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

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

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De mi consideración:

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

Loja, abril del 2016

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DECLARACIÓN DE AUTORÍA Y CESIÓN DE DERECHOS

“Yo, Ipiales Michilena Martha Lucía declaro ser autora del presente trabajo de titulación: “The influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools” de la Titulación de Ciencias de la Educación mención Inglés, siendo la Mgs. Gabriela Cecibel Inga Ordóñez directora del presente trabajo; y eximo expresamente a la Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja y a sus representantes legales de posibles reclamos o acciones legales. Además certifico que las ideas, conceptos, procedimientos y resultados vertidos en el presente trabajo investigativo, son de mi exclusiva responsabilidad.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my children Nathalia and Juan Fernando who are the essential motor in my life. They inspire and motivate me to achieve my dreams to become a professional and a better human being.

Martha

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First of all, I would like to thank God's grace for the opportunity of being alive, being blessed each day with health and having a marvelous family that supports me unconditionally.

My greatest gratitude goes to my mother; she is an inspiration of tenacity, she is always looking after the welfare of her daughters and son by supporting and believing in their overcoming capabilities.

To my husband for sharing his life with mine, for loving me just the way I am and for respecting and supporting my decisions.

Martha

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ABSTRACT

The influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools is the topic of this study. Its general objective is to determine the instructional, social and psychological implications that large classes have on the teaching-learning process.

This study was conducted in two high schools in San Antonio de Pichincha, Quito-Ecuador. The sample consisted of 188 students whose ages ranged between 12 and 15 years old. The methods applied were qualitative and quantitative and the instruments used were students' questionnaires and note-taking.

The results of this study showed that large classes are being affected by instructional and psycho-social implications particularly the lack of individual feedback by the teacher to students and students' self-confidence to speak in front of the class. It was also found that students have fewer opportunities to participate since the large number of learners in the classroom.

Key words: large classes, EFL teaching, teaching-learning process, instructional, social and psychological implications.

RESUMEN

La influencia de las clases numerosas en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma Inglés en las escuelas secundarias del Ecuador es el tema de este estudio. Su objetivo general es determinar las implicaciones educativas, sociales y psicológicas que las clases numerosas tienen en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

Este estudio se realizó en dos escuelas secundarias en San Antonio de Pichincha, Quito-Ecuador. La muestra estuvo constituida por 188 estudiantes que pertenecen a los 12 y 15 años de edad. Los métodos empleados fueron cualitativo y cuantitativo y la técnica aplicada fue cuestionarios a los estudiantes y la toma de notas.

Los resultados de este estudio mostraron que las clases numerosas están siendo afectadas por implicaciones educativas y psico-sociales, en particular la falta de retroalimentación individual por parte del profesor a los estudiantes así como la falta de auto-confianza de los estudiantes para hablar en frente de la clase. También se encontró que los alumnos tienen menos oportunidades de participar, debido al gran número de educandos dentro del aula.

Palabras clave: clases numerosas, enseñanza EFL, proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje, de enseñanza, implicaciones sociales y psicológicas.

INTRODUCTION

Public Education's objective is to provide equal access and opportunity to the majority of population, so this vast majority can be part of the economic development of society. However, governments cannot hire enough teachers to cope with the real demand of its population. In the EFL classroom this is more than evident due to the nature of language teaching, which requires a high level of student-student and teacher-student interaction through real time feedback. In Ecuador, large classes create a reality which has its own specific needs and require EFL teachers to adapt to it.

The principal objective of this research is to determine whether large number of students might affect this process which is going to be determined by answering the following research questions: What instructional implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?, What social implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?, What psychological implication do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?

The beneficiaries of this study are students, teachers, educational institutions and every person in general involved in the educational field, especially those at the public education system in Ecuador.

Various studies have already been carried out on the influence of large class sizes on the teaching learning process. One such study was conducted by Senekane (2010) who aimed to find out what was the classroom management and instructional challenges that teachers in large EAL classrooms faced and what strategies teachers employed in dealing with these classrooms management and instruction challenges in achieving specific outcomes of EAL lesson. Learners from a secondary school in Lesotho, Africa were interviewed and recorded by their teachers to avoid external intrusion. The findings of this limited exploration showed that Noise interference, inability to remember and use students' names, difficulty in managing students' behavioral problems, and the use of cellphones are in fact not only slowing down the flow of learning but also generating unneeded downtime and as a consequence decreasing the attention span and academic performance of learners. The author concludes that these challenges call for collaborating teaching to be implemented as an instructional paradigm so as to be able to achieve the desired level of learner's competence. The limitation of the study was that the recordings were made in the absence of the researcher to allow the lessons to progress as natural as possible.

Another related study was conducted by Blatchfor, Bassett, and Brown (2011) who aimed to demonstrate how the different attainment groups were affected by a large number of students specifically, how behavior and time on task performance are influenced when there is insufficient time to deal with learners' individual needs. The study was carried out in 27 primary schools and 22 secondary schools in England and Wales. The results show that active methodologies and alternative assessment are key if learning standards are to be raised. No limitations were found in this study.

A third study done by Khazaei, Zadeh, and Ketabi (2012) implemented a study at an institute in Kermanshah, Iran, 30 male and female adult Iranian intermediate EFL learners took part in it. Observation showed that as the number of students increase the students' talking time lowers due to fear of embarrassment and low eagerness towards oral communication, teachers' feedback becomes very limited as well. Thus, class size has a negative impact on learners' motivation to participate, as they fear ridicule and being perceived as low achievers; hence, teachers must create scenarios to boost self-esteem and cooperation by means of respectful interaction. No limitations were found on the study.

With regard to our current research study, one main limitation is that students' opinion was the only element taken into account so no contrast was established between learners and teachers' perspectives. Another important concern was the lack of interest students showed about the topic, most learners had a carefree attitude towards the study. It is therefore advisable to promote further studies in this subject in which the observational period should be extended in order to provide the observer with a deeper understanding of the influence of class size in the EFL teaching learning process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Dealing with large classes is an educational problem which can be tackled from different perspectives, such as, instructional, social and psychological. Throughout this research diverse viewpoints were taken into consideration so as to establish a comprehensive understanding of the problematic at hand, and as a way to compare the different concepts offered by the authors with the intention of adapting them to the specific needs of the reality of Ecuadorian high schools.

This section contains previous research related to different teaching approaches and methods related to the influence of large classes on the English language teaching-learning process, which are going to support the research questions of this study.

In addition, this section presents a review of five important studies done by different researches around the world.

Teaching Approaches and Methods

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001) an approach is a level in which beliefs about language and language learning are specified. And method is a level in which theory is put into practice by choosing particular skills and content to be taught.

The Grammar–Translation-Method has been used since the middle ages where the purpose of language teaching was that of learning dead languages. According to Richards and Rodger (2001) and Larsen-Freeman (2000), this method focuses on grammatical structures, reading and writing because scholars needed it to translate books in Latin, therefore, an emphasis on oral communication was not necessary for the copying and translating of books. It was expected that learners accomplish their abilities in writing and reading by learning the grammar rules and vocabulary deductively; that is to say, students are given some examples about grammar rules to then be applied in new examples. Due to the nature of the method, it presents limitations in modern times as the purpose is to make students able to interchange ideas with the peoples of the world.

