activity. Finally, students are arranged and grouped to perform the activity. It is essential that teachers know exactly when they must be that way. If teachers do not invest their time by encouraging their students to be actively involved in their classes, the activity will not be meaningful. To ensure good organization, students must participate, be interested and prepared. Mentioning the benefits of the upcoming activity is a good way to keep the interest. Teachers should also mention the reasons to show the advantages of doing a certain activity. As a result, students will know the positive points and the advantages of doing an activity rather than doing it for obligation.

Gower (2005) claims that the teacher is one of the most useful tools in terms of exchanging language. In countries where English is not the mother tongue, the principal focus is to discourage students from using it. Exchanging information in the classroom is to communicate. Students act naturally as the teacher talks to them, some other students copy the way you speak, your formal and informal way of expressing ideas. Teacher communication is essential for classroom interaction. Teachers can give real world material to their students. There can be many exercises for listening comprehension, but if a teacher makes the activities on his own by telling something realistic, there will be more benefits to do so. Teachers usually are good patterns of language. There are more advantages of clarify the use of the language by speaking rather than using a CD player. It can be really



beneficial to correct how students pronounce because the teacher can measure the correct use of language in a realistic way.

#### *Student – Student Interaction*

Harmer (2001) states that when students work in pairs they use the language together, analyze a reading exercise, investigate some terms, or are part of exchanging information activities. Students can also create conversations, think about what is coming in a text or they can discriminate about what they have experienced before. There are many different positive points about working in pairs. First, it raises up the communicational time inside the class. Second, it helps students to be independent and not so unnecessarily attached to the teacher. Third, it increases the opportunities to share opinions and ideas in class. Therefore, the class environment turns into a helpful place to everybody. Finally, pair work allows students to be more reliable and trust each other when making decisions.

In addition, Lynch (1996) argues that working in pairs or groups is not a recent invention. Group work allows students to feel confident and it increases the opportunities for communication. It also helps to avoid the usual embarrassment of speaking in front of a large group of people. Based on Lynch research, in group work, students do not pay specific attention to individual mistakes, the use of the structures is varied and extensive. Learners also give more complete responses. There are also disadvantages of working in groups. One of them is that negotiation can bring trouble in the way students communicate because it can cause dissatisfaction for not communicating ideas completely and correctly.

#### *Class size*

Harmer (2007) states that it is hard to keep contact with students sit at the back of a big class. It is also hard for students to make questions and for the teacher to give immediate responses. In addition, it looks really unbelievable that students are constantly in

movement sharing new and original ideas. Teachers who are new in the teaching field can also feel desperate when they think about managing such big classes. On the other hand, there are some positive aspects of working in big classes. One of the positive aspects is that a big class is usually more friendly than a small class in terms of the different people you can meet. Teachers who have been in these groups consider the size an advantage to prepare meaningful classes. It is hard to think that we can select only small classes, our duty is to be prepared, no matter what circumstances we find in a class we receive.

Scrivener (2005) argues that class size is a term that varies from teacher to teacher. For teachers who work with large classes, the idea of a larger class means something bigger than they actually can handle. On the other hand, for the ones who work with a small group of people the idea of larger classes can be a few more students than they actually have. There are some disadvantages of having a large class. One of them is that students and teacher have difficulties in changing their positions to perform different activities. Seating arrangement is also affected when the class is really large. Another disadvantage is that class size influences in a reduction of interaction between students and the teacher because the students are too far from the teacher and the teacher is not making all of them to participate. Another factor teachers can find in large classes is that students have different levels of proficiency. As a result, students who do not have a good level of English do not participate or keep the interest in the content. Controlling the way rules are followed in the class is also affected because of lack of participation and it can become a problem because of students who do not want to do it.

*Teaching techniques, strategies or activities.*

Herrell (2012) states that predictable routines and signals is one of the tasks that lowers the way students feel when communicating their ideas in English. Because students

are not 100 % attentive in class, this strategy allows students to feel less anxious about following all the process of learning in a really strict way. If students are sure about what comes, they will give their best on understanding the content rather than being worried about the end of an activity. The routines technique includes the explanation of the process, areas where students show their assignments, an everyday routine schedule for students. This technique can help teachers distribute their time better because learners are waiting for the next step of the process. As a result, there is more communication, which is one of the ultimate goals of the learning process.

Edge (2009) suggests a sample exercise that involves playing with Grammar. First, learners brainstorm a list of actions. Then, all students one by one, approach to their classmates and they have to visualize the action brainstormed. Later, students use gestures to represent the action. As a result, learners participate in correction and predict the correct response. This strategy can be turned into a contest by splitting the class in two groups. The winner group will be the one that predicts as many actions as possible. The teacher should select a helper who checks that everyone is following the instructions.

#### *Learning Environment.*

Harmer (2001) suggests that teachers can be creative and sensitive to make the classes more interesting and attractive. Considering the different factors to keep students interested can increase their enthusiasm about the upcoming classes. The first impression is important when students come in the first day of classes. Arranging a class in an attractive way that involves to add all the possible elements to make the class attractive and friendly. Sometimes, the place is not our permanent place. However, we can make it more attractive by adding more other elements as music, a different seating arrangement. The most important issue that mostly affects a classroom is the teacher's attitude to students.

Gower (2005) claims that the place where students prefer to be in the class is associated to many factors. Some of them can be associated to their relationship with their teacher and classmates, the tasks they are about to perform, and the way they participate. The way a teacher places the students in the class can be associated to different variables. For example, age, level of students, learning styles. In occasions, it feels like the best decision to place a quiet one with a more extroverted and social one. It is the teacher's job to do so, but respectfully. Some students feel that an area of the class is their property. Therefore, there will be less opportunities to make some of them move from their positions. A good idea to overcome this potential problem is to encourage students to see the reasons for a certain move in their positions. Also, it is important to comprehend any apparent reason for their attitude.

There are also some other studies about the effects of class size in instruction that are associated . These studies provide information and they give us more insight about the different factors that affect classrooms around the world . The researchers in all these studies (Konstantopoulos ,Nye, Hedges, Harfit) provide different techniques and strategies in order to demonstrate their theory and to support it .

Konstantopoulos (2013) in his study about larger teacher effects in small classes states that the reduction of the number of students in class can change the way they success. Also, the researchers purpose is to find out if the instruction changes when class size is different . First, to recognize the structural information, they calculated the number of classes in all schools for each classroom apart. Then, they calculated the number of classes in each school and grade apart. Finally, they calculated the number of different small, large size classes for every school and grade. The researchers wanted to find out if teaching effects in preschool were more emphasized in small classes. To reach this objective, they

started the analysis in separate grades. The results were the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) for Reading and Mathematics. SAT is a common way to evaluate students academically. They calculated classroom effects as results obtained through theoretical calculation and observation. The difference of these aspects show the significant changes in teachers instruction.

To start the investigation, the researchers calculated the effects of teachers for all classes and schools in 2 aspects. In the first aspect, students were grouped according to their sex, and ethnical group. In the second aspect, the researchers added school arranged results to clarify fluctuation in success because of school differences. To evaluate teachers' effects, the researchers used the same descriptors on mathematics and reading in each grade apart. Then, the researchers calculated the results in small and regular size classes to analyze the different results in each classroom. The marked difference included the estimates of teacher effects in all classrooms. The evidence is that teacher effects in first grades in school are really meaningful.