According to Richards and Rodger (2001), Total Physical Response (TPR) is a language teaching method that was popular in 1970s and 1980s aimed at building coordination of speech and action to teach language through physical (motor) activity. The general objectives of (TPR) are to teach oral proficiency at a beginning level, to teach basic speaking skills and to produce learners able to communicate in a natural way as a native speaker. This method was developed by James Asher who stated that first and second language learning

are parallel processes where an adult can successfully learn a second language in the same way a child at an early stage acquire first language by parental commands. Asher argued that children respond to commands physically before they start to speak. In a similar way, Larsen-Freeman (2000) state that according to Asher the least stressful way to learn the target language is to follow directions given by the instructor with no native language translation.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) and Larsen-Freeman (2000) both showed that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was a revolutionary approach that emerged as a response to the situational language teaching method used until the late 1960s and as a result of the work of Noam Chomsky who stated the structural use of language could not explain creativity and uniqueness in individual production. The creators of the approach saw the necessity to focus on communication rather than mastering instructors as a way of learning a second of foreign language. The Communicative Approach sees the language as a vehicle for communication and aims at developing what Hymes Coined as communicative competence, which is the ability to get thoughts, feelings and needs across in order to convey a message. This shift in language teaching also reflected the necessities of a more interconnected world.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) and Larsen-Freeman (2000) suggest that Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is an approach drawing on CLT, it is a descendant of the communicative language teaching movement of the 1980s. TBLT is based on the use of tasks as the central unit of planning and teaching; considering task as a teacher-controlled activity in which certain information is provided so learners can arrive to an outcome through some process of thought like reading a map, making a telephone call, writing a letter or giving directions. Task-Based Language Teaching is the proponent of the importance of specially designed instructional tasks as the basis of learning.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) and Larsen-Freeman (2000) describe the Natural Approach as the one that sees communication as the most important function of language connecting it to the communicative approach. The authors of the approach Krashen and Terrell (1983), emphasized the primacy of meaning and therefore the importance of vocabulary. Once again, language is view as a vehicle for communication, particularly communicating meanings and messages, so the view of language consist of lexical items, structures and messages and even though this is not new, it brings a new emphasis. The lexicon of the emitter and the receiver are considered critical in the building up of the communicative process. This approach can be summarized as function of meanings over grammatical structures.

Class size

Bray and Kehle (2011, p. 269) stated, "Class size is defined as the number of students that are regularly present in a teacher's classroom for instruction". They also mention that a class is considered small when having less than 20 students, and is considered large when having more than 20 students. Additionally, they stated that students' outcomes are definitely best achieved in small classes; for example, pupils show a higher level of academic engagement, they participate more in class, they receive individualized attention and classroom is quite manageable than in large classes. Thereby, as class size is oriented to benefit the students, some studies have recorded the benefits in both the short and the long term to reduce class size.

In contrast, Byram and Hu (2000) argued that class size does not have a negative impact on students' learning, but it depends on how students and teachers see the large class, especially teachers' perception because the larger the class they teach, the larger the idea of what an intolerable and an ideal class is. Another important issue in large classes is the method applied in the classroom due to the fact that they allow good organization, interaction, individual attention to learners and an appropriate assessment to the pupils' activities. Additionally, they mention that the perception of "large" is relative because a class can be made of 30 to 40 students in some countries like Britain and over 60 in some countries like China. Davies and Pearse (2000) state that the basic teaching principles are the same for both small and large groups but in large groups there are some common problems like limited communication and interaction between teacher and pupils, less individual practice, lots of pairs and group activities to be monitored, restricted learners individual feedback on written work and so on.

Managing learning

According to Ming-tak and Wai-shing (2008) the strategies that a teacher employs for improving students' learning constitute a fundamental part of the management of learning. These authors also highlight how seating arrangement and decoration can make a significant difference in the classroom; though they state that more important is stimulating the subject matter, activities and teaching strategies. However, activities can fail if teachers do not give an accurate instruction to the class having as a consequence students' misunderstanding about what they have to do. Thus, although the instruction lasts most of the time no more than 10 seconds, it is a crucial moment in every lesson. On the other hand, Scrivener (2012) states that teachers need to avoid extensive and complex instructions, and need to be

careful in getting students' attention for listening specific details about the command they are receiving.

Another aspect about managing learning is discipline, Ming-tak and Wai-shing (2008) state that teachers should develop prevention activities when organizing their classroom to avoid discipline problems rather than to deal with them. Gower, Phillips and Walters (2005) argued that there are several factors which are the key point for maintaining discipline in the classroom management like: the age of students and their motivating reasons, the size of the class, the atmosphere, the respect to the teachers, etc. Lack of or low discipline has a tremendous negative impact on feedback, as a result, the driving force of learning is ineffective and weakened. Feedback and assessment give the teacher the opportunity to monitor students' progress through countless forms such as giving praise and encouragement, setting regular tests, corrections, discussions, individual tutorials, etc. Moreover, Hess (2001) suggest to work with the principle of collaboration in order to cope with feedback in the large class, since feedback help students to learn. Under this principle students, after being properly trained, can do peer assessment especially during the written work.

Managing large classes

Byram and Hu (2000) mentioned that some problems like time management, teacher stress, classroom noise, appropriate individual assessment, etc, emerge in large class management. However, some methods and strategies can be developed in order to help teachers to deal with those kinds of inconveniences by using for example seating plans for getting to know students' names easily, by whispering quietly in pairs for reducing noise in class, by giving clear directions and facilitating transitions from one task to another, by working in pairs and groups to get involved in activities that promote oral skills, and so on.

Harmer (2001) stated a number of key elements for large group success in language teaching. He highlighted the importance of being organized before starting the lesson, as well as establishing routines for students to recognize them immediately, likewise, maximizing individual work is another vital element to be considered because of the effects of working with a large group as a whole can be alleviated. Using chorus repetitions in large groups helps greatly since it is difficult to use plenty of individual repetition and controlled practice. Finally, having a positive view on big groups helps the teacher create a setting where both learners and educators are at ease. Big classes are humorous and exciting, which at first might seem like a setback yet if proper guidance is given the experience should not be daunting.

Activities for working with large classes

Managing a large group is not an easy task, thus teachers are required to develop new and out-of-the-box strategies, for instance, the creation of a sense of community in the large class is an issue that UNESCO (2006) has brought into debate with the goal of encouraging educators to understand why students need to learn about the teacher and the rest of their classmates. UNESCO (2006) also advises that the first step in creating a comfortable classroom, is knowing all the students' names and although this is considered as a challenge in large classes, it provides students with the notion that the teacher is interested in them as individuals. The usage of name cards or tags in front of each student, having some students introduce themselves, striving to memorize a row or a group of student's name per day, breaking class into small groups, etc., are indeed advantageous resources for teachers.

The appropriate use of workstations is an excellent alternative when working with large number of students. As stated by Diller (2003), this kind of work "allows hands-on learning which is meaningful to students because they can work alone as well as interacting with others". Moreover, they are extremely useful for review, extension activities and assessment since they create a classroom dynamic where the teacher is not a lecturer but a learning guider. According to Tomlinson (2001), "station teaching is ideal for teachers to use in the inclusive classroom for it allows the teachers to work with individuals or small groups of students who need more instruction, while others are simultaneously doing other content-related tasks".

In the same way, Hess (2001) manifested that learning students' names is essential because it promotes basic but good human relationships and mentions some activities to be carried out at the beginning of a large class session. These classroom activities are: crosswords, stories and the use of real pictures. Moreover, there are some other classroom activities that can be put into practice with large groups with the aim of giving individual attention to learners. Individual attention has been seen as an extremely difficult issue because it demands a great deal of time, but it is just a matter of attitude rather than a matter of time. The activities that allow us to know our students better, are those centered in language acquisition such as writing letters, guess who, interviews, announcements, formal introductions, etc.

Additionally, Carbone (1998) remarks how stories contribute to illustrate students with an alive lecture material rather than merely explain them concepts. She stated that "stories help us to learn, but more than that, they help us to understand". Furthermore, Carbone asserts that stories bring lively knowledge and are loaded of emotional content, which allows students to connect with their own real-world experiences and the subject matter in the class.

Classroom space and seating arrangement

In relation to this topic, Gower, Phillips and Walters (2005) expressed that if permitted by the institution's authorities, it is exceedingly beneficial that the position and the way a teacher organizes students in the class is change so it can settle different attitudes toward the teacher and reconcile the teacher toward students aside from their interaction and the activities they can do.

In order to get the activity adapted to the large class, it is imperative to provide students with a relaxed learning atmosphere, this implies moving the furniture to obtain maximum benefits. In accordance with the above UNESCO (2006) highlights that environment affects the students' learning process as well as the teaching process. Hence, teachers should organize the class by creating a well-managed physical environment combining both, the learning resources for lessons and the psycho-social environment to have as a result a learning community where the feelings of crowdedness, confusion and frustration are discarded.

According to Harmer (2001) most of the people conceive in their minds the classic and fixed class structure where students are sitting in rows with the teacher standing in front of them. Undeniably, it is the most common way to organize a large class and it is also a good way to facilitate practical eye contact especially in activities such as lecturing where there is a clear view of all students as well as the teacher. However, the way the teacher organize students in the classroom is limitless; for example the teacher may wish to arrange the desks as a horseshoe, café style, or simply in a way where pair work and group work are facilitated. As stated by Hammer, the main purpose is to succeed in achieving a class where despite of some inconveniences the class could be taught as a whole.

Different levels of proficiency

A large class is by itself, a class with a large number of mixed abilities and different levels of knowledge reference. According to Harmer (2001) many teachers see these classes as problematic because extremely difficult planning is needed to manage learners with different language knowledge, different speeds, different styles, different preferences and different levels of ability. Some private institutes have an advantage because they can place students by level after implementing a placement test, but other institutions do not possess such a privilege, bearing then the challenge of having a multilevel ability class. In spite of this, Hess (2001) state that teachers' responsibility is to help students to gain self-confidence and competence in language because at large multilevel classes, students feel afraid to speak because they want to avoid the risk of appearing stupid, or think that there is nothing

of importance to say so they will not contribute anything to the class. To encourage students to participate in class, it is necessary to first consider this situation from a positive point of view. Furthermore, Hess (2001) suggests to work with the principle of individualization in the mix ability class, since students produce better results when working on project of their interest and are allowed to work at their own pace and style and on themes of their own choosing.

Susan, and Bascon et al. (2011) pointed out that “one way of dealing with a mix of abilities is to make it a factor when organizing groups”. Students who have a lower level of language competency can be helped by those who are stronger in order to carry out the activities in the class; but stronger students cannot be considered as teachers’ helpers only, their language need to be encouraged by giving them the opportunity to use a wider range of language in more complex activities.

Unquestionably, learners grouping becomes essential for instructional success in the EFL classroom. As stated by Roberts (2007) “The use of grouping strategies has been found to be an effective management tool in multilevel settings to provide efficient use of teacher and student time, learners can assist each other, which frees the teacher to work with individuals or small groups”. Multilevel classrooms make interactions richer a more complex by providing a taste of how the real world is like, in Mrs. Roberts ‘words “The benefit of a proficiency varied classroom is the building of a strong, vibrant, comfortable, safe learning environment and classroom community”.

After discussing the theoretical concepts mentioned above, it is imperative to refer to some studies researchers have done with respect to the influence that large classes have in the English language teaching-learning process. This section will review five research works with relevant information regarding to this topic.

Nakabugo, Opolot-Okurut, Ssebbubga, Maani, and Byamugisha (2008) were the authors of a study that took place in some primary schools in Uganda whose purpose was to develop further the strategies that teachers in Uganda identified as having greater potential to facilitate teaching and learning in their large classes. Participants in the study were a total of thirty five professionally trained teachers: thirty one females and four males and twenty school administrators. Data was gathered through interviews and observations of one hundred lessons. Both categories of interviews were conducted using structured schedules. Analysis of the data was made by using the constant comparative method that involves a continual process of comparing pieces of data and identifying similarities and differences between them. Comparisons were made across the teachers being studied and data

collection instruments. This study revealed that teachers in large classes need urgent support of basic infrastructure like bigger classroom space, enough furniture and instructional materials. Teachers need to be increased to two per class, and lesson duration of current 30 minutes needs to be revisited. Finally, the study contends that alternative strategies should be explored to increase learning in large classes.

Kathi (2010) conducted a study in two schools in Nepal where 60 students from tenth grade were selected for gathering information. The study aimed to find out the very common expectations of students inside the large classroom where students were learning English at different pace. The population was sampled using purposive non-random sampling procedure. To collect primary data, one structured questionnaire was developed containing nineteen closed ended questions. Students were asked to tick both the nominal and ordinal alternatives.

The study revealed many findings regarding the expectations of students in large multilevel classes. For example students reported they like to be called by their first names; that English teachers should move all around the class; that there must be a limited use of the mother tongue in the English classroom; students like challenging activities, neither too easy, nor too difficult. Kathi recommended providing different tasks to different students to grow them at their own pace. Though in large heterogeneous classes, there is no alternative to develop a collaborative working atmosphere providing a variety of works and making all students involved in various activities appropriate for different levels.

Concurrently, another study on large classroom scenarios was conducted in a secondary school in Maseru, Lesotho. Senekane (2010) was the author of the study whose purposes were to find out what were the management and instructional challenges that the teachers of English Additional Language (EAL) classrooms faced and what strategies were employed as a solution for achieving the specific outcomes of EAL lesson. Participants in this research were 4 English Additional (Second Language) (EAL/ESL) teachers. A qualitative research method was used in the research. This study used lesson recordings and interviews to collect data. A maximum of 4 lessons with 4 different teachers were recorded. After lesson recordings, teachers were interviewed using semi-structured interviews, whose format was derived from the lesson recordings.

The findings of the study show the need to encounter more favorable alternatives to overcome the demanding task that large classes represent. The challenges teachers face in the large classes seemed to be the cause of students' disengagement in the classroom activities. Therefore, teachers have to actively involve students in classroom activities as this

seems to be the efficient strategy for all the challenges that have been mentioned. As limitations are an inevitable part of any study, in this case the methods that teachers used for collection of data brought about some of these limitations, due to lesson recordings were made in the absence of the researcher to facilitate a natural interaction of the students. Thus, there was no opportunity for note taking which would have given important information about students' behavior, teachers' interaction and classroom management.