According to the results, the effects were more stressed in small than in regular size classrooms. There was such a big difference in kindergarten and first grade small classes in comparison to the others. The results show some relationship with the idea that teacher instruction changes more in small classes than in regular size classes. The differences between teacher's instruction also affect students achievement. There is the possibility that teachers change and modify the activities to reinforce or improve because they have fewer students in the classroom and there is probably more space for practicing. On the other hand, there are some teachers who do not do anything about it. The inconsistency about instruction in small classes agree with the idea of taking advantage of class size for some teachers while others are not interested in it.

Nye (2004) in her research about how minorities experience larger lasting benefits in small classes states that policies of simplifying class size will reach the objectives of increasing success in students from big and small classes at the same time. It is important to know if the different class size effect will continue or decrease. The purpose for this objective is to find the results by using information from Project STAR. The way Project STAR is done, consists on the selection of students and teachers in schools.

The research is based on experiments that follow the same steps variables such as students' characteristics, class size, interaction of assignment with minority groups, and interaction of class size. Students' achievement is different inside schools and among schools. As a result, the way the research is done includes an organized structure that is important to remember in the analysis. One of these ways to analyze is the use or organized linear models. This model allows the close examination of some effects in a way that it includes a subset of a sample in a school. The researchers have to collect different analyses for each grade level. There are some repeated standards that can be used. The researchers faced the problem of different results by using the same tests for everybody before mixing the information. Having the same tests scores led to difficulties in analyzing the information.

The model used in the research showed student success as a dependent factor of: students characteristics, the size of classes, the way students interact in tasks, the way students interact in different classes with different students. The results showed that there is no proof of the benefits for a long time in small classes. On the other hand, it showed benefits for teachers. The analysis showed that students who were 4 years in small classes have more advantages and it can provide a model for the future. It is important to mention

that the effects could last for 5 years after the investigation. In addition, class size as a norm can increase success and it also reduces differences because of different status.

Harfitt (2013) in his study about the relationships between class size and pedagogical practices claims that teaching reports about the instruction in small classes is not adequate to reality. This research focused on the record of teachers in small and large classes in the same grade level. The idea is to find useful strategies that can be used to ensure instruction. The research is based on some studies which emphasis was on large classes and one small class in a school in a Hong Kong high school. In each study, both large and small classes had the same teacher. This is an innovation from previous research because of having the same teacher in both classes.

Even though this study seemed to be naturalistic, the focus of this study was on control the variables that can influence in participation and instruction, teachers, subject matter, and the capacities of students in class. This research was during 2 years. The information from the study is taken from 29 records with teachers in the different schools, and it included 60 observations. There were some interviews to teachers that provided ideas and anecdotes in their small and large classes. Interviews covered many range of topics such as lesson objectives, ideas about different problems, analysis of teacher instruction, the way teachers provide instructions, the teachers objectives in all classes, the opinions about students in classes, and the opinions about interaction in classes. The researchers recorded information from observations to check participation models. The researcher recorded all information by analyzing it. Reliability was confirmed by commitment of each record in addition to constant observation. In addition , there was no feedback on teachers as long as they finish their periods.

In the interviews, teachers stated that they never change their techniques while working in different classes. However, the observations showed somewhat different. One example of this was when the teacher did not give a challenging task. But, students received gifts for their participation. A common finding was that the way teachers interact varied from large to small classes. Also, classroom observations showed the use of techniques in seating arrangement while working in small and large classes. For example, teachers use less pair work and group work in small classes. Another finding is that teachers change the way they teach when moving from large to small classes. However, the interviews do not mention changes in the way teachers change their pedagogy. Finally, teachers in their interviews claimed that working in small classes helped them be more familiarized with students. This was according to what they demonstrated in their classes, there was more familiar treatment.

Nye ( 2001 ) in her research about the cumulative effects of class size claims that researchers in the past did not demonstrate what happens after the first year of instruction of working in small classes . The study is based on information from Project STAR to confirm or refuse if there are visible results in small classes after instruction. In the analyses of students success, the researchers worked with the SAT test that involves testing Math and Reading.

The start analysis included a regression pattern that showed links between sex, minority group status, and small class tasks that control the final tests scores at the end of the last year. The researchers controlled the final scores when classes at kindergarten finished. Also, the scores at the end of grades 1, 2, 3 based on the performance from the previous year. Project STAR includes the assignment of students to treatments in schools.



The investigation is focused on many scientific tests with the same steps and variables. Because of the differences in the results between and inside schools, the sample model includes the used of an organized structure that is considered in the analysis. The model used inside schools used in the first analysis discussed student success as part of a student behavior. The researchers calculated different patterns by selecting a mixture of sex, status, and the collaboration of variables. The investigators checked variations by checking different models that have various elements of the location of school, the medium term of proportion about teacher experience, the socio economical level, and the percentage of African American students attending school. Due to the school level predictors, the researchers chose the socio economical effect and the small class effect randomly.

In the analysis for grades, only students who were in small classes on that specific grade participated. The researchers did not include students who were not part of the group neither in the past nor in the future. Students who did not have scores on their tests were not included on the analysis of a particular grade. As a result, the sample size fluctuated year after year. The investigators modeled effects in an absolute way rather than approximate because the random way they chose was on values of the absolute variable, not on the numerical ones. Randomizing also prevents from preferences in choosing incorrect approximations of the effects linked with the absolute values.

The research suggests that there are increasing effects on students' success in small classes from early stages. There was a major effect of another year of small classes. However, there is not clear if the benefits are accumulated in all school years from kindergarten to Grade 3. The conclusion is that the results of the benefits of being in small classes were much more beneficial in terms of school regulations. The effects were even more than sex differences.

Konstantopoulos (2012) states that it is important to examine the increasing effects of students success in early grades. Konstantopoulos analyzed the advantages in one grade, and then associated it with the previous grade. The idea is to discover if there are increasing benefits in years from kindergarten to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. The objective was to check the additional effects of small classes in students success. Students were put together inside schools, there were 2 patterns to check the information.

First, the researchers calculated small class results in every grade and researchers did not take into account the reasons for students to success in grades studied before. Then, the researchers calculated small class results in the first, second and third grades related to success in years studied before. At the end, there were analyses over a period of time to decide the benefits through all years.

In total, there were three techniques to analyze the benefits and success. There was also treated analysis. First, the researchers calculated the small class benefits as they were used. The investigators calculated the effects on the treatment on success as the treatment that students get. Those calculations should be a result of a distortion of results. The changing between classrooms and additional changes in class size that cannot be considered randomly.

The intention to treat analysis is to calculate small class advantages as they were planned. The method provided distorted calculations. With this method, the advantages of class size are following a pattern according to the first assignment. In other words, the model was given to a learner at the beginning of the year, no matter if the student continued in the following grades. This method involves the potential problem of changing learners in classrooms. The third method is called instrumental variables. There was a certain number of students in each class.

However, there was a variation in each small and regular classes. The changes in each class size was not random. It may be the result of mixing some factors not observed. The class size was assigned without a special order. However, the current size can be the result of some elements which are not observed. There were also some other longitudinal analyses from all levels to check the dependent effects of small classes on student success from kindergarten to third grade at the same time. The researchers analyzed many students for 4 years. The conditional variable was third grade success. The goal was to decide if the student who was in kindergarten or first grade, will be affected in third grade. This pattern will show if belonging to a small class will be affected independently later.

The reports suggested that the last grade success and the belonging to a small class are together, does not really affect performance. People would hope to see no differences at all. However, the differences decrease over time. In addition, the effects do not spread from course to course. Moreover, the results suggested that the benefits in small classes continue in different courses and the extra benefits in small classes for many years are considered small in general.