Blatchfor, Bassett, and Brown (2011) conducted a study aimed to compare the effects in pupil classroom engagement and teacher-pupil interaction, and examining if effects vary by pupil attainment level and between primary and secondary schools. The study took place at 27 primary schools and 22 secondary schools in England and Wales and the participants were 686 pupils in 49 schools. Data was collected through observations. During the process schools were randomly selected and observations were conducted on a sample of eight pupils in each class being classified in three groups of attainment: low, medium and high. This paper employed sophisticated statistical analyses and examined effects of class size on moment by moment behavior of each student; that is to say, to observe when classroom activities took place to provide then a systematic account of pupils' behavior. Results came from a large scale study of the deployment and impact of support staff in primary and secondary schools.

This study would report as its main implication the fact that smaller classes can benefit all pupils in terms of individual and active attention from teachers; and that lower attaining pupils can benefit from smaller classes at secondary school. Another implication would be the need to be aware of how pupils in large classes can drift off task through too much teacher talk to the whole class and how it act on the low attained pupils who come to be the passive listeners of the class. By this, it was suggested the value of more varied pedagogical approaches. Teachers should be trained for including collaborative learning in their classes instead of concentrating on individual attention.

Furthermore, Khazaei, Zadeh, and Ketabi (2012) carried out research to determine if willingness to communicate (WTC) differs across different sized classes in Iranian EFL learners. Participants of this study were 30 male and female adult Iranian intermediate EFL learners at an institute in Kermanshah, Iran. Observation was the instrument for this study and it took six weeks to collect the data. During the process, three classes were observed to record the amount of time each student spoke and participated in activities and it was calculated the number of talk turn each student did when communicating.

Results of this study show how strongly class size can affect the participation of learners in class discussions and WTC. The authors of this research suggested that teachers should employ more communicative strategies and should involve students in more interactive situations when working with large classes. This study also probed students' willingness to communicate not only in oral mode but also in other modes by the use of different instruments.

METHOD

Settings and Participants

This research was carried out in Pichincha, Quito, San Antonio de Pichincha in two public schools. The sample consisted of 188 students from five different classrooms and grades; each classroom with 35 students or more. The students who participated in this study were between 12 and 15 years old from 8th and 10th grades of basic general education, and 1st and 3rd years of senior high school.

Procedures

This study started with a broad and deep bibliographic research based on different sources such as books, data bases, journals and internet. It was imperative for having solid evidence from previous research as well as for supporting the description, analysis, and interpretation of the results.

Another important part of this study was the research, which was done by selecting five classrooms with large classes. The students selected were asked to complete a questionnaire with 21 items. The items were concerned with the instructional, social and psychological implications that large classes have in the teaching-learning process.

The approach used on this study is quantitative and qualitative.

The research was developed in a free distraction environment due to the English department director's supervision. On researcher arrival, students and teachers were observed during the first thirty minutes of the lesson, leaving the remaining ten minutes for students to complete the questionnaire. Participants received instructions in Spanish to avoid misunderstanding and were reminded to answer the questions as honestly as possible. It was also emphasized that the questionnaire was going to be used for academic/research purposes just.

The techniques applied to collect the information were the students' questionnaires and note taking. After data was gathered, the information was tabulated by hand and entered into an electronic spreadsheet to get percentages in order to give answer to the three research questions established for this study. For the interpretation of the results, weighted average was applied to determine which numbers count more than others or carry more significance especially in such cases where the results from the four different criteria were highly tight.

Each statement was horizontally scrutinized for interpretation of the results; however, any radical variation or conflicting data was analyzed with correlated statements to understand the outcomes to the whole.

Finally, the interpretation was the framework for writing the conclusions and recommendations of this study.

DISCUSSION

Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

This section presents the description, analysis and interpretation of the data gathered through the questionnaire applied to EFL students in the two high schools chosen for this study. A quantitative and qualitative analysis will be done in respect to the three questions or purposes of the study that comprise instructional, social, and psychological implications of large classes on the English language teaching-learning process.

The results of the tabulation of the data will be interpreted through a table where percentages lay horizontally, that is to say, for each statement; and through a statistical graph for an easy and prompt understanding of the outcomes.

Quantitative Analysis

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

Chart 1 shows nine items designed to quantify the instructional implications in classes with a large number of learners. Students were asked to select one of the following options: Totally agree, agree, partially agree and disagree.

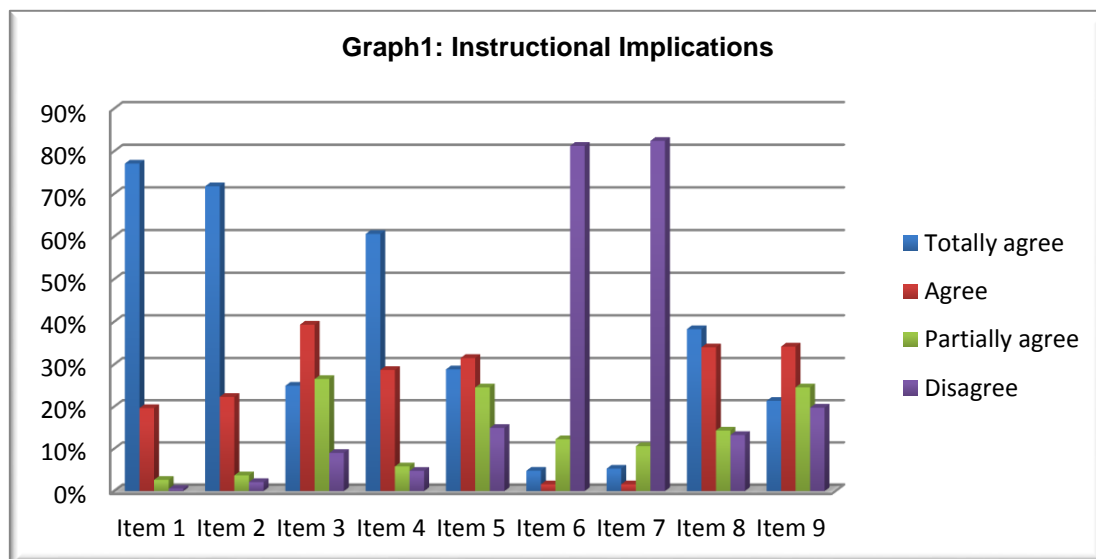
On item 1 "The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class" 145 students (77.1%) who totally agree, reported learning through the activities done in class, 37 students (19.7%) are agree with this fact meanwhile 5 students (2.7%) partially agree with this question mainly due to a lack of creative ideas in the classroom. Only 1 student (0.5%) disagree because he/she thinks the activities are not good enough for learning English in the class.