To conclude, the actual findings did not give specific evidence about the not dependent benefits of extra years in small classes in early courses. The class benefits lose effectiveness when these benefits and success are limited. In addition, when the effects are limited after the 4<sup>th</sup> year , the benefits of being in a small class is not so evident . The only coherent finding is that being a small class after kindergarten and only for one year is an advantage for students .

### Description, Analysis and Interpretation of Results.

In this section of the study, the information collected during the investigation will be presented and analyzed by following a quantitative approach. In order to do this, the responses to each question on the Teacher’s questionnaire will be displayed in charts, then the responses for each question on the student’s questionnaire. Finally, there will be the corresponding analysis supported by the information from the observation sheet and the literature review.

#### *Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis.*

*What are the benefits of teaching and learning English in small classes ?*

Table 1 .

#### Teachers Perceptions

No.	In classes with a small number of students :	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		total	
		F	%	f	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	It is easier to design activities that help students to apply what they have learned.	5	100							5	100
2.	The students are attentive and participate in class activities.	5	100							5	100
3.	Classroom space allows students to properly do the activities designed .	5	100							5	100
4.	Appropriate feedback can be given .	5	100							5	100
5.	Activities that allow more interaction among students are performed	5	100							5	100
6.	There is more interaction between the teachers and the students.	5	100							5	100

7.	It is easier to remember students' names	5	100							5	100
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Author : Angel Baño Sanchez .

Source : Teacher's questionnaire .

*Table 2 .*

*Student's perceptions*

No.	In classes with a small 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 learned.	36	72	14	28					50	100
2.	Students are attentive and participate in class activities .	34	68	15	30	1	2			50	100
3.	The students can better concentrate because there is less noise in the classroom.	42	84	7	14	1	2			50	100
4.	The classroom space allows students to carry out the activities assigned by the teacher.	39	78	11	22					50	100
5.	Students receive proper feedback from the teacher.	38	76	11	22			1	2	50	100
6.	There is interaction between students.	26	52	20	40	4	8			50	100
7.	There is interaction between the teacher and students .	37	74	12	24	1	2			50	100
8.	The teacher remembers the students' names.	40	80	9	18	1	2			50	100

Author : Angel Baño Sanchez .

Source : Students' questionnaire .

According to the 5 teachers' perceptions about teaching in small classes, in statement one, the perceptions show that all teachers who answered the questionnaire, which constitute 100 % of the sample population, reported that it is easy to design

activities. On the other hand, in statement one from the 50 students who answered the question, 36 said that they totally agreed with the fact that in small classes the activities practiced in class allows students apply what they learnt, which corresponds to the 72% of the total population, 14 students, which correspond to the 28 % of the total population, agree that activities in class help them to practice in class.

In the class observation, it could be seen that students practiced the activities planned by the teacher. Teachers can adapt the information according to the need of the group which is clearly seen from the fact that it is easier to observe a small group of students performing an activity. It also helps the teacher decide how long the activity should be and how much is considered enough for teachers and students. Konstantopoulos (2013) in his study about larger teacher effects in small classes states that the reduction of the number of students in class can change the way they succeed. In addition, Harmer (2007) states that it is hard to keep contact with students sit at the back of a big class. It is also hard for students to make questions and for the teacher to give immediate responses. Therefore, it looks really unbelievable that students are constantly in movement sharing new and original ideas.

In the second statement about students attitude from the 5 teachers observed, all of them agreed that students are more attentive and participate in the activities planned for the class . In statement two for student's questionnaire, 34 students, which make up 68% of the sample population totally agreed that they are attentive and participate more in a small class. 15 students, which means 30% of the sample, agreed that they pay more attention and also participate more in class; 1 student, corresponding to 2% of the total population, partially agreed that students are more attentive and practice. The class observation shows that it becomes a must for everybody, even for the most introverted students, to participate

on the activities given by the teacher due to the reality that the group is small and the teacher can call any student at any moment. It also increases the opportunities for students to be actively involved in the activities planned for the class. Moreover, it could be seen that in a small class students are more encouraged to participate. As a result, they are more attentive because they can practice at any moment or when the teachers require to do so.

Harmer (2007) suggests identifying common mistakes and errors during practice activities because students must correct their mistakes in the target language during those specific moments in the class. As a result, teachers can assess effectively and successfully because they have enough evidence to compare and make decisions about students learning. In addition, Harmer (2007) states that one of the positive aspects is that a small class usually is more friendly than a big class in terms of the different people you can meet.

In the third statement about the physical space, all 5 teachers surveyed, it means 100 % of the total population, agreed that physical space in small classes allows students to practice the activities adequately and in order. In statement four from students questionnaire, 39 students, which correspond to 78 % of the total of students, totally agreed that in a small class there is more space and the activities planned were practiced according to plan. 11 students, which make up 22% of the total population, agreed that there is more space to practice in small classes.

From the class observation, space plays an important role because students feel a sense of independence and they can work by themselves. Gower (2005) claims that the place where students prefer to be in the class is associated to many factors. Some of them can be associated to their relationship with their teacher and classmates, the tasks they are about to perform, and the way they participate. The way a teacher places the students in the class can be associated to different variables. For example, age, level of students, learning

styles. In occasions, it feels like the best decision to place a quiet one with a more extroverted and social one. It is the teacher's job to do so, but respectfully.

Moreover, the common rule for students was the seating arrangement in semicircles to increase the participation and avoid isolation in different corners of the classrooms. As a result, teachers can monitor students all the time and the environment for the class becomes more friendly because students are near and they can see each other.

In statement three from student's questionnaire, 42 students, which make up 84% of the total of students, totally agreed that in a small class there is less noise and it helps students concentrate more. A number of 7 students, which means 14 % of the total population of students agreed that there is less noise and more concentration in a small class. One student, corresponding to 2% of the total population partially agreed about this issue. During the observation, students were concentrated during long periods of the class. There were no distractions. As a result, students could relate information quickly and it enhances students learning.

According to Harmer (2007) it increases the opportunities to share opinions and ideas in class. Therefore, the class environment turns into a helpful place to everybody. In addition, Scrivener (2005) argues that class size is a term that varies from teacher to teacher . For teachers who work with large classes, the idea of a larger class means something bigger than they actually can handle. On the other hand, for the ones who work with a small group of people the idea of larger classes can be a few more students than they actually have in their classrooms.

In statement four, all teachers, 100 % of the total reported that they can give feedback adequately when a class is small. In statement five from student's questionnaire, 38 students , which make up 76 % of the school population, totally agreed that in small



classes there is the correct kind of feedback. A number of 11 students , which corresponds to 22% of the total of students agreed that teachers provide adequate feedback in small classes. 1 student, which means 2% of the school population disagreed on this issue. From the class observation, there were students waiting for their feedback at the end of the class. As a result, teachers organized a practice session so they could reinforce and answer any questions they had. The way students received feedback was on time and focusing on relevant mistakes. Harmer (2007) suggests not cutting fluency by correcting immediately after they listen to a mistake in production tasks such as conversations or role-plays. This constant interference can discourage students from expressing their ideas naturally and it can also affect student's attitude in a future task.

In addition, it could be seen that every student was corrected on time, precisely, and in order. Teachers spent their time on feedback sessions by reinforcing material that was not understood or which needed some improvement. The time spent on the activity was connected to the time spent on the previous activities. As a result, there is more control of the time for activities and feedback in the same hour of class which results in constant improvement. In addition, Gower (2005) claims that providing feedback is part of a teacher's duty. By doing this, teachers make sure that students are going in the right way. Feedback is not only a synonym of correction, it can also include to reflect and congratulate students' achievement and the constant pursuit of goals.

In statement five, all teachers surveyed, 100% of the total population, agreed that in small classes there are more activities that allow interaction among students. In statement six from the students questionnaire, 26 students, which mean 52 percent of the total population, totally agreed that there is more interaction between students. A total of 20 students, which corresponds to 40 % of the students surveyed, agreed that they interact

more in small classes. 4 students , which make up 8% of the total of students partially agreed on this issue. From the observation in class, it was seen that students in small classes tend to participate more because they see other classmates participating. Some students become good at this by participating in discussions. According to Harmer (2001) if teachers do not invest their time by encouraging their students to be actively involved in their classes, the activity will not be meaningful. To ensure good organization, students must participate, be interested and prepared. Mentioning the benefits of the upcoming activity is a good way to keep the interest.

In addition, there were some activities that involved and engaged students better than in other activities. The teachers mentioned that students can also take more time in the activities planned and it benefits students' fluency. In addition, students are more prepared to academic and real life tasks because they overcome shyness. Gower (2005) claims that the teacher is one of the most useful tools in terms of exchanging language. In countries where English is not the mother tongue, the principal focus is to discourage students from using it. Exchanging information in the classroom is to communicate.

In statement six, 100 % of teachers surveyed reported that there is more interaction with students in small classes. In statement seven, 37 students, which mean 74% of the total students' population, totally agreed that there is more interaction between students and teachers. A number of 12 students, which makes up 24% of the total of students, agreed that students interact more with their teachers. 1 student, which corresponds to 2% of the total population, partially agreed on this issue. From the observation, there was more interaction with the teacher. Students had more opportunities to make questions because of the physical space. Students also felt free to interact with different students because there is a friendly environment and students know each other. Gower(2005) states that exchanging

information in the classroom is to communicate. Students act naturally as the teacher talks to them, some other students copy the way you speak, your formal and informal way of expressing ideas. Teacher communication is essential for classroom interaction.

Moreover, teachers mentioned that one of the effects of students in small classes is that learners are closer to teachers which results in more communication to the teacher. Teachers feel that students who are near have more opportunities for interaction which improves a friendly atmosphere in class. In addition, Gower (2007) claims that students act naturally as the teacher talks to them, some other students copy the way you speak, your formal and informal way of expressing ideas. Teacher communication is essential for classroom interaction.

In statement seven, all teachers surveyed, it means 100 % of all teachers, said that they could remember their students names easily in small classes. In statement eight from student's questionnaire, 40 students, which correspond to 80% of the total population totally agreed that the teachers remember more students' names. A number of 9 students, which makes up 18% of the total of students, agreed that teachers remember more their names. 1 student, corresponding to 2% of the total of students, partially agreed on this issue. From the class observation, teachers in small classes try to make a more friendly environment. As a result, students feel more engaged, participate more and teachers due to their participation remember their names better.

The observation also showed that the number of students influences in the way teachers treat their students. In small classes, there is more familiar treatment. In addition, teachers can call students at any time without making mistakes in the use of their names. In addition, Gower (2005) claims that the place where students prefer to be in the class is associated to many factors. Some of them can be associated to their relationship with their

teacher and classmates. Also, students feel identified with their teachers because the time teachers spend learning their names shows there is more interest in knowing them better.

There are many benefits of teaching English in small classes. First, students feel free to participate and provide their contributions to the whole class. As a result, there is more active participation and the class does not become boring and passive. Second, it is beneficial for students to be in small groups because they can receive feedback more frequently and they can receive it in a short period of time and in some cases feedback comes in the same class period, which is really important considering that structures and knowledge is corrected during the learning process in class. Third, teachers can benefit from this issue because there is more time to prepare activities and learning is personalized. Students feel that they and the teachers are important elements in the learning process because there is more interest on what and how students do the activities. Therefore, students feel part of the process and become more involved in the activities.

*What teaching strategies and resources benefit the teaching of English in small classes ?*

Table 3 .  
Teachers Perceptions

No.	In small classes it is easier to :	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
8.	Design and apply activities that allow students to practice listening skills.	4	80	1	20					5	100
9.	Design and apply activities that allow students to practice speaking skills.	5	100							5	100
10.	Design and apply activities that allow students to practice reading skills.	4	80	1	20					5	100
11.	Design and apply activities that allow students to practice writing skills.	5	100							5	100
12.	Design and apply group work activities.	2	40	3	60					5	100
13.	Design and apply individual activities	5	100							5	100
14.	Use technological tools.	4	80	1	20					5	100
15.	Use didactic materials.	4	80	1	20					5	100

Author : Angel Baño Sanchez .

Source : Teacher's questionnaire .

Table 4 .  
Students' perceptions

No.	In classes with a small number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
9.	The activities done allow students to practice listening skills.	33	66	14	28	3	6			50	100
10.	The activities done allow students to practice speaking skills.	35	70	14	28	1	2			50	100
11.	The activities done allow students to practice reading skills.	35	70	14	28	1	2			50	100

12.	The activities done allow students to practice writing skills	35	70	13	26	2	4			50	100
13.	Group work activities are used.	26	52	18	36	6	12			50	100
14.	Individual activities are used.	34	68	14	28	1	2	1	2	50	100
15.	Technological tools are used.	27	54	17	34	5	10	1	2	50	100
16.	Didactic materials are used.	32	64	12	24	6	12			50	100

Author : Angel Baño Sanchez .

Source : Students' questionnaire .

According to the 5 surveyed teachers' perceptions about teaching in small classes. In statement eight, the perceptions show that 4 teachers, who make up 80% of the total population, totally agreed that it is easy to design and practice listening activities. 1 teacher, which corresponds to 20% of the total of teachers, agreed on this issue. In statement nine in student's questionnaire from the 50 students who answered the question, 33 said that they totally agreed with the fact that in small classes there is listening practice, which correspond to the 72% of the total population. A number of 14 students, which corresponds to the 28 % of the total population, agreed that listening is practiced in small classes. A total of 3 students, which makes up 3 % of the total population, partially agreed on this issue. The class observation showed that teachers could elaborate activities and spend enough time doing them. Teachers adapted the information according to the needs of the group. It also helped the teacher to decide which activities could improve their comprehension.

Herrell (2012) states that predictable routines and signals is one of the tasks that lowers the way students feel when communicating their ideas in English. Because students are not 100 % attentive in class, this strategy allows students to feel less anxious about following all the process of learning in a really strict way. In addition, it could be seen that

students practiced the activities planned by the teacher. There was more time to practice the activities and give personal feedback to each of the listening activities.

In statement 9 from the 5 teachers observed, all of them totally agreed that in small classes there are more opportunities to design and practice speaking activities. In statement ten from student's questionnaire, 35 students, which make up 70% of the sample population totally agreed that there are more speaking activities in a small class. A number of 14 students, which means 28% of the sample, agreed that they participate more in speaking activities in class. 1 student, corresponding to 2% of the total population, partially agreed that students practice more speaking in class. Furthermore, it could be seen that because of the number of students was small, the teacher was able to encourage students to participate more when talking about any topic. Consequently, students were more attentive to contribute with their ideas and opinions.

Harmer (2001) states that to ensure good organization, students must participate, be interested and prepared. Mentioning the benefits of the upcoming activity is a good way to keep the interest. Teachers should also mention the reasons to show the advantages of doing a certain activity. As a result, students will know the positive points and the advantages of doing an activity rather than doing it for obligation.