CHART 1

N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Totally Agree		Agree		Partially Agree		Disagree		TOTAL	
		F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
1.	The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class.	145	77.1%	37	19.7%	5	2.7%	1	0.5%	188	100%
2.	The activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.	135	71.8%	42	22.3%	7	3.7%	4	2.1%	188	100%
3.	The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those sitting at the back of the classroom.	47	25.0%	74	39.4%	50	26.6%	17	9.0%	188	100%
4.	Varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc.	114	60.6%	54	28.7%	11	5.9%	9	4.8%	188	100%
5.	Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class.	54	28.7%	60	31.9%	46	24.5%	28	14.9%	188	100%
6.	Students can cheat during the test.	9	4.8%	3	1.6%	23	12.2%	153	81.4%	188	100%
7.	Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects.	10	5.3%	3	1.6%	20	10.6%	155	82.4%	188	100%
8.	The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class.	72	38.3%	64	34.0%	27	14.4%	25	13.3%	188	100%
9.	Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students.	40	21.3%	65	34.6%	46	24.5%	37	19.7%	188	100%

Author: Marhta Lucía Ipiales

Source: Student's Questionnaire



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This finding shows that most of the students are comfortable with the activities developed in the classroom. The observations done to the five classes also show that the teachers are devoting time for planning lessons to attract students to the subject as well as to integrate what they need to learn and how it will be done properly in the class. As UNESCO (2006) states, it can become boring to draw on the same activities especially in the large class. The teacher must use different fun ways of teaching to take advantage of the diversity of students and learning styles.

It can be observed on item 2 “The activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills” that 135 students (71.8%) totally agree that the activities done in class allow them to practice their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills of the English language; 42 students (22.3%) agree with this fact while 7 students (3.7%) of the sample partially agree. Only 4 students (2.1%) of the respondents reported being unsatisfied with item 2 which is a surprising finding considering that most of the students are not able to communicate in the target language or it is difficult for them to understand a listening activity from the tape recorded. In any case, the finding indicates that most of the students feel they can put into practice the four skills of the language mainly because the teacher is carrying out a variety of classroom activities to support the learning process. As stated by Susan, et al (2011) “One way of dealing with a mix of abilities is to make it a factor when organizing groups” therefore, groups can be created according to specific skill demands and talents, so as to, provide learners with an opportunity to learn a skill with and from those who have a certain

level of mastery. Likewise, Byram & Hu (2000) suggest to apply some strategies and methods like whispering quietly in pairs for reducing noise in class, giving clear directions and facilitating transitions from one task to another, working in pairs and groups to get involved in activities that promote oral and written skills.

On item 3 “The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those sitting at the back of the classroom” 47 students (25%) of the sample are attentive and can participate in the activities developed including those students sitting at the back of the class; 74 students (39.4%) agree with this particular meanwhile 50 students (26.6%) are partially agree because large classes are not allowing them to attend and participate from the teacher’s instructions. The remaining 17 students (9%) of the participants disagree due to the fact that they feel that nobody can be attentive from the back of a large class. It was found that most of the students are actively participating in classes even when they are part of a large classroom scenario with a fixed structure of desks. On the other hand, a substantial 36% of the students between those who are partially agree and disagree are facing inconveniences in participating and being attentive in classes. As Gower, Phillips & Walters (2005) state that the position and the way the teacher organize the class is of great importance because it settle the attitude from students to teacher and from teacher to students.

The answers given by students on item 4, regarding “Varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc” demonstrated that 114 students (60.6%) of the sample totally agree with the diversity of classroom activities such as group work, individual work, pair-work, etc. A significant number of 54 students (28.7%) agree with this fact. In contrast, 11 students (5.9%) of the participants partially agree because they think that class activities are somewhat varied and only 9 students (4.8%) disagree due to they feel there are not varied activities in classes. In relation to these statistical results, UNESCO (2006) points out that students need to develop analytical and critical thinking skills through active learning by doing activities that allow them to think about what they are doing. Findings show that most of the students consider that the teacher is incorporating some activities in the class to improve and promote continuous learning. It can be appreciated that the use of pairwork and groupwork in large classes as Harmer (2001) stated, play an important role since they maximize student participation.

On item 5 “Activities such as: plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class” we can see that 54 students (28.7%) of the respondents totally agree with the fact that some activities like debates, games, competitions, etc. are used in class. The survey shows that 60 students (31.9%) agree while 46 students (24.5%) of the participants partially agree

because they think that the use of games, debates or competitions are not enough during the English class, whereas 28 students (14.9%) disagree with item 5. Results show that the teacher is actively engaging students with the different activities inside the classrooms to allow them to develop and practice their target language knowledge. Byram & Hu (2000) state that class size does not have a negative impact on students' learning, but it depends on how students and teachers see the large class, especially teachers' sight; consequently, using a wide variety of activities reinforces not only learning but learner's interaction as well. Furthermore, UNESCO (2006) suggest to work with active learning strategies in order to make all the students participate in the large class in the different activities that the teacher should carefully choose to the attainment of the objectives of a particular class. These activities may be rounds, brainstorms, simulations and games, etc.

The results obtained on item 6 "Students can cheat during test" a low percentage of the participants think they can trick the teacher. As we can see from table 1, only 9 students (4.8%) of the sample are totally agree with the question; 3 students (1.6%) agree with this fact and 23 students (12.2%) partially agree. In contrast, 153 students (81.4%) of the respondents disagree because they cannot cheat during the test due to good discipline management implemented by the teacher. Referring to this fact, Davies & Pearse (2000) stated the value of setting rules to get learners' cooperation by attractively explaining them that the key to succeed in class and specially in the large class, is everybody cooperating or everybody wasting their time. The finding indicates that the majority of the students are engaged with teacher's instructions regarding discipline and thus, the minority is pressured to evoke a good behavior.

On item 7 "Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects" we can see that only 10 students (5.3%) totally agree, 3 students (1.6%) agree in getting distracted with other subjects and 20 students (10.6%) partially agree because they do homework from other subjects even though they are exposed to a disciplinary action by the teacher. In contrast, 155 students (82.4%) disagree due to they cannot get distracted with activities from other subjects certainly because the teacher organizes and manages the class properly. This finding indicates that the five classes chosen for this study are taught by experienced teachers who are able to control groups with more than 35 students. The finding also shows that teachers are planning their lessons ahead in order to deal effectively with the undeniable problems that teaching a large class represent.

Moreover, it is important to refer to what was found during the observations to the five classes. Four of the five observed teachers were professionals with more than 15 years of experience and their classes (one of them made of male students only) remained in

complete order for the whole 40 minutes of the class. However, one teacher despite being an adult native speaker faced some problems to catch students' attention mainly because he had never worked as a teacher before and was not trained in methodologies. Hence, the significance of having trained teachers in our country to improve the learning process. As Gower, Phillips & Walters (2005) state, there are several factors that are the key points in keeping discipline within the classroom like the students' age, their motivation, the size of the class, the atmosphere and the respect towards the teachers. Ming-tak & Wai-shing (2008) state that teachers should develop prevention activities when organizing their classroom to avoid discipline problems rather than to deal with them. Teachers should monitor bad behavior frequently and consistently to prevent it from becoming acceptable.

On item 8 "The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class" it can be seen that 72 students (38.3%) of the respondents totally agree that the way seats are arranged during English classes are not affecting them in doing the tasks or activities; 64 students (34%) agree with this and 27 students (14.4%) partially agree in that seating arrangement is diminishing them somehow the ease in doing tasks. Only 25 students (13.3%) of the respondents disagree with item 8. Findings showed that seating arrangement is not a barrier for the learning process, certainly because as stated by UNESCO (2006) the teacher should have the ability to create pleasant physical environments combining both, the learning resources and the psycho-social environment to work in a learning community where feelings of confusion and frustration are discarded. Moreover, Harmer (2001) say that the way the teacher organizes students in the classroom is limitless; the teacher for example may wish to arrange the desks as a horseshoe, café style, or simply in a way where pair work and group work are facilitated. The main purpose here is to succeed in achieving a class where despite of some inconveniences it could be taught as a whole.

Results on item 9, which refers to "Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students" it was found that 40 students (21.3%) totally agree with not receiving regular feedback from the teacher because of the large number of students in the class. A considerable number of 65 students (34.6%) agree with this fact meanwhile 46 students (24.5%) partially agree because they receive feedback in some way. Finally, 37 students (19.7%) disagree with the question. They reported receiving feedback from the teacher even when they are involved in a large classroom environment. As can be seen, the findings do not show us a large majority in favor of one of the four options in the question (totally agree, agree, partially agree and disagree). Although there is a divided opinion between students, we can appreciate a bit of relevance in the fact that students are

not receiving feedback from their teachers certainly due to the high number of students the teacher is responsible for, which makes individual attention quite a difficult task.

Feedback is one of the most important responsibilities of a teacher in classroom management. It gives the teacher the opportunity to evaluate students' progress and it gives the students the opportunity to adjust what he or she is doing to improve their learning process (Gower, Phillips & Walters 2005). It is quite difficult to provide individualized feedback to each student in a large class. As Hess (2001) states, teachers are frustrated with the large amount of written work in the large multilevel class. However, she suggests to work with the principle of collaboration in order to cope with feedback. Under this principle students, after being properly trained, can do peer assessment especially during the written work.

In summary, findings are showing us that despite of the good job that teachers do by providing students with active learning methodology and clear instructions to keep discipline inside the classroom, large classes influence the individual feedback that a teacher can give to the learners.

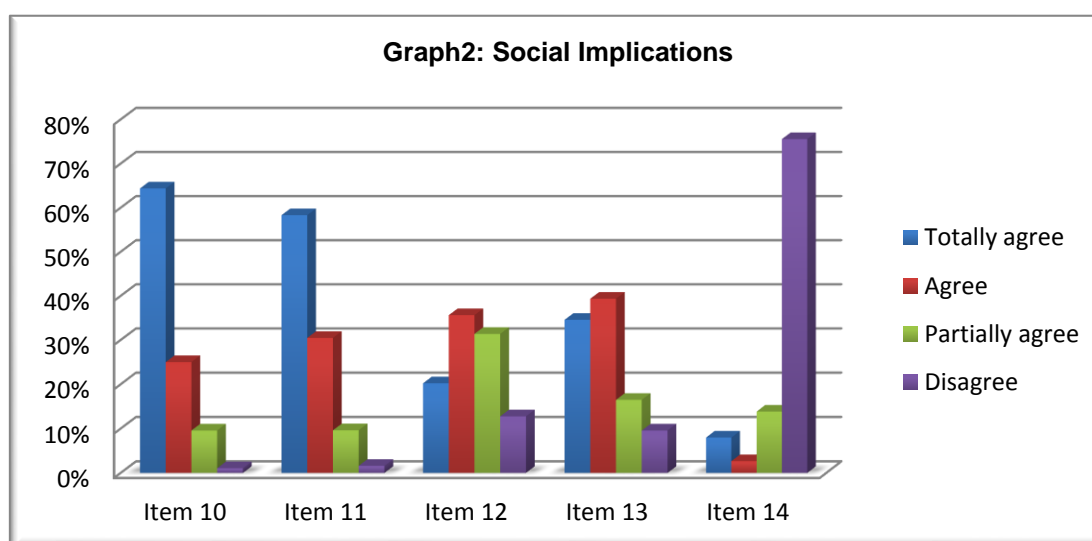
What social implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?

CHART 2

N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
10.	There is a proper balance of student-student and teacher-student interaction.	121	64.4%	47	25.0%	18	10%	2	1.1%	188	100%
11.	Students have the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates.	110	58.5%	57	30.3%	18	10%	3	1.6%	188	101%
12.	The teacher has problems remembering all the students' names.	38	20.2%	67	35.6%	59	31%	24	12.8%	188	100%
13.	The atmosphere is less stressful since the teacher does not ask several questions to the same student.	65	34.6%	74	39.4%	31	16%	18	9.6%	188	100%
14.	It is easier for students to use their cellphone or any other mobile device without being seen by the teacher.	15	8%	5	2.7%	26	14%	142	75.5%	188	100%

Author: Martha Lucía Ipiales

Source: Student's Questionnaire



Author: Martha Lucía Ipiales

Source: Student's Questionnaire

Chart 2 displays five items designed to quantify the social implications that large classes have on the teaching-learning process.

On item 10 “There is a proper balance of student-student and teacher-student interaction” 121 students (64.4%) totally agree, they stated that there is mutual or reciprocal action between student-student and teacher-student; 47 students (25%) agree, 18 students (10%) partially agree and only 2 students (1.1%) disagree and do not think that interaction is something being built in the class. The findings indicate that students are interacting with others classmates and with the teacher without difficulties, certainly because according to the observations, the teachers are bridging the gap between them and students by reducing physical and social distance. For example, teachers moved toward a student when he or she asked a question.

In addition, Byram & Hu (2000) mentioned that some problems like teacher stress, classroom noise, emerge in large class management; these can be avoided if teachers present themselves as a person rather than an authority in the class by sharing for example some personal information or showing students that he or she can laugh of him or herself. Undeniable, it will help to show students how much the teacher wants to know about them as well as how much the teacher wants them to know about he or she.

The responses on item 11 “Students have the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates” show 111 students (58.5%) totally agree, 57 students (30.3%) agree and 18 students (10%) partially agree because they think they may have some limitation when interacting with the rest of their classmates. Only 3 students (1.6%) disagree and feel it is difficult for them to establish close relation with the rest of the class. These findings are closely related with item 10 and show how well the social environment has been constructed inside the five observed classes to motivate the students to learn even when they are in crowded conditions. This is corroborated with what UNESCO (2006) state about the importance of creating a sense of community in the large class in order to encourage students to learn about the teacher and the rest of their classmates for a better understanding of each other.

It can be observed on item 12, “The teacher has problems remembering all the students’ names” that 38 students (20.2%) reported being in total agreement with this fact. The responses showed that 67 students (35.6%) agree and think that teachers struggle in memorizing all the students’ names mainly due to they work with groups with more than 35 students per class and 59 students (31%) partially agree because teachers are facing problems in learning student’s names in some way. Only 24 students (12.8%) disagree

because they think that teacher can deal with this particular because they remember all or almost all the students' names.

Hess (2001) states that learning the names of all the students in a large class is seen as a challenge, but it would make students feel that the teacher is interested in them as individuals and furthermore, it is essential because it promotes basic but good human relationships. The findings are showing that the teacher is concerned in establishing a connection with their students but the large amount of people inside the classroom creates difficulties which is not a good prediction for the basic human relationship that should be prevalent in the class.

Item 13 refers to, "The atmosphere is less stressful since the teacher does not ask several questions to the same student". The study tells us that 65 students (34.6%) are in total agreement with this fact because they think the teacher has a large diversity of options between students to choose one to ask their questions; 74 students (39.4%) agree with this fact and 31 students (16%) partially agree and feel there is a bit of stress in the class mainly because the teacher sometimes asks questions to the same student. Only 18 students (9.6%) disagree and reported being stressed due to the teacher is asking for participation to the same pupil since they are gifted students that may act as a model to the class or on the contrary, because they are students who need more participation to improve their learning process.