Moreover, the class observation shows that it becomes a must for everybody, even for the most introverted students, to participate on the activities given by the teacher due to the reality that the group is small and there are more opportunities for interaction. It also increases the need for students to be actively involved in the activities planned for the class. As a result, teachers can assess effectively and successfully because they can collect enough evidence to make final decisions about students' learning. Harmer (2001) states that

when students are part of exchanging information activities, they can use the language together. For example, students can also create conversations, think about what is coming in a text or they can discriminate about what they have experienced before.

In the statement ten, 4 teachers surveyed, it means 80 % of the total population, totally agreed that in small classes, teachers can design and practice more reading activities. 1 teacher, which makes up 20% of the total of students agreed on this issue. In statement eleven from student's questionnaire, 35 students, which make up 70% of the total of students, totally agreed that in a small class there are more opportunities to practice reading. A total of 14 students, which means 28 % of the total population of students agreed that there are reading activities in a small class. One student, corresponding to 2 % of the total population partially agreed about this issue.

During the observation, students were concentrated in reading during long periods in class. The activities in class such as skimming, scanning, meaning from context were timed. As a result, students could finish the activities on time. From the observation, the most common reading techniques that teachers encouraged their students to do was skimming and scanning texts. Also, the way they practice inferences was more personalized. Each student had the opportunity to argument his or her reasons.

In statement eleven, all teachers, 100 % of the total reported that they totally agreed on the issue that there are more opportunities to create and practice writing activities. In statement twelve from student's questionnaire, 35 students, which correspond to 70% of students, totally agreed that in a small class there are more opportunities to practice writing activities. A total of 13 students, which makes up 26% of the total population, agreed that students can practice more writing activities. 1 student which makes 2% of the total of students partially agreed on this issue.



From the observation in class, students can have more writing activities because the time distribution in a small class is smooth. As a result, there is more time to practice other activities that are important to reinforce skills. Writing is one activity that is usually neglected and it should be reinforced as much as possible. In addition, it could be seen that teachers have more time to check each student piece of writing. The correction of papers did not take so much time and the teachers could continue with their programmed activities on time. Teachers also spent their time on feedback in writing by making students be aware of the most common errors students have in their paragraphs. As a result, there is more control of the time for activities and feedback in the same hour of class which results in constant improvement.

Harmer (2007) suggests identifying common mistakes and errors during practice activities because students must correct their mistakes in the target language during those specific moments in the class. The teachers' duty is to make students conscious of their errors and provide opportunities for self-correction.

In statement twelve, 2 teachers which make up 40 % of the total population, totally agreed that in small classes there are more opportunities to design and implement group activities. 3 teachers which constitute 60 % of the total of teachers agreed that in small classes there are more opportunities to work in groups. In statement thirteen, 26 students, which make up 52 % of the school population, totally agreed that in small classes students practice in groups. A number of 18 students, which corresponds to 36% of the total of students, agreed that in small classes there is group work. A total of 6 students, which means 2% of the school population partially agreed on this issue. From the class observation, there were students who prefer not to work in groups because there was space to do activities alone by themselves and students consider that group work is useful in large

classes.

Lynch (1996) argues that working in pairs or groups is not a recent invention. Group work allows students to feel confident and it increases the opportunities for communication. It also helps to avoid the usual embarrassment of speaking in front of a large group of people. Based on Lynch research, in group work, students do not pay specific attention to individual mistakes, the use of the structures is varied and extensive. Learners also give more complete responses. Furthermore, I checked some student's worked independently during the whole class. There were no group activities, some of the teachers said that the number of students was reduced and there is no interest in practicing in groups because the class size in groups looks almost empty and that makes the class look less interesting .

In statement thirteen, 100 % of teachers surveyed reported that there are more opportunities to design and practice with individual activities. In statement fourteen from student's questionnaire, 34 students, which mean 68 percent of the total population, totally agreed that there is more individual work in small classes. A total of 14 students, which corresponds to 28 % of the students surveyed, agreed that they work individually in small classes. 1 student, which makes up 2% of the total of students partially agreed on this issue. Finally, 1 student, which makes up 2% of the total of students disagreed on this issue. From the class observation, it was seen that students prefer to work individually in small classes more because they can personalize their learning and create their own knowledge and receive support from the teacher. Students agreed on the fact that there is less dependence on a person who has better skills and it can enhance participation.

Gower (2005) states that the way a teacher places the students in the class can be associated to different variables. For example, age, level of students, learning styles. It is

the teacher's job to do so, but respectfully. Some students feel that an area of the class is their property. Therefore, there will be less opportunities to make some of them move from their positions. A good idea to overcome this potential problem is to encourage students to analyze the reasons for a certain move in their positions. Also, it is important to comprehend any apparent reason for their attitude.

Moreover, teachers mentioned that one of the effects of students in small classes is that learners become more independent and practice individually. Teachers feel that there should be more encouragement to participate in pair work or in group as part of the learning process to avoid isolation in case of students are transferred to a large class. Harfit (2013) in his research about class size and pedagogical sizes stated that there is less different seating arrangement possibilities while working in small classes. For example, teachers use less pair work and group work in small classes. Another finding is that teachers change the way they teach when moving from large to small classes. This was according to what they demonstrated in their classes, there was more familiar treatment in a small class.

In statement fourteen, 4 teachers surveyed, it means 80 % of all teachers, totally agreed on the issue of using technology in small classes. 1 teacher, which makes up 20% of the total population of teachers surveyed, agreed on this issue. In statement fifteen from student's questionnaire, 27 students, which mean 54% of the total students' population, totally agreed that there is use of technology in the classroom. A number of 17 students, which makes up 34% of the total of students, agreed that teachers use technology in the classroom. 5 students, which corresponds to 10% of the total population, partially agreed on this issue. 1 student, which makes up 2% of the total population, disagreed that teachers use technology in the classroom.

From the observation, there was use of technology in the classroom. Teachers used CD players and some of them had laptops. There were some teachers who work with additional speakers when doing listening comprehension. Students have more opportunities to use an English program in the laboratory which belongs to the institution. The practice is extra curricular, not in the class. Harmer (2001) states one of the most important uses of technology is language laboratories because they help students work by themselves, and teachers can correct their students individually. It can also help students reinforce what they have learnt in class.

Moreover, the observation showed that the use of technology in the class is limited to the class size and level. In all classrooms, cd players were available to all teachers. However, there was a specific number of laptops which were only assigned to teachers according to a list. The list reflects that the use of laptops is for teachers who have large and advanced classes.

In statement fifteen, 4 teachers surveyed, it means 80 % of all teachers, totally agreed on the issue of using didactic material in small classes. 1 teacher, which makes up 20% of the total population of teachers surveyed, agreed on this issue. In statement sixteen, 32 students, which correspond to 64% of the total population totally agreed that the teachers use didactic material in their classes. 12 students, which makes up 24% of the total of students, agreed that teachers use extra material in class. 6 students, corresponding to 12% of the total of students, partially agreed on this issue.

From the class observation, teachers in small classes use extra material in classes. Students agreed on the importance of the use of extra material because it can reinforce, correct and also give new ideas for teachers to practice. Harmer (2001) states that pictures are one of the most common uses of didactic material. Harmer also states that the selection

of pictures is a personal matter. Moreover, teachers have to select authentic material, so students can enjoy it. Additionally, the material can be used in different classes, so teachers have to make it durable.

The observation also showed that the use of didactic material is a must in all classes. In all classrooms, all teachers used the textbooks. In addition, teachers carry extra material to complement their class. Due to the fact that there are fewer students in the class, there is extra time in class that can be correctly used by implementing the use of extra material such as flashcards and worksheets.

To work in small classes, teachers usually use solo work because there is more space and time in the class. Students prefer to work alone better than in groups because their independence is enhanced. Working alone helps students stop being dependent on different students, specially the ones that are considered the smarter ones. It also prevents dominant students from doing all their work by themselves and permits other students to give their contributions.

Extra material is essential to improve learning in small classes due to the fact that there is more time and students can have great benefits of reinforcing their knowledge inside the class and it can also reduce the time spent on homework. In addition, technology in the classroom such as CD players, laptops and programs help students compare what they learnt in a new interactive view. Because of budget, some institutions do not have enough funds to implement projects as English laboratories, but they can use simple not too expensive ways of using technology, for example a CD player for music or pictures in a laptop or tablet to be described.

*How do students feel about learning English in small classes ?*

Table 5.  
Teachers Perceptions

No.	In classes with a small number of students ,	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		total	
		F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
16.	They are relaxed when speaking in front of their classmates.	3	60	2	40					5	100
17.	They are taken into account by the teacher because they have more opportunities to participate in class.	4	80	1	20					5	100
18.	They are motivated to participate because of the small number of students.	4	80			1	20			5	100
19.	They are at ease because they can healthy compete with their classmates.	4	80	1	20					5	100

Author : Angel Baño Sanchez .

Source : Teacher's questionnaire .

Table 6.  
Students' perceptions

No.	In classes with a small number of students,	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		total	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
17.	I am relaxed when speaking in front of my classmates.	35	70	12	24	3	6			50	100
18.	I am taken into account by the teacher because I have more opportunities to participate in class.	32	64	16	32	2	4			50	100
19.	I am motivated to participate because of the small number of students.	33	66	15	30	2	4			50	100
20.	I am at ease because I can healthy compete with my classmates.	29	58	17	34	3	6	1	2	50	100

Author : Angel Baño Sanchez .

Source : Students' questionnaire .

In statement sixteen, the perceptions show that 3 teachers, who make up 60% of the total population, totally agreed that students feel more relaxed at speaking in front of their classmates. A number of 2 teachers, which corresponds to 40% of the total, agreed on this issue. In statement seventeen on student's questionnaire from the 50 students who answered the question, 35 said that they totally agreed with the fact that in small classes they feel relaxed when speaking in front of their classmates, which correspond to the 70% of the total population. A total of 12 students, which corresponds to the 24 % of the total population, agreed that in small classes they feel more relaxed when they speak in public. 3 students, which make up 6 % of the total population, partially agreed on this issue.

In the class observation, it could be seen that students were less nervous of speaking in front of a small group. Students mentioned that one of the factors is that they could interact with a small group by asking questions and making eye contact. Students felt less nervous because they could interact several times and they do it with the same people. In addition, the observation in class showed that students were not so worried when speaking in public. One of the reasons they have is not to be in a crowded room, so they do not have to make eye contact all the time. Making eye contact can be a real challenge for them and that makes students feel nervous because they are not used to doing that. Herrell (2012) states that predictable routines and signals is one of the tasks that reduces anxiety when speaking in public. This strategy allows students to feel less anxious about speaking in front of others.

In statement seventeen, 4 teachers surveyed, it means 80 % of the total population, totally agreed that in small classes, students feel involved in class activities because there is more participation. 1 teacher, which makes up 20% of the total of students agreed on this issue. In statement eighteen from student's questionnaire, 32 students, which make up 64%

of the sample population, totally agreed that they feel involved in class activities because of more participation. A total of 16 students, which means 32% of the sample, agreed that they are more active in their classes because of more participation. 2 students, corresponding to 4% of the total population, partially agreed on this issue.

During the class observation, students were involved in all activities, because there were more opportunities for them to participate. This participation helps them feel that their contributions are important for the class and to the teacher. Students mentioned that when teachers pay attention and consider what students suggest or say in their classes, there is a feeling of enthusiasm because they can contribute for the good of the class. Harmer (2001) states that teachers should also mention the reasons and to show the advantages of doing a certain activity. As a result, students will know the pros of the upcoming activities and they will feel that they are playing an important role during class instruction.

Furthermore, students were actively participating during classes. Teachers claimed that this is an advantage because students feel everybody is part of the routine of the class. Also, teachers have observed that Teacher Talking Time decreases when it is a small class. Harmer (2001) states that when students are part of exchanging information activities, they can use the language for communicative purposes. As a result, students can also create more conversations, and many more activities.

In statement eighteen, 4 teachers which make up 80% of the total population, totally agreed that in small classes students feel motivated because there are less students in class. 1 teacher which constitutes 20 % of the total of teachers partially agreed that students feel motivated in small classes. In statement nineteen from students questionnaire, 33 students, which make up 62% of the total of students, totally agreed that in a small class they are motivated to participate because of the reduced number of students. A number of 15



students, which means 30 % of the total population, agreed that they feel more motivated to participate. 2 students, corresponding to 4% of the total population partially agreed about this issue. During the observation, students felt motivated to participate in all activities planned. Motivation tends to decrease, as time passes in the class. For that reason, teachers have to overcome this problem by rewarding students during those moments. Also motivation is increased when teachers show the advantages of participating in class. Scrivener (2005) stated that a disadvantage of a large class size is that it influences in a reduction of interaction between students and the teacher because the students are too far from the teacher and the teacher is not making all of them to participate. In a small class, this is not a problem.

In addition, students feel engaged in participating because the number of students in class is reduced. When students felt not motivated, teachers tried some strategies to keep their interest in learning. One of these strategies was to give them rewards such as candy or chocolate that makes them feel they get something for their contributions. Harmer (2001) suggests that teachers can be creative and sensitive to make the classes more interesting and attractive. Considering the different factors to keep students interested can increase their enthusiasm about the upcoming classes.

In statement nineteen, 4 teachers surveyed, it means 80% of all teachers, totally agreed that students feel pleased in a small class because they can compete in a friendly way with others. 1 teacher, which makes up 20% of the total population of teachers surveyed, agreed on this issue. In statement twenty from student's questionnaire, 29 students, which correspond to 58% of the total of students, totally agreed that in a small class they are happy because they can compete in a friendly way with other students. A total of 17 students, which makes up 34% of the total population, agreed that students can

compete with their classmates. 3 students which make 6% of the total of students partially agreed on this issue. Finally, 1 student, which makes up 2% of the total population, disagreed on this issue. From the class observation, when students participated more in a small class, they feel that they are learning more because they could interact with their classmates. Competition can help students accept challenges and achieve goals to reinforce their qualities and feel more confidence. Scrivener (2005) states that one factor teachers can find in large classes is that students have different levels of proficiency. As a result, students who do not have a good level of English do not participate or keep the interest in the content.

On the other hand, in a small class students feel the necessity of participation and do as much as possible to reach the level required. The observation also showed that in small classes there are opportunities to compete. Group management is an important issue in this matter because the smaller the better. Teachers can control what students do or say. Because a smaller group tends to be more familiar and friendly, the competition is less tense and it would be rare to see people fighting or having quarrels because of competitions. Harmer (2001) states that the first impression is important when students come to classes. Arranging a class in an attractive way that involves to add all the possible elements to make the class attractive and friendly. As a result, students will feel engaged and be ready to work on challenging activities such as competitions.