During the observation of the five classes, it was witnessed that the same student or students contributed frequently with ideas in the class while others remained in complete silence. However, it was also seen that the teacher created conditions where students of all learning preferences have the opportunity to contribute with some ideas. Findings show that there was not a stressful environment in the class because all the students are being encouraged to participate by the teacher; but as the teacher is trying to include all of them, there is less opportunity for the learners to participate in class.

As Hess (2001) suggests there are several ways to enlarge the circle of active attention in the large class. Teachers for example, should not call to the first student who rises his/her hand, it is better to encourage to the class for participation. It is also helpful to let shy students know that he/she will be call to participate by arranging a signal that can warn them that a question is coming. Another topic is no to call students in a predictable order because it may cut down student's involvement. With these kind of activities, problems related with classroom control can be avoided because teacher is involving as many students as possible even to those quiet listeners.

On item14 “It is easier for students to use their cell phone or any other mobile device without being seen by the teacher” only 15 students (8%) totally agree, 5 students (2.7%) agree with this item and 26 students (14%) partially agree. A large proportion of the respondents (142) which represents 75.5% disagree since they don’t use their cell phones because it is not allowed in class and they do not want to be exposed to the teacher’s punishment.

This is not a surprising finding considering that the results about discipline and instructions in class are positives. It is true that we can take advantage of technology and use it to apply activities within the class that ensure an appropriate students learning. However, according to the observations the use of cell phones in large classrooms help to create distractions and that is why teachers have to prohibit them.

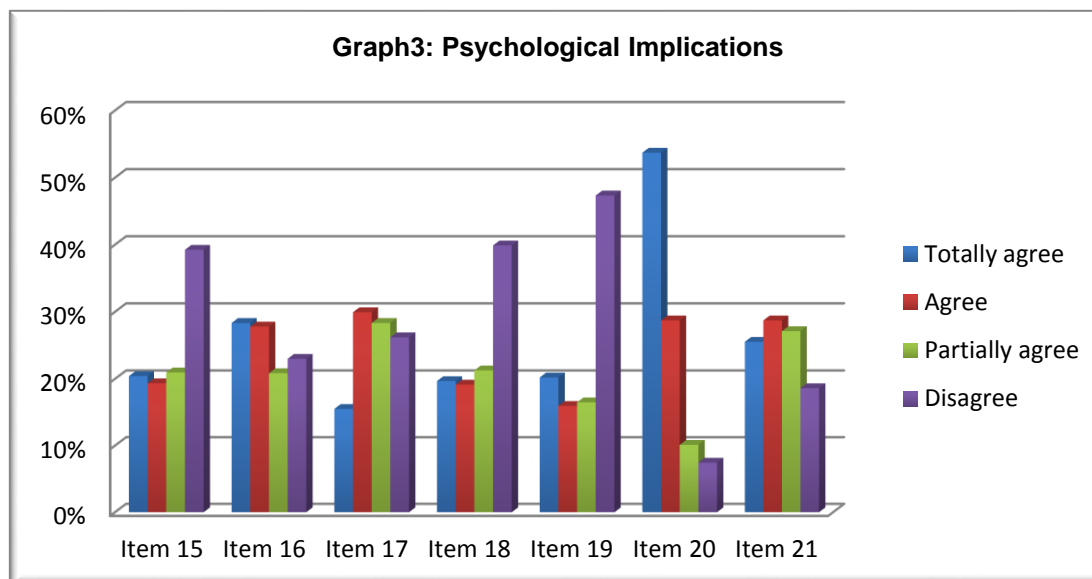
What psychological implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?

CHART 3

No	In classes with a large number of students:	Totally Agree		Agree		Partially Agree		Disagree		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
15.	The atmosphere is stressful.	38	20.2%	36	19.1%	40	21.3%	74	39.4%	188	100%
16.	Students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest.	54	28.7%	52	27.7%	39	20.7%	43	22.9%	188	100%
17.	Students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions.	29	15.4%	57	30.3%	53	28.2%	49	26.1%	188	100%
18.	Students do not like to participate because they feel afraid.	37	19.7%	36	19.1%	40	21.3%	75	39.9%	188	100%
19.	The teacher does not pay equal attention to all his/her students.	38	20.2%	30	16%	31	16.5%	89	47.3%	188	100%
20.	Students feel they can act competitively with other students.	101	53.7%	54	28.7%	19	10.1%	14	7.4%	188	100%
21.	Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed.	48	25.5%	54	28.7%	51	27.1%	35	18.6%	188	100%

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Source: Student’s Questionnaire



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Source: Student's Questionnaire

Chart 3 displays seven items aimed at quantifying the psychological implications that large classes have on the teaching-learning process.

On item 15 “The atmosphere is stressful” the survey shows that 38 students (20.2%) totally agree, 36 students (19.1%) agree with the fact that the environment in class is stressful and 40 students (21.3%) partially agree and state they feel a bit of stress in the class but it does not affect their learning process. Finally, 74 students (39.4%) reported disagreement and are satisfied with the atmosphere of the English classes they attend, in that they are not stressful.

Findings show that a large amount of the participants surveyed, consider that they are interacting in a relaxed atmosphere and that competition with their classmates is beneficial. Moreover, students are receiving equal attention from the teacher so they can express and participate without fear. As it was discussed before, UNESCO (2006) states that the teachers should perform the ability of creating well managed physical environments combining both the learning resources for lessons and the psycho-social environment in order to have as a result, a community learning where the feelings of crowdedness, confusion and frustration are discarded, and this has been supported by the results of the questionnaire.

Responses on item 16, which refers to “Students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest” show that the opinion of the students is divided because 54 students (28.7%) totally agree, 52 students (27.7%) agree with this fact which means that they feel inhibited to

speak to the class in the target language; 39 students (20.7%) partially agree and finally 43 students (22.9%) disagree because they do not feel inhibited to speak even when their competence in the target language is not adequate. These are surprising findings considering that in statements where relaxed atmosphere, interaction, competition, and participation in class are discussed; we find positive outcomes. Therefore, according to the observations to the five classes, it is considered that fear comes from the lack of knowledge of the target language.

As was reviewed previously in the literature, in the corresponding part of different levels of proficiency; Hess (2001) states that the teacher's job is to help students gain self-confidence and competence in the target language. Within the large multilevel class, students are afraid to speak because they want to avoid the risk of making a fool of themselves, they think there is nothing important to say so they will not contribute with anything useful to the class. It is essential to take this situation from a positive perspective in order to encourage students to participate in class.

On item 17 "Students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions" it can be seen that 29 students (15.4%) totally agree and think they cannot express their opinions due to the lack of opportunities; 57 students (30.3%) agree with this fact and 53 students (28.2%) partially agree which means they feel that in some way there are not enough opportunities for them to express their ideas in part due to their fear of speaking in public, and mostly due to the large classroom environment in which they are involved. The responses showed that 49 students (26.1%) disagree with this statement because they think they do have opportunities to express their opinions. The findings indicate that students can express what they think inside the classroom mainly because the teacher is contributing with a friendly environment where students can communicate and share their ideas. In relation to this statement, Hess (2001) argues that it is important that students feel they are not only a number on a list and in the same way it is important to avoid bureaucratic atmospheres where students' opinion is a waste of time.