In small classes students feel relaxed at speaking in front of their classmates because there is less eye contact with different people. There is a friendly environment which makes it easier to interact with others. There is more familiar treatment because they have more opportunities to socialize and know each other. Involvement of students in class is enhanced because of the opportunities of participation. With more participation, students

will feel comfortable as time goes by. As a result, it will not be shocking to raise their hand and express their ideas and provide more examples. Students feel they are giving their contributions to the class and that makes them feel important. Motivation increases due to the opportunities given to express their ideas and opinions. Contributing with the class will make students be conscious about how active they should be for their own benefit. Finally, all these factors contribute to enjoy the activities. Optimism will increase as a result of all the activities mentioned before. Everything is a process and it is connected.

*Are there any limitations when teaching English in small classes ?*

Table 7.  
Teachers Perceptions

No.	In classes with a small number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		total	
		F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
20.	There is anxiety among students because there is more control from the part of the teacher .	2	40	2	40	1	20			5	100
21.	Listening and speaking skills are more difficult to develop.			2	40	1	20	2	40	5	100

Author : Angel Baño Sanchez .

Source : Teacher's questionnaire

Table 8.  
Students' perceptions

No.	In classes with a small number of students :	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		total	
		F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
21.	There is anxiety among students because there is more control on the part of the teacher.	17	34	14	28	10	20	9	18	50	100
22.	Listening and speaking skills are more difficult to develop.	13	26	17	34	14	28	6	12	50	100

Author : Angel Baño Sanchez .

Source : Students' questionnaire .

In statement twenty, the perceptions show that 2 teachers, who make up 40% of the total population, totally agreed that students feel anxious because the teacher has more space to monitor students. 2 teachers, which correspond to 40% of the total of teachers, agreed that there is more anxiety in small classes. Finally, 1 teacher, corresponding 20% of the total population, partially agreed on this issue. In statement twenty one, from the 50 students who answered the question, 17 said that they totally agreed with the fact that there is more anxiety when teachers monitor in a small class, which correspond to the 34% of the total population. A number of 14 students, which corresponds to the 28 % of the total

population, agreed that in a small classes they feel more anxious because of teacher's monitoring. 10 students, which make up 20 % of the total population, partially agreed on this issue. Finally, 9 students, which correspond to 18% of the total population disagreed on this issue.

In the class observation, it could be seen that students felt the teacher so distant as a figure of authority. Some students mentioned that the teacher was monitoring them for their own benefit but they were still nervous when the teacher was around them because they did not want to be corrected all the time. Students felt that correction was discouraging, so they preferred not to be observed by the teacher. In addition, the perceptions of teachers vary from person to person, but all of them agreed that students feel anxious and get nervous when teachers are around. Teachers find this confusing because they feel more familiarized with students. Harmer (2001) suggests that teachers can be creative and sensitive to make the classes more interesting and attractive. Considering the different factors to keep students interested can increase their enthusiasm about the upcoming classes. It is also important that teachers create a less stressful environment by providing guidance on the issue of monitoring.

In statement twenty one, 2 teachers surveyed, it means 40% of the total population, totally agreed that in small classes, it is difficult to practice listening and speaking activities. 1 teacher, which makes up 20% of the total of the population agreed on this issue. Finally, 2 teachers, which correspond to 40% of the total population, disagreed on this issue. In statement twenty two from student's questionnaire, 13 students, which make up 26% of the sample population, totally agreed that it is difficult to practice listening and speaking activities. A total of 17 students, which means 34% of the sample, agreed that in a small class it is more difficult to practice listening and speaking. 14 students, corresponding

to 28% of the total population, partially agreed on this issue. Finally, 6 students which correspond to 12% of the total population, disagreed on this issue.

During the observation, students were practicing listening and speaking activities according to what the teachers had planned. Some students mentioned that they preferred to have listening and speaking activities after they received instruction because they could feel more confident and they can relate the information learnt previously. For some students it is difficult to understand a speaking task especially if they do not know the structure or the instructions are clear.

Harmer (2007) states that the way we give instructions is vital in terms of learning. If students are lost during a set of instructions such as the ones for Activate sections of the Engage, Study and Activate model, the output activities will not be meaningful neither correct. Therefore, the goals will not be reached. Moreover, students were actively participating during classes. Teachers gave their instructions at a normal pace and they practice all the skills at a time in class. All of them agree that the only difficulty they have is to start with activities which involve listening and speaking due to the lack of vocabulary or structure for the topics given. Teachers agree that listening and speaking activities are at the end of the process, when they activate learners in task.

Students in small classes feel anxious because there is the attentive observation from the teacher. Students agreed that it is for their own benefit. On the other hand, teachers do not understand the reason for this feeling because in small classes there is more friendship and everybody feels closer and not distant. In addition, some students find it difficult to practice listening and speaking activities because there are lot of factors such as the instructions, and the moments during the class. Moreover, teachers prefer to do listening and speaking activities at the end of the class, in the Activate section of the ESA

process(Engage-Study-Activate ) because there are better results in terms of activating content learnt .

## Conclusions

According to the study, students feel more comfortable in small classes. There is more space to interact with others. As a result, students feel free to move around the class. That practice reduces passivity in students and it helps students feel engaged in their classes.

Teachers have more time to plan and implement their activities. It means that students can take more time for practicing and also for applying the information they learnt. Also, students benefit from this because their learning is oriented on the product they create in a class period without constraints such as time.

Teachers monitor their classes better because there are fewer students in class, teachers can stop and listen or watch what students are doing. Also, it can help students to be attentive all the time, and to pay attention to what is being taught.

Feedback sessions are improved because teachers manage fewer students; as a result, they can have more time to reinforce and give comments about students' performance. Students get a lot of benefits from this practice because they can receive comments about their work before the class period finishes.

Group work and pair work is minimized in small classes because there are fewer students and sometimes students prefer to work independently. Working alone in small classes is beneficial because they are not dependent on what others can do, but also they can create their own work.

Finally, the use of technology is important when studying in a small class. Using technology can help students to improve their learning and to be familiarized with new tools that can help them in their professional life.



## Recommendations

Teachers should talk to students about being monitored in class. Monitoring can become a real big problem if teachers do not communicate what it is, why it is applied, and what students should do during those periods. Students can feel harassed by being constantly seen by their teachers. One idea to make monitoring less strict is to assign different students to do that monitoring job once a month while the teacher takes the role of the monitoring students and works with students in their groups, all at the same time.

Teachers should encourage more group work and pair work activities in class. Working in pairs or groups benefits students because they can share their ideas and practice with their classmates to achieve a specific objective. Teachers should encourage this kind of work by analyzing the advantages of getting students together in pairs or groups.

Teachers should interact more with students. Students' interaction is maximized in small classes. However, the way students approach to their teachers only consists on answering questions. Students need to interact in many more different ways with their teachers because they are the source of information and students can copy many positive attitudes from their teachers. There should be a limit between teachers and students in terms of respect, but it does not mean that communication and interaction are going to be neglected. Teacher should try to communicate more with their students; as a result students will feel more confident and start feeling less nervous about failure.

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ANNEXES



**UNIVERSIDAD TECNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA**

La Universidad Católica de Loja

**MODALIDAD ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA**

**TITULACION DE INGLES**

Estimado estudiante :

Este cuestionario tiene como objetivo conocer su opinión en cuanto a la enseñanza del Inglés en clases con grupos de 20 estudiantes o menos.

La información que usted brindará a continuación se utilizará únicamente con fines académicos e investigativos.