Answers given by students on item 18 "Students do not like to participate because they feel afraid" show that 37 students (19.7%) totally agree; 36 students (19.1%) agree with this fact and 40 students (21.3%) partially agree because they like to participate even when they are afraid. Finally, 75 students (39.9%) disagree and reported not feeling afraid and consequently they enjoy participating in classes. These findings are related with item 16 since students feel inhibited when they have to speak in front of their peers. However, if the teacher encourages them with engaging activities they will be moved to participate even if they feel some apprehension. Susan, & Bascon et al. (2011) suggest that students who have

a lower level of language competency can be helped by those who are stronger in order to carry out the activities in the class. In any case, the results show a majority of the participants reporting not being afraid to participate in activities during the English classes.

On item 19 “The teacher does not pay equal attention to all his/her students” the results show us that the opinion of the participants is divided. Although there are a substantial 47.3% corresponding to 89 students who disagree, there is a 36.2% between totally agree (38 students) and agree (30 students) that feel teachers are not giving equal attention in their English classes. The additional scores of 16.5% of partially agreement corresponding to the answers of 31 students lead us to explain that the majority of the learners think the teacher does not give equal attention to them during the class. Findings suggest that despite of the big number of students, teachers are striving to maintain an organized environment with varied activities such as group work and pair work in their classes which may help in some way to give individual attention to the learners. As Hess (2001) states it is important to be interested in students’ likes and dislikes, cheer their success and support their challenges, because in this way students can be individually attended and furthermore, this is the best preventative medicine for discipline problems.

On statement 20 “Students feel they can act competitively with other students” it can be seen that a majority of 53.7% that is 101 students totally agree; 54 students (28.7%) agree with this assertion because they also think they can compete with their classmates and 19 students (10.1%) partially agree and think they can compete in class in some way. Only 14 students (7.4%) disagree because they are not having the desire to demonstrate being better students than the rest of the class. Findings tell us that a majority of the students enjoy the competition between themselves inside the classroom, certainly because the teacher is creating an environment where varied activities are provided to develop the student’s knowledge.

However, despite the teacher is giving the students the opportunity to be competitive learners; it was seen during the observation that the same five or six students were asked to participate in the activities that were carried out during the English class. This matches with what had been discussed before on item 16 in the psychological implications. Students feel restricted to participate in classes because they are afraid to fail or say something stupid. For this reason, as Khazaei, Zadeh, & Ketabi (2012) state that willingness to communicate can affect the participation of learners due to classroom size because they create social stress.

Finally, we can see on item 21 “Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed” that most of the students, 54.2% between totally agree and agree reported feeling relaxed

because the teacher does not notice them; 51 students (27.1%) partially agree and only 35 students (18.6%) disagree and stated not being unnoticed in the class so they are not feeling relaxed. Findings are closely related with assertions where feedback and individual attention were not favorable for the study. It is clear that teachers are striving to include all the students in the classroom activities because they can only be actively attentive with about half of the class. As Richards & Rodgers (2001) suggest that teachers should have a vast repertoire of approaches in order to meet with different learners' needs. Hess (2001) suggests to work with the principle of individualization in the mix ability class, since students produce better results when working on project of their interest and are allowed to work at their own pace and style and on themes of their own choosing.

CONCLUSIONS

This research demonstrates that despite of the large classroom scenario that public institutions have, teachers provide students with a great deal of varied activities like group work and pair work that allow students to put into practice what they have learned and furthermore, allow students to develop the four English language skills.

Moreover, seating arrangement does not significantly affect the teaching-learning process because even the students placed at the back of the classroom are able to participate in the activities as was proved through the results obtained from the participants in the study as well as through the observations to the classes.

Likewise, interaction in class between the teacher and the student is not notably influenced by class size, which allows building a good relationship between all the members of the classrooms. Only 1.1% of the students don't think there is a proper balance of interaction, which is unrepresentative for the population as a whole.

On the other hand, the research's outcomes showed that 55.9% of the students reported they are not receiving an appropriate and ongoing feedback from their teachers.

It was also found during the observations to the five classes, the absence of self confidence in the students due to the lack of knowledge of English language. Students are not able to communicate in the target language consequently, they are inhibited to speak in front of the class because they feel they will say something wrong.

The study shows that in the large class atmosphere, it is less probable for a teacher to ask the same student more than one question, which gives students fewer opportunities to participate and express their ideas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Feedback is a problematic challenge in large classrooms, it is recommended to frequently organize workstations and do peer assessment so students can learn from each other within a dynamic class.

From a psychological perspective large class scenarios increase the level of stress students have and the lack of willingness towards participation. It is recommended to use the learning process as a confidence builder by providing constructive assessment emphasizing the student's achievements over their mistakes.

Finally, enlarging the circle of active attention in the large class may give all the students the opportunity to participate. Teachers should allow students to interrupt the lesson plan with personal questions which can be more stimulating for them than what the teacher initially planned.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX A

INSTRUMENTS



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

OPEN AND DISTANCE MODALITY

ENGLISH DEGREE

Dear student,

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

Very satisfactory:	Totally agree
Satisfactory:	Agree
Somewhat satisfactory:	Partially agree
Unsatisfactory:	Disagree

Informative data: Please fill in the information below

Name of institution: _____

Type of institution: Public () Private ()

Year of study: 8th year. () 9th year () 10th year. ()

1st senior high school . () 2nd senior high school. () 3rd. senior high school. ()

City: _____

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

A. Academic issues

	In classes with a large number of students:	Very satisfactory	Satisfactory	Somewhat satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
1.	The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class.				
2.	The activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.				
3.	The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those sitting at the back of the classroom.				
4.	Varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc.				
5.	Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class.				
6.	Students can cheat during the test				
7.	Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects.				
8.	The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class.				
9.	Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students.				

B. Social issues

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

C. Psychological issues:

	In classes with a large number of students:	Very satisfactory	Satisfactory	Somewhat satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
15.	The atmosphere is stressful.				
16.	Students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest.				
17.	Students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions.				
18.	Students do not like to participate because they feel afraid.				
19.	The teacher does not pay equal attention to all his/her students.				
20.	Students feel they can act competitively with other students.				
21.	Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed.				

Thank you for your collaboration!

ANNEX B

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The teacher does not pay equal attention to a his/her students

CRITERIA	VALUES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Very Satisfactory	4	38	20%
Satisfactory	3	30	16%
Somewhat Satisfactory	2	31	16%
Unsatisfactory	1	89	47%
TOTAL		188	100%

WEIGHTED AVERAGE CALCULUS	
	152
	90
	62
	89
TOTAL	393
WEIGHTED AVERAGE	2.090425532

If the weighted average is higher than 2.5 is closely related to satisfactory and very satisfactory

Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed

CRITERIA	VALUES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Very Satisfactory	4	48	26%
Satisfactory	3	54	29%
Somewhat Satisfactory	2	51	27%
Unsatisfactory	1	35	19%
TOTAL		188	100%

WEIGHTED AVERAGE CALCULUS	
	192
	162
	102
	35
TOTAL	491
WEIGHTED AVERAGE	2.611702128

If the weighted average is higher than 2.5 is closely related to satisfactory and very satisfactory