**Datos Informativos:**

Nombre de la institución:			
Tipo de institución:	Pública ( ) Privada ( )		
	Escuela ( )	Colegio ( )	Instituto ( )
Ciudad:			

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

**Estrategia:** Luego de leer cada ítem, le rogamos contestar de acuerdo a la siguiente escala de referencia.

Muy Satisfactorio
Satisfactorio
Poco satisfactorio
Nada satisfactorio

**A. Beneficios de enseñar y aprender Inglés en clases con pocos estudiantes.**

		Muy Satisfactorio	Satisfactorio	Poco satisfactorio	Nada satisfactorio
	En clases con pocos estudiantes:				
1.	Las actividades que se realizan permiten practicar lo aprendido.				
2.	Los estudiantes están atentos y participan en las actividades				
3.	Los estudiantes se concentran mejor porque no hay mucho				
4.	El espacio de la clase permite desarrollar adecuadamente las actividades asignadas por el profesor.				
5.	El profesor brinda una retroalimentación adecuada				
6.	Existe interacción entre los estudiantes.				
7.	Existe interacción entre el profesor y los estudiantes.				
8.	El profesor recuerda el nombre de los estudiantes.				

B. Estrategias y recursos que favorecen la enseñanza del Inglés en clases con pocos estudiantes.

N°	En clases con pocos estudiantes:	Muy satisfactorio	Satisfactorio	Poco satisfactorio	Nada satisfactorio
9.	Se realizan actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades de escucha.				
10.	Se realizan actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades habla.				
11.	Se realizan actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades de lectura.				
12.	Se realizan actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades de escritura.				
13.	Se utilizan actividades grupales.				
14.	Se utilizan actividades individuales.				
15.	Se utilizan recursos tecnológicos.				
16.	Se utilizan materiales didácticos.				

C.Opinión acerca de cómo se siente al aprender Inglés en una clase donde hay pocos estudiantes.

N°	En clases con pocos estudiantes me siento:	Muy satisfactorio	Satisfactorio	Poco satisfactorio	Nada satisfactorio
17.	relajado al momento de hablar frente a mis compañeros.				
18.	tomado en cuenta porque tengo mayor oportunidad de participar en la clase.				
19.	motivado a participar porque somos pocos compañeros en la clase.				
20.	a gusto porque puedo competir sanamente con otros estudiantes.				

D. Limitaciones al aprender Inglés en clases con pocos estudiantes

	En clases con pocos estudiantes:	Muy Satisfactorio	Satisfactorio	Poco satisfactorio	Nada satisfactorio
21.	Existe ansiedad entre los estudiantes debido a que hay mayor control por parte del profesor.				
22.	Se dificulta practicar las habilidades de habla y escucha.				

¡Gracias por su colaboración!



**UNIVERSIDAD TECNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA**  
La Universidad Católica de Loja  
**MODALIDAD ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA**  
**TITULACION DE INGLES**

Estimado docente:

Este cuestionario tiene como objetivo conocer su opinión en cuanto a la enseñanza del Inglés en clases con grupos de 20 estudiantes o menos.

La información que usted brindará a continuación se utilizará únicamente con fines académicos e investigativos.

**Datos Informativos:**

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Ciudad:			

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

**Estrategia:** Luego de leer cada ítem, le rogamos contestar de acuerdo a la siguiente escala de referencia.

Muy Satisfactorio
Satisfactorio
Poco satisfactorio
Nada satisfactorio

A. Beneficios de enseñar y aprender Inglés en clases con pocos estudiantes.

		Muy satisfactorio	Satisfactorio	Poco satisfactorio	Nada satisfactorio
	En clases con pocos estudiantes:				
1.	Se facilita diseñar actividades que permitan al estudiante poner en práctica lo aprendido.				
2.	Los estudiantes están atentos y participan en las actividades desarrolladas en clase.				
3.	El espacio de la clase permite que las actividades diseñadas por usted se desarrollen adecuadamente.				
4.	Se puede brindar una retroalimentación adecuada.				
5.	Se realizan actividades que permitan mayor interacción entre los estudiantes.				
6.	Existe mayor interacción entre el profesor y los estudiantes.				
7.	Es fácil para usted recordar el nombre de los estudiantes.				

B. Estrategias y recursos que favorecen la enseñanza del Inglés en clases con pocos estudiantes.

N°	En clases con pocos estudiantes se facilita:	Muy satisfactorio	Satisfactorio	Poco satisfactorio	Nada satisfactorio
23.	Diseñar y aplicar actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades de escucha.				
24.	Diseñar y aplicar actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades habla.				
25.	Diseñar y aplicar actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades de lectura.				
26.	Diseñar y aplicar actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades de escritura.				
27.	Diseñar y aplicar actividades grupales.				
28.	Diseñar y aplicar actividades individuales.				
29.	Utilizar recursos tecnológicos.				
30.	Utilizar materiales didácticos.				

C. Opinión acerca de cómo se sienten sus estudiantes al aprender Inglés en una clase donde hay pocos estudiantes.

N°	En clases con pocos estudiantes los estudiantes se sienten:	Muy satisfactorio	Satisfactorio	Poco satisfactorio	Nada satisfactorio
31.	Relajados al momento de hablar frente a sus compañeros.				
32.	Tomados en cuenta porque tienen mayor oportunidad de participar en la clase.				
33.	Motivados a participar porque son pocos compañeros en la clase.				
34.	A gusto porque pueden competir sanamente con otros estudiantes.				

D. Limitaciones al enseñar Inglés en clases con pocos estudiantes.

	En clases con pocos estudiantes:	Muy satisfactorio	Satisfactorio	Poco satisfactorio	Nada satisfactorio
35.	Existe ansiedad entre los estudiantes debido a hay mayor control por parte del profesor				
36.	Se dificulta practicar las habilidades de habla y escucha.				

¡Gracias por su colaboración !



**UNIVERSIDAD TECNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA**  
La Universidad Católica de Loja  
**MODALIDAD ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA**  
**TITULACION DE INGLES**  
**HOJA DE OBSERVACION**

INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA:	
FECHA:	
CURSO/NIVEL:	

1. Se realizan actividades que permiten poner en práctica lo aprendido.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

2. Todos los estudiantes están atentos y participan en las actividades desarrolladas en clase.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

3. El espacio de la clase permite desarrollar adecuadamente las actividades asignadas por el profesor

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

4. El profesor brinda una retroalimentación adecuada debido al poco número de estudiantes en la clase.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

5. Existe interacción entre los estudiantes.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

6. Existe interacción entre el profesor y los estudiantes.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

7. El profesor recuerda el nombre de los estudiantes.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

8. Se realizan actividades que permiten practicar la habilidad de escucha.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

9. Se realizan actividades que permiten practicar la habilidad de habla.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:



10. Se realizan actividades que permiten practicar la habilidad de lectura.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

11. Se realizan actividades que permiten practicar la habilidad de escritura.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

12. Se utilizan actividades grupales

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

13. Se utilizan actividades individuales.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

14. Se utilizan recursos tecnológicos.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

15. Se utilizan materiales didácticos.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

16. Los estudiantes se muestran relajados al momento de hablar frente a sus compañeros.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

17. Los estudiantes tienen mayor oportunidad de expresarse.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

18. Los estudiantes se muestran interesados en participar en las actividades realizadas en clase.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

19. Los estudiantes pueden competir sanamente con sus compañeros.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

20. Los estudiantes se muestran relajados porque no hay mucho ruido en el salón de clase

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

21. Los estudiantes se muestran tensos debido a que existe mayor control por parte del profesor.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

22. Se dificulta realizar habilidades de habla y escucha.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas: