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

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

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Jiménez Procel Miguel Enrique

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Dedication

I devote this job in first place to God and my two reasons for life: my beloved son Jesús Adrián and my wife Claudia who are my love and support in this hard life.

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Abstract

The topic of this study is “The influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools”. This study aims at answering the following questions: What instructional, social, and psychological implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process? The participants in this research project were taken from an Ecuadorian high school, which is located in Zaruma County in El Oro province. The students are in the ninth and tenth grade of Basic General Education. The students were surveyed using a questionnaire that contained 21 statements divided into three sections: 5 items of social issues, 7 items of psychological and 9 items focusing on academic issues.

The information collected was tabulated, presented in charts and analyzed. The results obtained in this study lead to conclude that students in large classes benefit from the use of certain activities, that allow the reinforcement of the lessons already taught. However, because of the size of the classes, students felt restricted from performing more complex activities such as debates, contests, etc, which could have contributed in a better way to the development of skills.

KEY WORDS: large classes, teachers, students, instructional, social, psychological implications, teaching-learning process, language, activities, class size.

Resumen

El tema del presente trabajo es “The influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools”. Este proyecto fue desarrollado para analizar y al mismo tiempo responder interrogantes directamente relacionadas con las implicaciones instruccionales, sociales y psicológicas que tienen las clases numerosas en el aspecto educativo, social y psicológico en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma Inglés.

Las participantes utilizados en este proyecto de investigación fueron tomadas de un colegio ecuatoriano, el mismo que está ubicado en el cantón Zaruma en la provincia de El Oro. Las muestras fueron estudiantes que asistían al noveno y décimo año de Educación General Básica. Los estudiantes fueron encuestados a través del uso de un cuestionario constituido por 21 preguntas divididas en tres secciones relacionadas con ciertos asuntos: 5 temas sociales, 7 psicológicos y 9 educacionales.

La información recolectada fue tabulada, presentada en cuadros y analizada. Los resultados obtenidos en este estudio nos guiarán para concluir que los estudiantes en clases numerosas se beneficiaron del uso de ciertas actividades que tuvieron como objetivo, reforzar las lecciones ya enseñadas. Sin embargo, debido al tamaño de las clases, los estudiantes se sintieron restringidos al desarrollar actividades más complejas como debates, concursos, etc, las cuales pudieron haber contribuido mejor al desarrollo de sus cuatro habilidades lingüísticas.

PALABRAS CLAVES: clases numerosas, profesores, estudiantes, educacional, social, psicológico, implicaciones, proceso enseñanza-aprendizaje, lenguaje, actividades, tamaño de clase.

Introduction

According to the National Secretariat for Higher Education, Science and Technology (SENESCYT), students in the last five years leaving public high school graduate with an average of 65% in English language level. Thus, the government is fighting the low level of English found all over the public school system by imitating successful models of other countries.

The government is working to improve the teaching of English in Ecuador; for this reason, it is required that Ecuadorian English teachers have a B2 level proficiency, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Language, to guarantee that English teachers have the appropriate level of English language proficiency to be instructors.

Similarly, the program "Go Teacher". was implemented to provide teachers with the opportunity to travel to an English speaking country to improve their English level and also to improve their teaching

In addition, there are organizations such as Fulbright Fellowship which offer programs in Ecuador that are developing at a fast pace in the public school system. Despite of all the hard work on behalf of the Ecuadorian government to improve the English language teaching learning process in Ecuadorian high schools, the students are graduating from Ecuadorian public high schools with an A1 or A2 level of English proficiency.

In spite that the Ecuadorian government has been working to provide a high quality of education, there are some other factors that must be considered, such as the class size. The purpose of this research is to analyze and answer questions involving the instructional, social, and psychological implications that large classes have upon the teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools.

Concerning large classes, some previous studies have shown that this type of classes create an impact upon both students and teachers. A research paper was completed in Thailand by Todd (2012) who set out to answer questions about the connection between the size of the class and learning, and at what size a class loses the ability to learn effectively. He found that students in larger classes get lower grades as compared to those in smaller classes, making a defining correlation between the size of a class and academic results. This theory maintained its integrity over all courses examined and held true regardless of what the class objectives were. The author claimed that the research had restrictions in respect to grading. There was the possibility that teachers unconsciously awarded higher grades to students in smaller classes because there was a stronger relationship between teacher and students.

Harfitt (2012) conducted a study in Hong Kong. This work was based on the idea that whether the number of students per each class was reduced, the environment of the classroom can be less stressful. The outcome was evident, the author's findings stated that students who participated in smaller classes had less feeling of fear at receiving negative feedback from teachers combined with an increased feeling of security. Also, Harfitt said that his work was limited because he only studied four cases which involved eight classes made of 231 students and four teachers.

On the other hand, Thaher (2005) conducted a research focusing on the instructional, psychological, and social effects of large classes on English as foreign language students. This author concluded that there were more negative than positive implications resulting from large classroom settings. Students failed to be paying attention in class due to feelings of neglect resulting from the teacher not being able

to give each student enough time. This feeling managed to the view of students that there were no chances in the classroom to express themselves. The author made no notes about any limitations.

Another study was conducted by Bahanshal (2013) who examined a study about the effect of large classes on the English teaching and learning in Saudi secondary schools. The main objective of this project was to discover the Saudi secondary teachers' perception towards teaching English in large classes, and also to determine the practical methodology to teach English in such context.

From this study, the author concluded that even though all participants believe that teaching large classes is a great challenge as they finish class feeling exhausted, they find lots of opportunities and experiences while teaching big number of students; and he resolved that engaging on the teaching development and employing various techniques brings effective English teaching and learning.

The results of this research project will first of all benefit the students of the public education system in Ecuador. Besides, all teachers will take advantage from this research but the ones that will succeed the most are going to be those who have to face the over populated classrooms. Last but not least, the data gathered here in will be advantageous for the administrative groups such as the Ministry of Education, schools and all other forms of educational institutions.

The analysis of this investigation had one limitation. Only the students completed a questionnaire but none of the teachers. The data gathered only shows the students' point of view in learning. In order to have a better understanding of how large classes influence the teaching-learning process, teachers should be given a questionnaire and classes should be observed as well.

Literature Review

Currently, English is the most widely spoken language all over the world. It has long been established that English is the base for countless fields of industry since it is considered the universal language because it allows people to communicate with others in different aspects with a specific goal. Taking into consideration that Ecuador is growing rapidly, the Ecuadorian government is pushing the implementation of English upon students to ensure the success of the next generation.

More than twenty years have passed since the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education made English a mandatory subject in the school system and yet students are graduating with substandard abilities. However, the situation has changed quite a bit since nowadays the Ecuadorian government has eliminated the English language teaching in public Elementary schools.

The government has invested time and money to improve teacher's qualifications and still the results are not what it is expected. There are many factors that impact the process of teaching-learning and one we are going to investigate further is about the over-crowded classes and its impact.

Teaching Methods and Approaches

In every teaching-learning process, the teacher always considers which teaching methods and approaches to use for effective instruction. Concerning this issue, some methods and approaches will be tackled.

Content based instruction, also known as CBI, is an approach that focuses not only on content but also on teaching a language, they both are combined so that students become more knowledgeable and proficient in a second language.

According to Richards and Renandya (2002), Content-based Instruction is an approach organized around the content or information that students will acquire, rather than around a linguistic or another type of syllabus. Also, they say that Content-based instruction has progressed very fast since it is considered a means of developing linguistic skills through the use of specific activities. Besides, they mention that Content-based instruction stimulates students to think and learn by means of their target language.

Larsen and Anderson (2011) state that Content-Based Instruction is achieved through the use of real texts, visual aids, repetition, examples which all builds upon students' previous knowledge. Richards and Rodgers (2001) take this idea one step further by isolating two main principles that explain how and why CBI is effective. The first idea is that people learn languages with a higher rate of success when they are trying to learn information in a second language (L2) rather than just trying to learn through traditional channels of grammar and vocabulary. When people are self-motivated to learn interesting or necessary information they learn more efficiently. The second premise is that learning through a content-based method allows learners to be better prepared for academic advancement and allows them to learn as quickly as possible.

In addition, Qiang and Ning (2011) say that the focus of a Control-based instruction lesson is on the topic or subject matter. During the lesson, students are concentrated in learning about something. They learn by using the language they are trying to learn, rather than their first language, as a tool for developing knowledge and so they develop their linguistic ability in the target language. Qiang and Ning (2011) think this is a more natural way of developing language skills and one that relates more to the way we originally learn our native language.

Likewise, it is important to mention the Grammar-Translation Method. In a grammar-translation classroom the students are not intended to have much communication with other students. Here the teacher is the center of the activities, giving instruction and maintaining the role of authority figure.

Larsen and Anderson (2011) claim that teachers hold the highest authority in the class and the students must do what is asked thus they may learn. The majority of the interaction is given by the teacher and received by the students. It is rare that students would start any form of interaction with the teacher and it is not common to have student to student interaction.

This method holds strict to rules and memorization with an emphatic focus being on literature incorporating all sub categories such as grammar, vocabulary which results in strong reading and writing skills especially translation. This can be clearly seen in the ideas of Richards and Rodgers (2001) who state that the primary objective of English as a foreign language (EFL) is to have the ability to read literature so one may flourish academically through the discipline and development of studying another language.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) say that reading and writing are the major focus and speaking and listening have little or no systematic attention. They also say that in this approach vocabulary is based only in using the dictionary and memorization, likewise the teaching and language practice is based in sentences that are translated into the target language.

Additionally, Harmer (2005) states that a concentration on grammar-translation does not allow students to get the natural language input that will help them acquire language. The danger with grammar-translation, in other words, is that

it teaches people about the language and does not really help them to learn the language itself.

On the other hand, it is worthy to mention the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in which the primary function of language is to allow interaction and communication through a system for expression of meaning. But, the primary units of language are categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse.

Also, Harmer (2005) argues that CLT has a beneficial effect because students know and communicate the language giving it aspects of style and appropriation and they also have opportunities to try out real language such as inviting, agreeing and disagreeing, suggesting, etc., also if the students get enough exposure to language, then language learning will take care of itself and becoming in activation.

Another approach is Task-based Language teaching, also known as TBLT. According to Richards and Renandya (2002) TBLT is focused on the usage of tasks as the most important unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. This approach uses tasks that allow teachers and students to know whether or not the communication has been successful.

Richards and Rodgers (2001) stated: There is a commonsensical understanding that a task is an activity or goal that is carried out using language, such as finding a solution to a puzzle, reading a map and giving directions, making a telephone call, writing a letter, or reading a set of instructions and assembling a toy. To this, Richards and Renandya (2002) agree with the above data of TBLT, however instead of talking about specific tasks, they refer more about the types of tasks such as “information-gap-task, opinion gap-task and reasoning gap-task.” The gap tasks

can be used in conjunction with the above mentioned activities to create a curriculum for the TBLT classroom.

Moreover, it is worthy to mention Whole Language approach that according to Richards and Rodgers (2001) refers to the communication through an interactive relationship between readers and writers, which also is a vehicle for internal interaction for egocentric speech.

On the topic of Audio-lingual method, it is said by Nagaraj (2005) that this method is rooted in behaviorist theory and is similar to the direct method. The basic premise that form audio-lingual is that the four basic skills are isolated and taught separately with listening and speaking receiving the most emphasis. He says that the primary tool used in audio-lingual method is the use of dialogues, but explicit grammar instruction is avoided. Through dialogues the form of the language is copied and committed to memory. Through practice, it is expected students will eventually be able to use the given language spontaneously. Nagaraj suggests that reading and writing are not ignored, there is more emphasis on listening and speaking. So that, language learning is primarily taught through dialogues providing students to mimic, practice and memorize the parts of language. Richards and Rodgers (2001) are in agreement with Nagaraj, however they go on to speak more specifically about vocabulary. Once sounds and grammatical forms are clearly learned then the student goes on to increase lexical abilities.

As regards the Natural approach, this approach has less emphasis on teaching-learning traditional grammar in the formal style and is focused on communication skills for beginners. An explicit goal of this approach is to reduce stress which in turn is supposed to allow students to learn in a more natural setting. Richards and Rodgers (2001) indicates that The Natural Approach was created to

allow beginners to become intermediate level students. Through this approach it is expected that students will have the skills to adequately function in the L2 and have the ability to relay ideas and requests. Garcia (2005) completely agrees with what has been claimed by Richards and Rodgers, however he explains in detail the four principles that support the Natural Approach. In the first principle, students will be able to understand before they will be able to speak. In the second one, language production follows a series of stages starting with nonverbal interaction leading up to complex grammatical segments of speaking. The third principle involves classes that are based on communicative objectives and not levels of grammar. Lastly, the fourth principle indicates that the class should be friendly and as near stress free as possible to maximize learning.

Furthermore, the Total Physical Response (TPR) methodology is the creation of a Californian psychologist called James Asher in the 1960s. Mr. Asher's observations shows that in young children it was hypothesized that language is first learned through listening then the skill of speaking is later developed. Even though young children cannot produce complex statements that does not mean they do not understand and this is the basis for TPR. Children are often told to do activities and they must act these commands out physically. Listening comprehension is the basis for TPR and has been known to be the same process followed during the acquisition of the mother tongue. In summary, TPR focuses on listening combined with physical action, speech and other relevant skills following in time. According to Gordon (2007) if TPR is used in the English as a Second Language (ESL) setting we are assured that the pupils will begin to comprehend the second language with a higher level of confidence. Richards and Rogers (2001) were in agreement and added no substantially new information.

Moreover, there is the Silent Way method, here the teacher is intended to be silent during instruction. Instead of speaking the teacher is supposed to use colored charts and Cuisenaire rods to give classes. The objective of this method is to instill basic oral skills with beginners of a second language focusing on the outcome of being near-native in fluency.

This can be demonstrated by Richards and Rodgers (2001) when they state that the Silent way is aimed at beginners to increase their oral and aural abilities in the target language. The students are to strive for fluency and pronunciation as close to a native speaker as possible. Richards and Renandya (2002) agree and repeat almost exactly what has been said before, but make the distinction that The Silent Way is intended for adult beginners.

As regards to Class size Harmer (2007) mentions that, the size of the class can vary because there are students that choose private lessons, the teacher teaches one student at a time, or the teacher can have classes of many students. However, one to one lessons have considerable advantages over classes with two or more students in the group because both teacher and student can tailor the course to exactly what is appropriate for that student. However, large classes also have as many students to get interaction and there is a rich variety of human resources as well.

Managing Learning

The process of managing learning is a multi-faceted process. Ridnour (2006) states that the recipe for a well-managed class incorporates instruction, feedback, discipline and timing. Ridnour talks extensively about classroom management, however Ridnour takes a pro-active stance about avoiding problems by providing clear instructions to students. If instructions are not clear, especially in large classes

the resulting problems multiply exponentially resulting in a confused class. So, it is better to take it slow, to demonstrate and explain clearly before beginning any activity.

Managing Large Classes

Byram (2000) indicates that some teachers effectively manage large classes although these are considered to be problematic for language learning. Some strategies that can be used to reduce these problems are: using seating plans, giving individual attention, regulating activities by quick responses, using clear signals and instructions, etc. Another issue is student involvement in activities especially for developing oral skills. This situation can be managed by using short purposeful activities with pre-organized pairs.

Likewise, how to assess all individual learners is an issue which can be reduced by making notes on oral presentations and written tasks. The last issue is effective consequences of large classes where the teacher should establish rapport with learners and to know them as individuals.

In addition, managing large classes requires an adequate time management because it is an essential part of the development of a large class, for this reason the teacher should arrive early to each class. Also, the teacher should use additional resources such as microphones, and audiovisual aids that permit an effective communication between the instructor and the students. Similarly, all assignments must be written on the board, explained orally, and written in a handout. The teacher must use strategies for distributing and collecting handouts, exams, homework, etc. so it does not take all class session (Chadha, 2008). Then managing large classes will differ from teacher to teacher and from culture to culture. Baker and Westrup (2003) have suggested that communication (speaking) is the key. It is not desired that the

teacher talks a lot but to have the students engaged and speaking as often as possible. The teacher should also vary the speaking among: closed questions, open questions and elicitation.

Activities for Working with Large Classes

In large classes, students learn best through activities in which they can interact. For this reason, Hess (2001) offers activities that allow students to express their ideas and opinions both in speech and in writing. These are important in large classes. Guess Who? Is one in which students write letters and practice information questions, then they mingle the answers and when they find a person, should ask for that person's signature that identifies to the student. Likewise, an activity as mutual interviews is useful because the students can know what an interview is. Also, students can work in pairs and take turns to interviewing each other, for example, each pair joins another pair and introduces his/her partner to the foursome.

In addition, the quick-write consists in dictating the sentence and the students cannot stop. When they cannot think, they may continue writing loops or write I do not know what to write, until the teacher stop them. Finally, in the groups, students choose and read the most interesting piece of writing.

The last activity is names and adjectives in which the students form rows and think of an adjective that describes them and that begins with the letter of their names. After, students say their names preceded by the adjective and all students will do the same in each row will repeat the first students' name and adjective.

Classroom Space and Seating Arrangement

The way that students and the teacher sit in the classroom has an impact on learning. It is said by Woolfolk (2007) that "Spaces for learning should invite and support the activities you plan in your classroom and they should respect the

inhabitants of the space.” Also, she argues that the classroom should offer unobtrusive reading, group collaboration, and the students can use easily the resources. Also, Woolfolk proposes some seating arrangements such as horizontal rows that permit students to work in pairs and encourage others to focus on the presenter and simplify house-keeping.

However, this arrangement does not allow large-group discussion. In clusters of four, students can help one another and develop tasks in group. Besides, circle arrangements allow interaction among students through discussion activities. But, these seating arrangements are difficult for class management. For instance, Fishbowl or Stack special formation is a seating arrangement, where students are not comfortable because they sit close together and can create discipline problems, although, the Fishbowl is helpful when the teacher wants that students interact with demonstrations.

In addition, Ming-Fak and Wai-Shing (2008) believe that when the space is limited in the classroom, the teacher should make a good use of it as much as possible. For this, it is necessary a good seating arrangement to facilitate specific learning tasks and activities.

Moreover, teachers should aim to provide a secure welcoming context for learning which facilitates social contact among teachers and students.

For this reason, Harmer (2005) suggests some forms to arrange furniture in the classroom, for example orderly rows imply teachers working the whole class. In a horseshoe the teacher is often located in a central position, and circle where there is a far greater feeling of quality than when the teacher stays out the front.

In the same way, Savage & Savage (2010) argue that the dimension of the classroom should permit the location of the doors and windows, and the movement

of students in each activity considering student characteristics and the teacher ability to maintain classroom control. Likewise, they suggest the three basic seating arrangement viewed previously such as rows, clusters, and circular `patterns.

Different Levels of Proficiency

There are different levels of proficiency such as beginning, intermediate and advanced. According to Duran (2006), students are considered Beginners when they cannot gain familiarity with sounds, rhythms and patters of English. Also, students cannot express their ideas and they are in a silent period. By contrast, Intermediate students can understand complete structures using newly acquired vocabulary in context; also they can understand language structures in the text. On the other hand, the students with Advanced level are able to understand idiomatic and figurative language. This means that they use varied grammatical structures and vocabulary. And, they can recognize meanings in texts with English language development as well.

In addition, Vogt and Echeverria (2008) argue that teachers need to determine the English language acquisition levels of their students to understand their language needs. Furthermore, they should provide activities and opportunities to increase students' proficiency and to know how they are progressing and how they might respond in each classroom instruction.

All of the information described above gives students the opportunity to engage with class questions and challenges, even though it is sometimes anonymously. These tools can therefore reduce student's fear and thereby promote participation.

Some prior studies about the influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process are presented below to have a clearer perspective and know if researchers have reached their objectives and purposes.

Jimakorn and Singhasiri (2006) conducted a study to investigate teacher's beliefs in terms of perceptions, options and attitudes on the way to teach English in large classes. They used as method questionnaires piloted with the teaching staff of the Department of Language, School of Liberal Arts, and KMUTT and were delivered to English departments in the universities, there were around 100 copies, where seventy-five questionnaires were returned.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections: closed-ended, rating scales and closed-ended questions that were concerned in general and physical conditions of their current classrooms, teaching and learning conditions in large classes, degrees of difficulty of teaching in large classes, and opinions towards teaching in large and ideal classes. A descriptive method was used to analyze the participants' responses. It was developed by calculating percentages and average scores to certain teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards learning and teaching in large classes.

The authors concluded that Thai teacher's belief that teaching in large classes was difficult in aspects such as the relationships of teachers and students, monitoring and giving feedback and assessment. On the other hand, they thought that teaching in large classes could use receptive skills such as reading and listening.

On the other hand, Thaher (2005) focused his research on determining what the instructional, psychological, and social effects of large classes are on non-English major English as foreign language students. Besides, whether there are any significant differences at in students' answers toward large classes regarding students' gender, level of study, college, and placement exam marks, and if there are

any significant differences between the three different effects of large classes on non-English major EFL students.

This study also included dependent variables with the students' responses and the independent variables were gender, study level, college, and placement exam marks. The author indicated as conclusion that teachers should take into account the social and the psychological effect in the classroom interactions because students demonstrated negative and positive responses in large classes.

Harfitt (2012) conducted a research project in order to investigate if stress associated with learning in large classes could be reduced or eliminated by significantly reducing the number of students in over populated classes. There were only two methods to collect information in this research: interviews and class observations. Four classes were selected and all participants in the study, 4 teachers and 231 students, underwent interviews to understand their views and experiences of learning in small and oversized classes. In addition, a total of 78 class sessions were observed from the four classes in which small classes ranged from 21-25 students and larger classes had between 38-41 students. All classes chosen were of the same academic year and ability.

The results of this research indicated that while students were participating in small classes, the class as a whole felt more secure and the anxiety of being critically evaluated by teachers and peers seemed to be reduced. In addition, students had more confidence in taking part in the English class.

The author concluded his investigation indicating that allowing students to express their opinions through interviews gives greater insight into the EFL classroom. From the information gathered it seems that learners anxiousness may be

lessened in a small class environment and by reducing the number of students in a class may help in lowering cultural obstacles.

On the other hand, Forero (2005) led a research in order to verify if speaking skills could be improved by using task-based learning and how large groups could be managed using this style. The backbone to Forero's research was founded by using peer observation. There were three ways to collect the data: a pro-forma, recordings and questionnaires. The observing teachers would note the most important parts of the class in the pro-forma writing down the timeline of the class and the observers' opinions. The recordings were taken as undisputable evidence of the class and the results obtained. Finally, two questionnaires were used and given at the beginning and end of the class for a better understanding of the students' perspective.

The results of this research truly showed a change in students' behavior from the implementation of task based learning. When the class began students preferred individual activities such as reading and writing but by the end of the class they indicated stronger desires to work in pairs or groups.

In conclusion the large classes benefited from the application of task-based learning. It was a slow process but speaking skills improved and many opportunities were given to practice using different visual prompts and interesting topics according to the students. Maintaining motivation was done by switching activities frequently, the use of flashcards and an energetic class plan. Maintaining discipline proved challenging but was needed in a class this size. The seating arrangement was changed to encourage a competitive environment. Prior knowledge was a key factor in planning for these task-based classes. Overall task-based has proven beneficial to improving speaking skills in the over populated classroom setting.

Todd (2012) investigated the relationship between learning and class size and if there are threshold levels for learning effectively. The method for collecting data in this study was taken from the size of the classes and evidence of learning. From 2006 to 2009, 984 classes were observed having anywhere from 10 – 103 students each. The information was easily gathered from the universities enrollment documents. However, the evidence of learning was slightly more complicated. It is often considered that grades are all the evidences needed to demonstrate the level of learning. This study went more into depth to study the tasks and projects with a heavy emphasis on productive skills. The students observed were taken from four different levels of English and none of them were English majors. The result of most significance was that there was a direct correlation between class size and grades, with the biggest classes tending to have the lowest grades. Class objectives did not seem to play a major role in determining the outcome of the grades. The author concluded that until further research is done at similar institutions the general guideline for students threshold limits is between 25 to 45 students per class. This information can be used by other institutions to minimize lower learning results.

Method

Setting and Participants

This study was conducted in an Ecuadorian high school, which is located in Zaruma city in El Oro province. This secondary school is located in the urban area. The samples selected consisted on students attending the ninth and tenth grade of Basic General Education.

The samples consisted of five classes of 30 to 35 students each whose ages ranged from 12 to 13 years old. The students' English language level was intermediate, all of them were native speakers of Spanish, and belonged to middle socioeconomic status. The participants had 5 periods of English classes per week, each hour consisting of 45 minutes.

Procedures

The investigation began by researching previous literature in relation to this study. The literature came from two different sources: books and articles; and the information was found on the Internet, and physical and virtual libraries. On the other hand, the quantitative method was used by means of which the information was collected for its further interpretation and analysis.

The instrument used to gather information was a questionnaire that included 21 statements divided into three sections: 5 items of social issues, 7 items of psychological and 9 items focusing on academic issues. To apply this questionnaire, first authorization was required from the principal of the high school after that arranged for a convenient day with the teacher of the class. Upon arriving at the class the instructions were given in Spanish so there was no misunderstanding about what was expected from the students. The investigator read each of the questions and allowed enough time for students to answer them.

Likewise, after the completion of the questionnaires the information was tabulated and presented in charts and statistical graphs which showed the distribution of each item in terms of percentage and frequency for easier analysis.

Discussion

Description, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

The analysis of the data collected from the questionnaires that were administered to students is shown in this section. It presents the description, analysis and interpretation of the results obtained about the influence of large classes on the teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools.

This is a quantitative analysis of the instructional, psychological and social implications of large classes. The graphs and charts below examine instructional, psychological, and social implications on large classes according to the responses of the students' questionnaires.

Instructional implications are the tasks developed in class, which are selected according to students' skills, participation, etc. On the other hand, social implications analyze the interaction among students, teacher and classmates; also, if the teacher has problems at remembering students' names, or if students feel less or more comfortable in large classes, or either if they can use cell phone in class.

To end with, psychological implications refer to the participation of students along the period of class, and how they could feel while working in classes with a large number of classmates.

The analysis of these three variables will tell us more about the over-sized classes.

What Instructional implications do large classes have on the teaching – learning process?

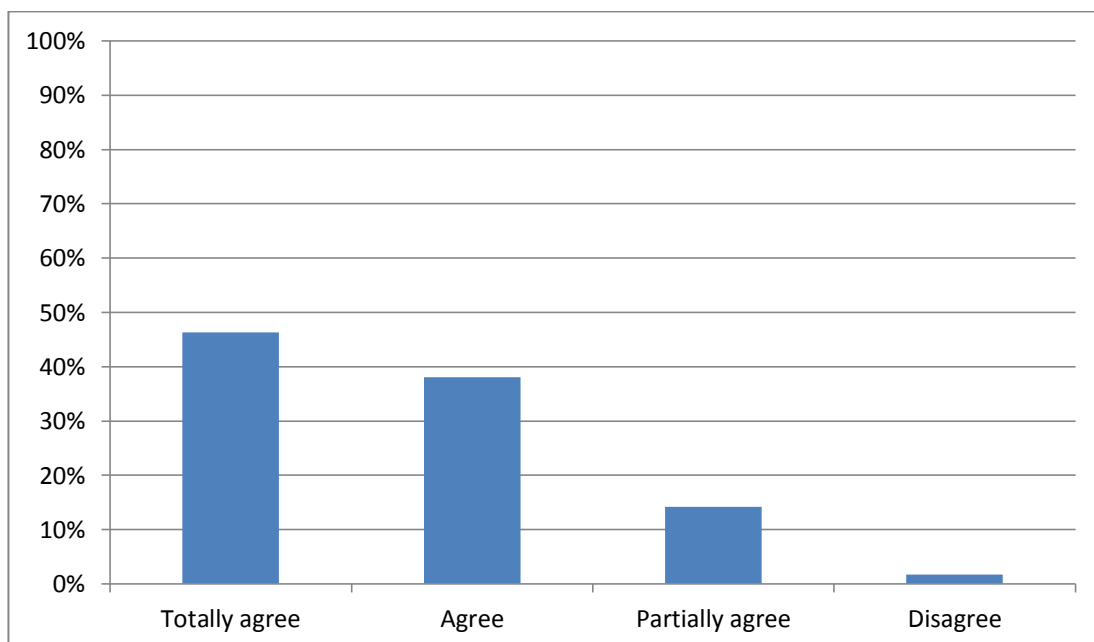
TABLE 1

N ^o	In classes with a large number of students:	Very satisfactory		satisfactory		Somewhat satisfactory		unsatisfactory		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class.	81	46.02	67	38.06	25	14.20	3	1.70	176	99.98
2	The activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.	72	40.90	68	38.63	29	16.47	7	3.97	176	99.98
3	The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those sitting at the back of the classroom.	20	11.36	70	39.77	63	35.79	23	13.06	176	99.98
4	Varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc.	110	62.5	45	25.56	17	9.65	4	2.27	176	99.98
5	Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class.	22	12.5	58	32.95	59	33.52	37	21.02	176	99.98
6	Students can cheat during the test.	25	14.20	31	17.61	37	21.02	83	47.15	176	99.98
7	Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects.	18	10.22	30	17.04	55	31.25	73	41.47	176	99.98
8	The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class.	78	44.31	62	35.22	24	13.63	12	6.81	176	99.98
9	Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students.	21	11.93	62	35.22	50	28.40	43	24.43	176	99.98

For a better understanding of the instructional implications, a questionnaire was applied to 175 students, in which nine aspects were evaluated; all of them with a base on the student's satisfaction scale.

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

GRAPH 1



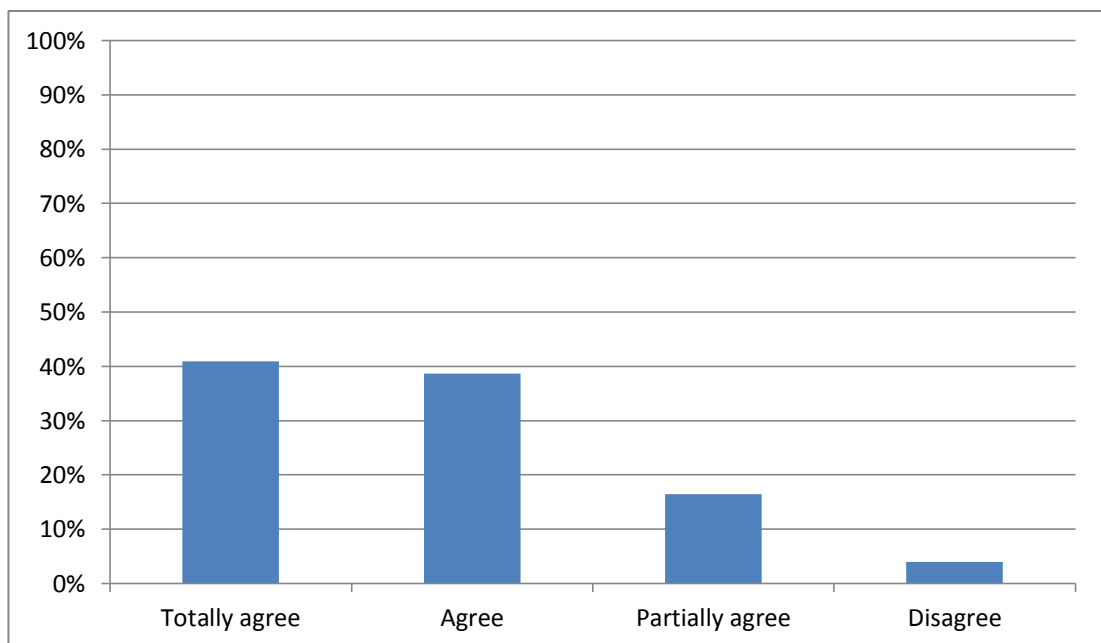
In relation to this first chart, we can see that 46,02 percent of the students totally agree that the activities done in class help them to reinforce what was taught. On the other hand, the 38,06 percent of them agree, 14,20 percent partially agree, and 1,70 percent of them disagree.

These results show that a high percentage of students assure that teachers apply activities that put into practice what they have learned. It is noticed that large classes are not an obstacle at the moment of planning and applying a variety of activities. However, there is a low percentage of students who disagree with the activities used by the teacher. They say that they need different activities to grasp the knowledge the teacher tries to teach at that moment. The literature presents

fundamentals for all this. Such is the case of Hess (2001) who recommends that some activities such as mutual interviews, Guess who?, Guess what?, Ask and Draw, Spot the difference, and the Quick-write can facilitate the teaching- learning process of English language in large classes.

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

GRAPH 2



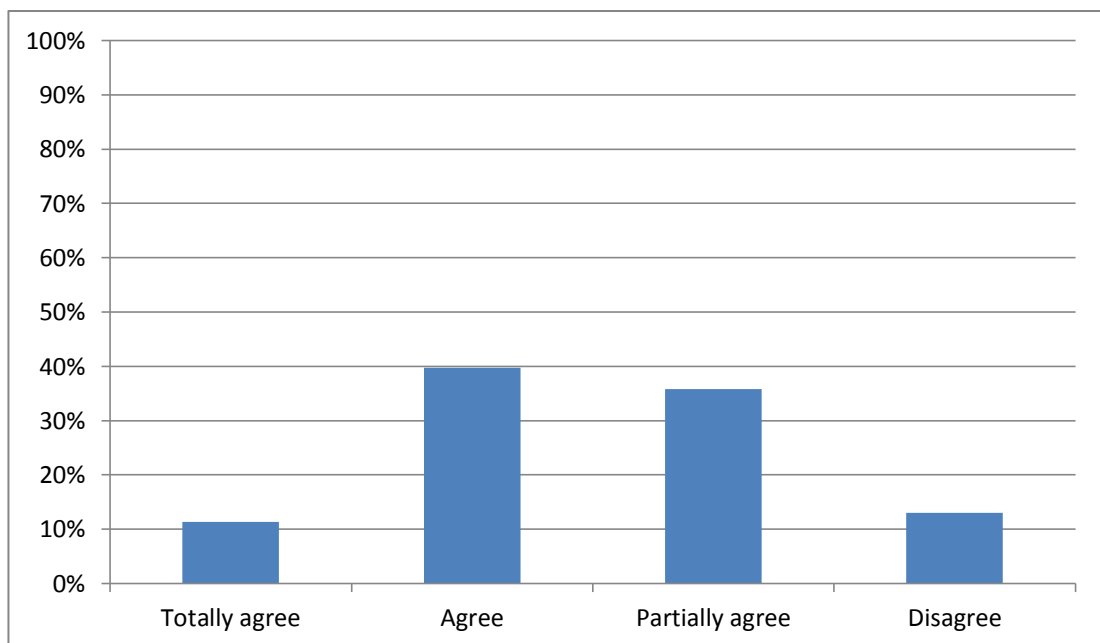
The second statement is aimed at finding whether the activities carried out in class permit to practice the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). The result reveals that 40.90 percent of students totally agree. On the other hand, 38, 63 percent of them agree, 16, 47 percent partially agree while 3, 97 of students disagree.

The results show that most of the students consider that the activities used by teachers allow them to apply the four language skills during the class, so that learning is meaningful. Regarding the application of the four skills in the lesson, it is seen that the teacher tries to involve students' practice of speaking, listening, reading and writing in the activities chosen, since the combination of them maximizes

students' comprehension and interaction as well, even though some studies carried out by Jimakorn and Singhasiri (2006) show that it is very difficult to put into practice activities of writing and speaking because they require more attention and interaction from teachers.

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

GRAPH 3



For the third statement, the 52.3 percent of students responded in a positive way. It is noticed that students' attention and participation in the class is satisfactory even they sit at the back part of the classroom. On the other hand, less than half of the class responded negatively changing the perspective of some students upon classroom participation.

According to the results some students find it difficult to be attentive and participate in large classes. Nonetheless others learn easily, there is also a percentage that indicates that some students are not attentive and do not interact with others

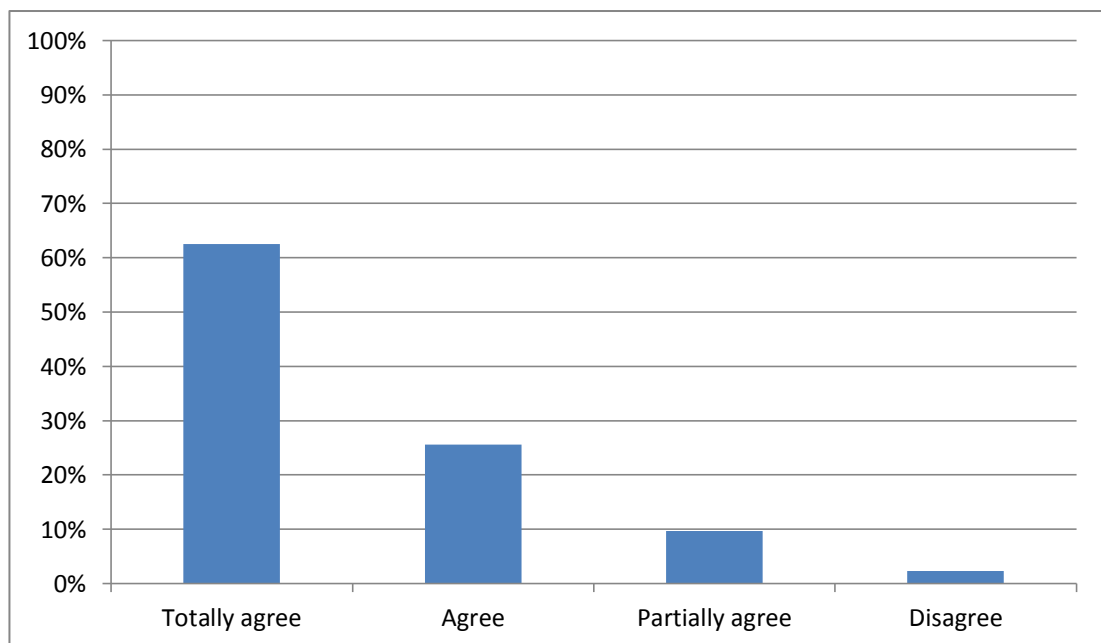
either. Then, for some students the English language learning process becomes more difficult or at least it takes more time than for others who learn faster.

What Woolfolk and Brooks (2001) argue is that seating location seems to increase participation for students who are predisposed to participate in class. Although, a seat in the back will make it more difficult to share and easier to sit back and daydream.

Continuing with the idea, Weinstein and Mingano (2003) suggest that it is important that teachers move around the room when possible, establishing eye contact and asking direct questions to students seated far away, and also change frequently the seating so the same students are not always consigned to the back.

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

GRAPH 4



The results for statement four in the questionnaire that asks if the class activities are varied as group, individual, or pair-work show that 62,5 percent of students totally agree, 25,56 percent agree, 9,65 percent partially agree, and only

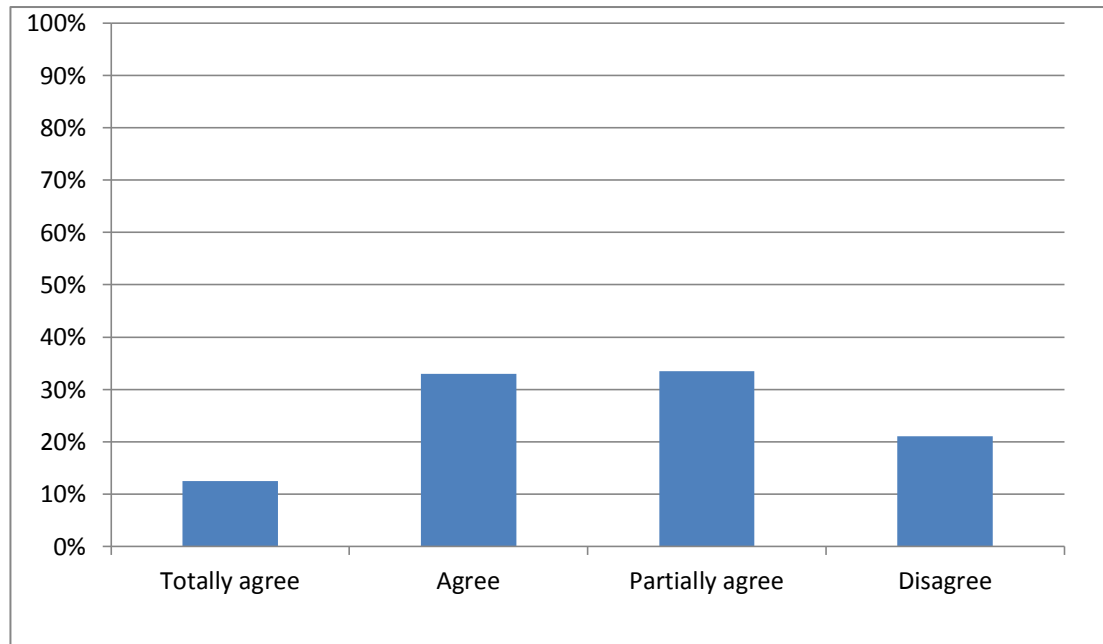
2,27 percent disagree. These results demonstrated that the vast majority of students find pair work and group work useful in class.

As showed in Graph 1, it is strongly noticed that most of the students consider that the activities done in class are varied and allow them to work in groups, individually and in pairs too. All of the interviewed students learn in some way with diverse activities which allow them to get a better learning with respect to the lessons. However, it results necessary to comment that some classrooms in that high school are too small, so that it isn't easy that teachers move around the furniture to do group work. Then, the learning process may be influenced by the classroom space.

To this Harmer (2005) states that the size and shape of the room are part of the spatial dimension of a classroom to work individually or in group work, thus, this dimension creates the setting where activities are carried out, and the setting influenced the types of activities that are possible as well as the behavior of those engaged in them.

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

GRAPH 5



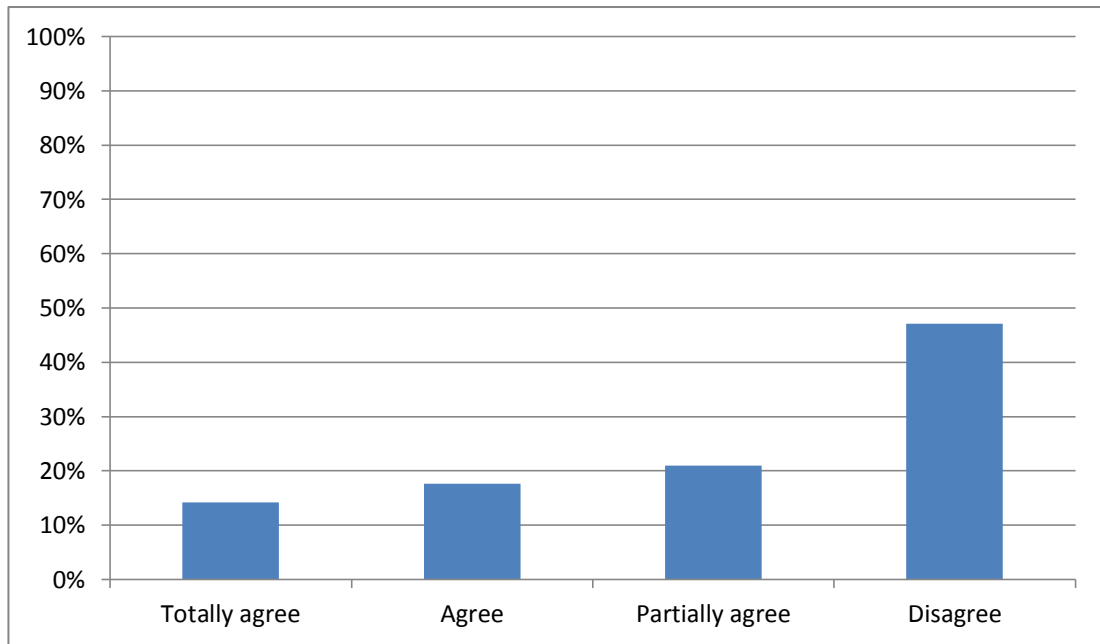
With respect to statement 5 that searches to know if activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc, are used in class, the 12, 5 percent of students answered satisfactorily, while the 32, 95 percent of them just agree. On the other hand, the 33, 52 percent that is related to the majority of students somewhat agree and 21, 02 percent of them disagree.

These results show that most of the students mention that their teachers do not use integrated activities that permit them to learn in a better way. Therefore, students answer shows clearly that activities are not being used frequently enough in class.

Related to what has been mentioned above, Harmer (2007) states that in large classes there should exist some key elements to succeed such as the use of various activities as games, be organized, establish routines, use a different pace for different activities, etc.

Students can cheat during the test.

GRAPH 6



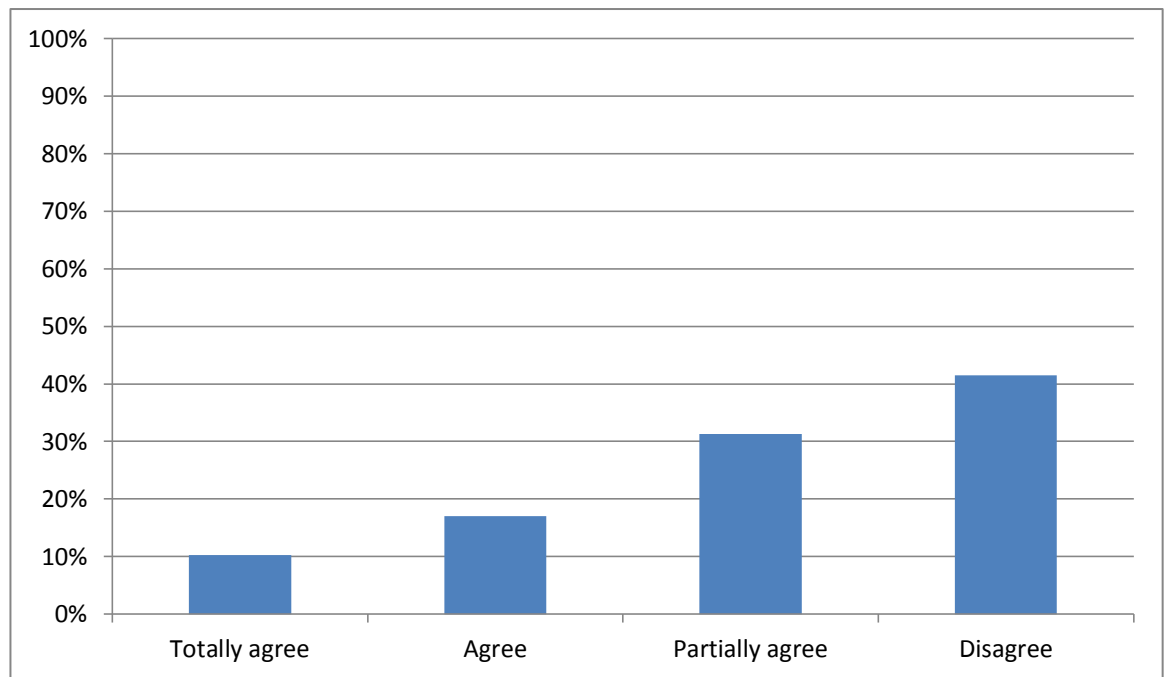
It could be seen that the highest number of students, that is the 47, 15 percent, indicated that there is no opportunity to cheat and believe that cheating is wrong. On the other hand, the 14, 20 percent of students totally agree, 17, 61 agree, while 21, 02 percent partially agree.

The results showed that the majority of students did not view themselves as easily becoming distracted with other subject material leaving the impression that their desire to work on the subject that is being taught at the moment. Then academic dishonesty is shown to not be prevalent in large classes.

In relation to this statement, Savage and Savage (2010) say that cheating is when a person misleads, deceives, or is dishonest. This fact may turn into a great moral problem in large classes, especially those with restricted or non-existent writing components, cheating is almost always perceived with some sort of deliberate intent.

Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects.

GRAPH 7



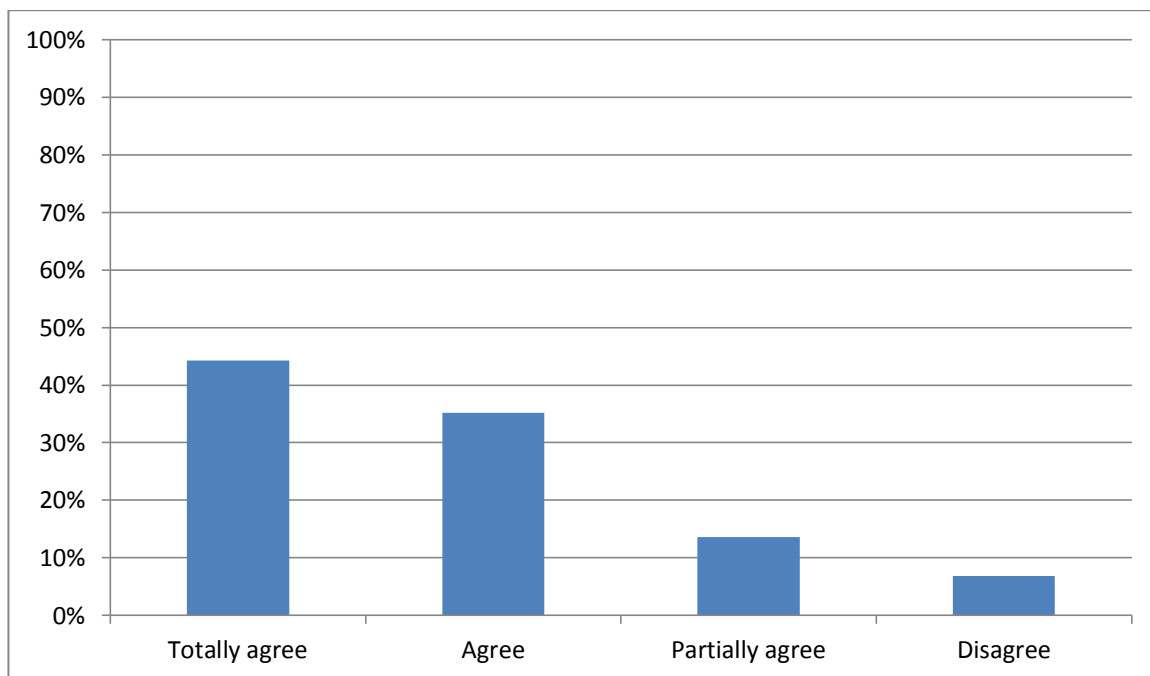
According to the seventh statement, students viewed themselves as not easily becoming distracted with other subject material with an impressive 41, 47 percent. Students reported that they do not get distracted by working on other assignments. But there is a 27.24 percent that said they are distracted by other subjects, this means that some students choose this time for complete other subject tasks, this reveals a contrast in this statement.

To this, Qiang and Ning (2011) say that distraction makes teachers to find quite challenging to keep students interested and excited about the English language learning. On the other hand, Qiang and Ning say that teaching a large class involves many complications. For example, in the classroom large enrolments can stimulate student disengagement and feelings of hostility, which could decrease students' sense of responsibility and carry them to do activities that both indicate and promote lack

of participation and distraction. The authors say that when this situation occurs, students get distracted by doing activities of tasks from other subjects.

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

GRAPH 8



According to the eighth statement, which is used to know if seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class; the 13,63 percent of students are unsatisfied, 35, 22 percent of them are partially

The results showed that the classroom space is large so that there is no problem with activities that need physical space. To decide how to arrange seats is not as difficult for teachers since the size and shape of the classroom, it means, the physical space is comfortable enough to develop different tasks and activities including group work.

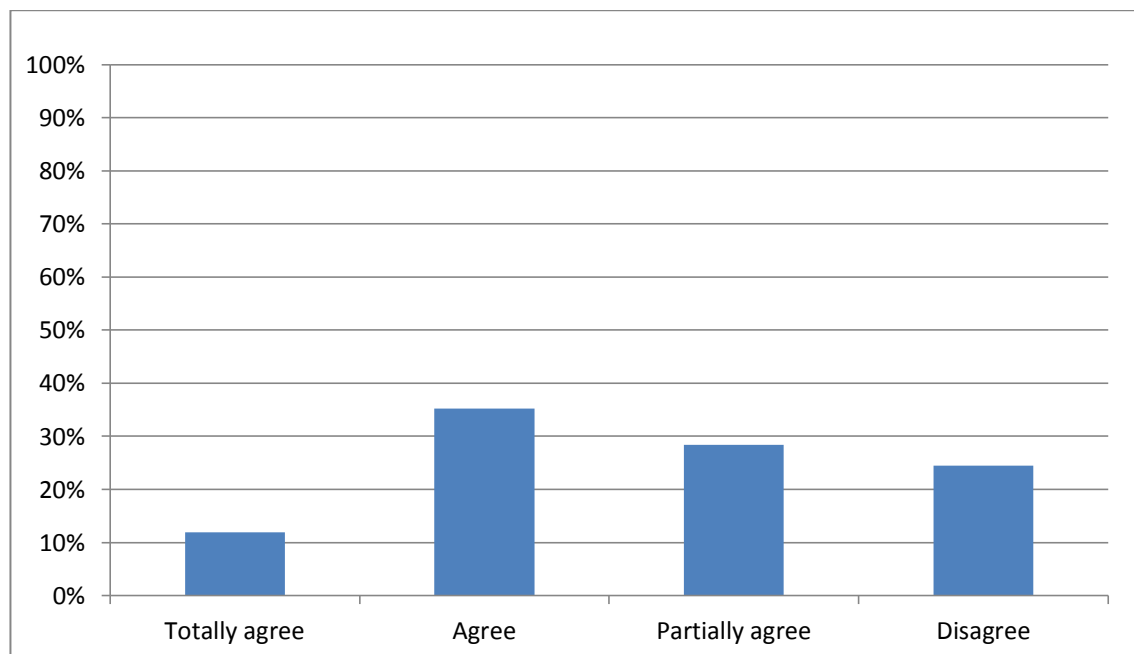
As regards this topic, Harmer (2005) thinks that an appropriate seating arrangement makes specific learning activities easier and communicates teachers' beliefs about learning and teaching. Furthermore, he mentions that in organizing the physical

atmosphere of the classroom, instructors should try to provide a safe, pleasant perspective for learning, which will help social contact among instructors and students to grow students' knowledge, confidence and abilities in human interaction.

Similarly, Ming-Fak and Wai-Shing (2008) agree that a worthy sitting agreement is one which helps particular learning projects and tasks, and joins a teacher's principles about learning and teaching.

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

GRAPH 9



Graph nine shows that teachers' feedback mostly rested in satisfactory to somewhat satisfactory according to the students. These results were slightly better than anticipated basing on how many students each teacher is responsible for. It is seen that the teacher has got the students' respect by receiving a general score of satisfactory.

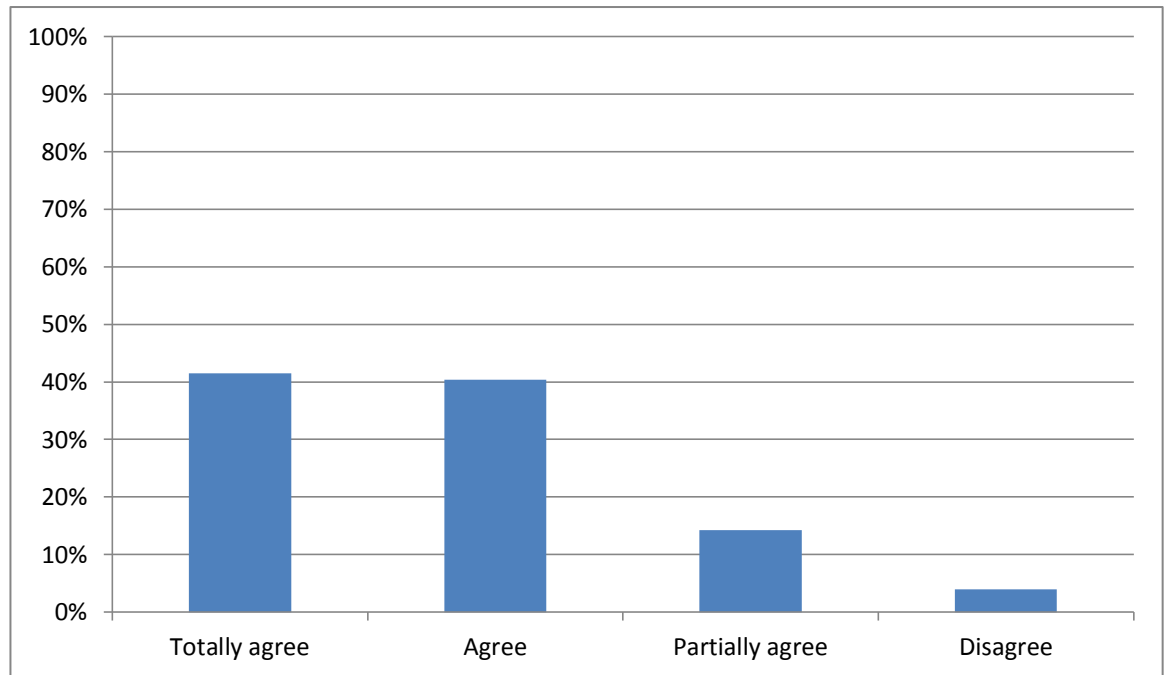
As regards this topic, Geysler (2010) states that for the instructor is important to get feedback from the learners after each assignment set. So, this situation will offer the student with a key as to whether the learners have recognized the language result and whether further explanation and practice is needed.

According to Geysler's point of view feedback is the most important source of motivation in any form of learning, and that doing it on verbal performance can be particularly challenging to establish in a large class. So that students need to be educated to accept that on the spot correction is neither a need nor a desire.

N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Very satisfactory		satisfactory		Somewhat satisfactory		unsatisfactory		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
10.	Interaction exists between the students and the teacher and vice verse	73	41.47	71	40.34	25	14.20	7	3.97	176	99.98
11.	I have the opportunity to be related with more people.	98	55.68	67	38.06	10	5.68	1	0.56	176	99.98
12.	The teacher doesn't remember the name of all the students.	45	25.56	55	31.25	34	19.31	42	23.86	176	99.98
13.	The environment is less tense, because there is a smaller probability that the teacher make constant questions to the same student.	33	18.75	60	34.09	62	35.22	21	11.93	176	99.98
14.	I can use my cell phone or some other electronic device without be seen by the teacher	25	14.20	17	9.65	38	21.59	96	54.54	176	99.98

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

GRAPH 10



About item 10 that consists in knowing if there is a proper balance of student-student and teacher-student interaction, 41,47 percent of the sample totally agree; 40,34 percent agree, 14,20 percent of the population sample partially agree; and 3,97 percent disagree.

The results show that the majority of the students are totally satisfied because there is interaction among student-student and teacher-student.

As regards to what happens during the class, it can be noticed that most teachers do not strictly teach one teaching method or strategy, but they prefer to combine different aspects of several strategies to create effective classroom interaction.

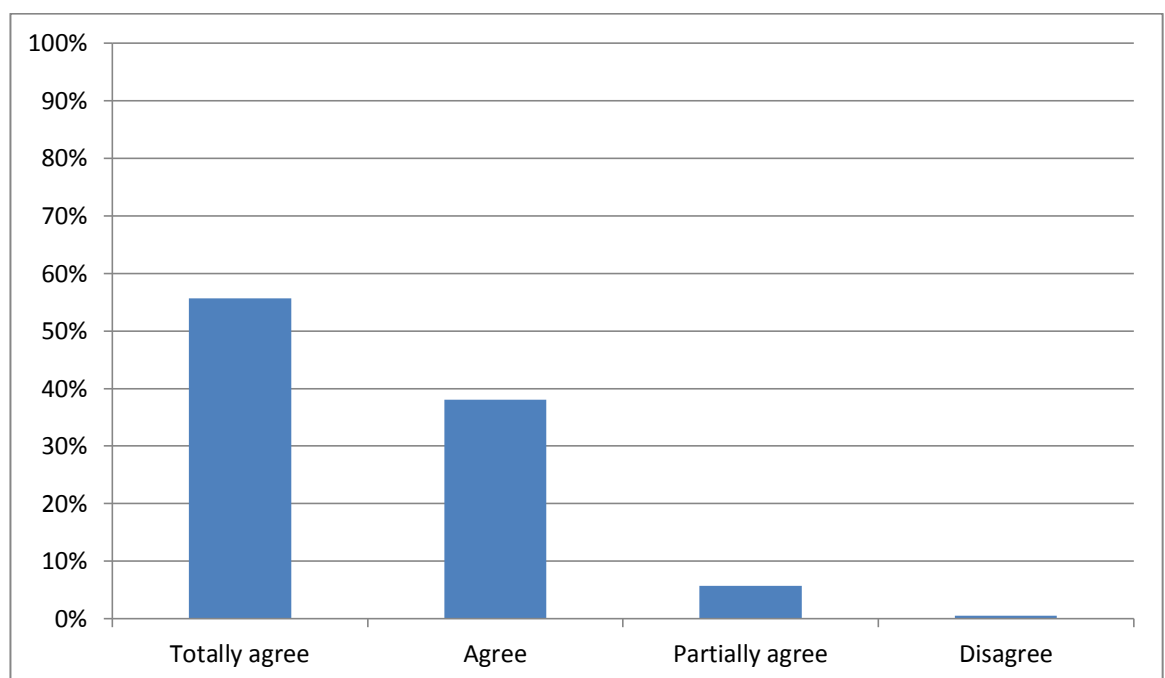
According to this point, Burns and Cunningham (2009) mention that the size of a class impacts students and instructor actions. They say that in general, smaller

classes are associated with learners who are less pressured and are more frequently on-task with less revealed actions problems than learners in larger classes.

Even though, teachers often use similar educational techniques whether educating big or small classes, there is some proof which suggests that more class time is invested on management projects for bigger larger classes, making shorter period available for training.

Students have the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates

GRAPH 11



In relation to the opportunity that students have to build relationships with their classmates 55, 68 percent of them are satisfied, 38, 06 percent are satisfied, 5, 68 percent are somewhat satisfied and 0, 56 percent are not satisfied.

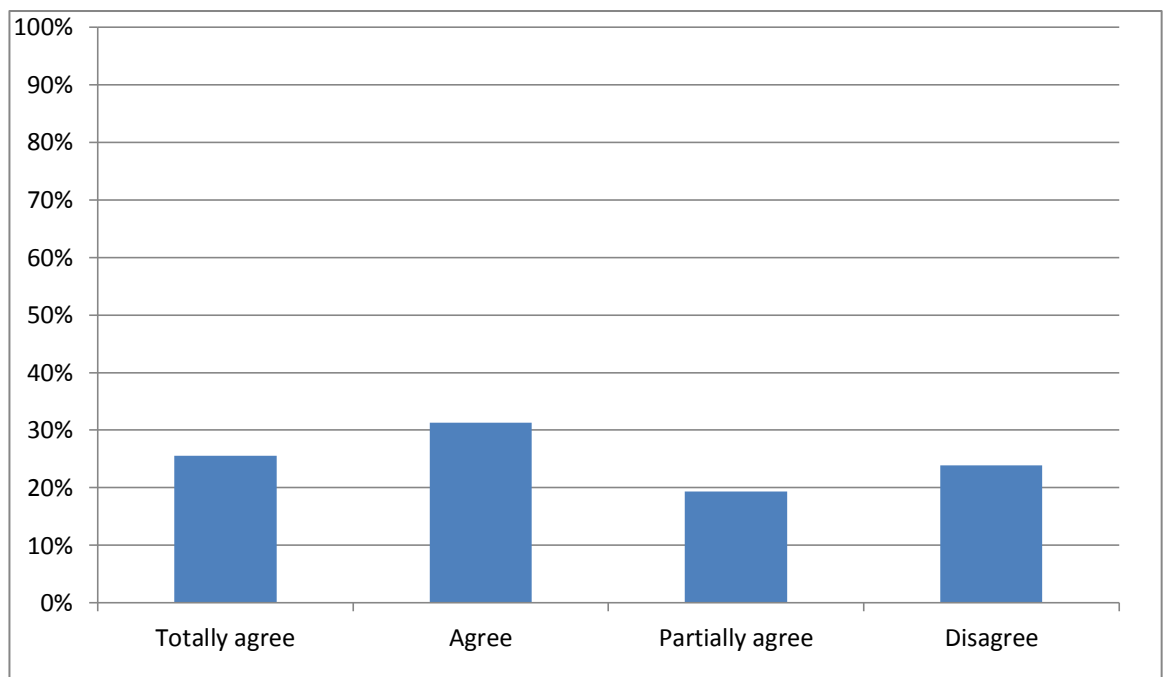
The overwhelmingly positive response to teacher and student interaction leaves the impression that the instructors are managing the large classes correctly. So that, students do not intimidate, bully, insult, or criticize each other.

In relation to this, Bryam (2000) believes that an affective consequence of large classes is the student's feeling of frustration when they cannot communicate

with their classmates. He suggests that an excellent activity to build good relationships among students is the interview since students get along better with the rest of the class. Bryam says that by means of this activity students feel a strong sense of comfort and safety from both physical and emotional abuse and criticism in the classrooms.

The teacher has problems remembering all the students' names

GRAPH 12



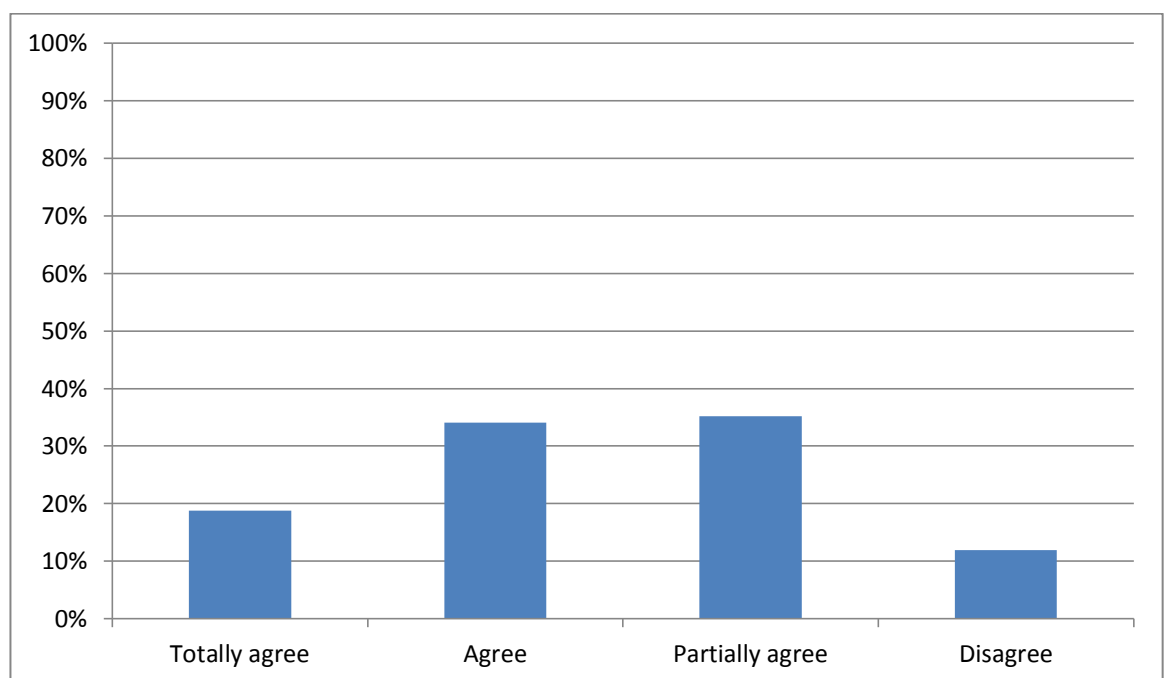
From all students that answered statement 12 that search to know if the teacher has problems remembering all the students' names, 25, 56 percent of the participants totally agree; 31, 25 percent says that they agree; 19, 31 percent of them partially agree; while 23, 86 percent disagree.

The results show that the higher number of students feel satisfied in some way since the teacher has no problem at remembering their names, although the rest of students do not feel comfortable with the situation.

Regarding this topic, Bryan (200) states that it results a little bit tricky for teachers to remember students' names. Such is the case that, teachers perform a variety of strategies that they use immediately they start with the class which help them to learn their students' names since they consider this is absolutely vital for good behavior management.

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

GRAPH 13



Statement number 13 is stated to know if, the atmosphere is less stressful since the teacher does not ask several questions to the same student, 18,75 percent totally agree, 34,09 percent of the sample percent agree, 35,22 percent partially agree, and 11,93 percent disagree.

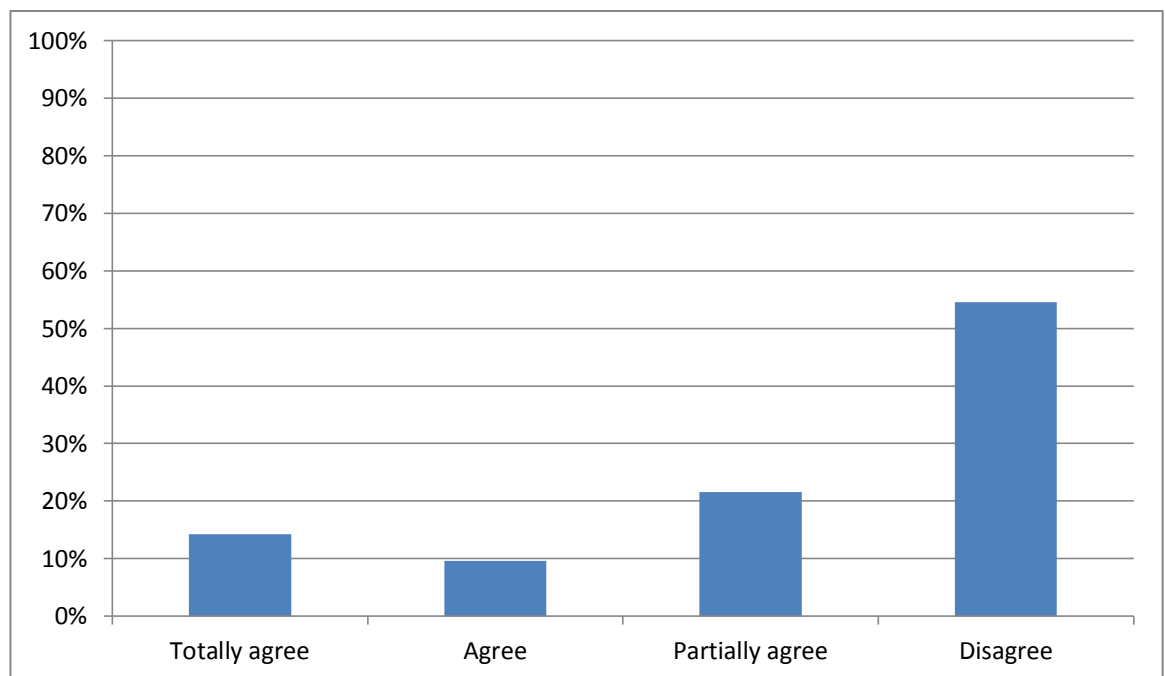
It is seen in the chart that a high number of students feel satisfaction since the teacher does not ask several questions to the same student, with the aim of checking

if they know the information they are requesting or questioning about the topic being taught at the moment.

However, regarding the purpose of the statement, Zhang(2008) says that this situation changes when teachers ask several questions to the same student because they cause him/her a feeling of frustration and reluctance. As long as teachers avoid asking many questions to the same student the result is an environment of relax, confidence and comfort. Besides, he indicates that asking questions is a wonderful tool for teachers to turn students from passive observers in the classroom into active learners.

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

GRAPH 14



The fourteenth question serves to find if it is easier for students to use their cellphone or any other mobile device without being seen by the teacher.

The results revealed that most students said that for them it is difficult to interact with these electronic devices; in contrast there are a few that said it is easy to avoid the teacher's control.

Then the results indicate that some devices easily distract students during the period of class. Regarding this statement Adrian (2010) mentions that the case of cell phones, the rippling vibrations and blaring ring tones make both teaching and learning hard. Thus, this situation causes irritation because the teacher tries to avoid students' texting under desks and behind books, since students tend to pay more attention to their cell phones or any other devices than lessons.

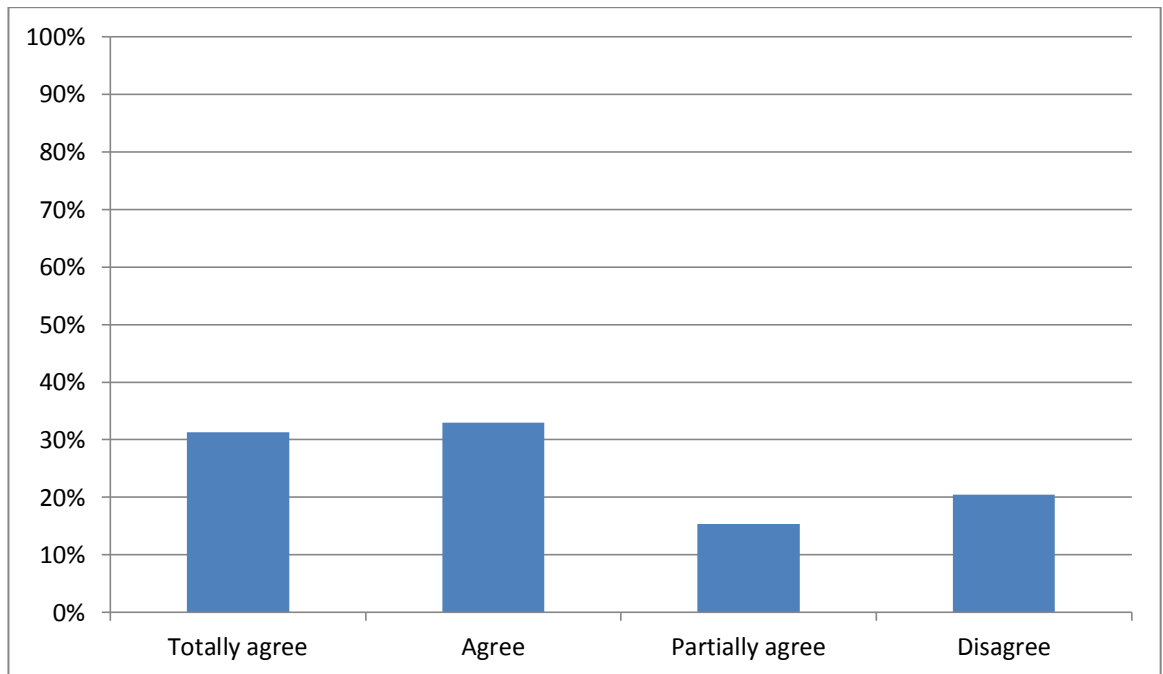
What Psychological implications do large classes have on the teaching – learning process?

N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially Agree		Disagree		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
15	The atmosphere is stressful.	55	31.25	58	32.95	27	15.34	36	20.45	176	99.98
16	Students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest.	33	18.75	41	23.29	37	21.02	65	36.93	176	99.98
17	Students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions.	29	16.47	43	24.43	45	25.56	59	33.52	176	99.98
18	Students do not like to participate because they feel afraid.	14	7.95	31	17.61	45	25.56	86	48.86	176	99.98
19	The teacher does not pay	46	26.13	36	20.45	38	21.59	56	31.81	176	99.98

	equal attention to all his/her students.										
20	Students feel they can act competitively with other students.	85	48.29	57	32.38	23	13.06	11	6.25	176	99.98
21	Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed.	31	17.61	23	13.06	51	28.97	71	40.34	176	99.98

The atmosphere is stressful.

GRAPH 15



Another statement applied to the participants was used to know if the atmosphere is stressful, more than half of students agree that the atmosphere of the class results tense, the 15, 34 percent partially agree, and 20, 45 percent disagree.

Graph 15 shows that the atmosphere of large classes bring a lot of problems directly related to classroom organization in all senses. There are several situations which cause a stressful English learning atmosphere.

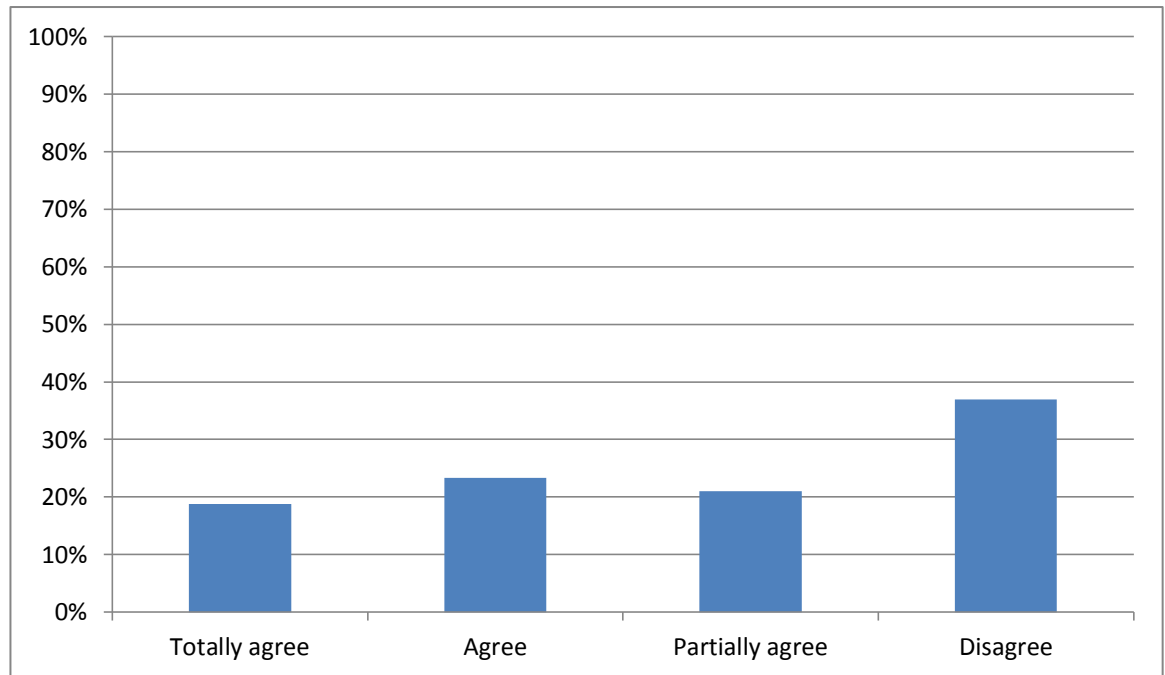
Besides, the instructor has to talk loudly to make sure everyone can listen to her/him clearly, which will create him/her feel tired. Language interaction between the instructor and students and peer work among the learners become difficult due to visual and physical challenges.

Making reference to this statement Harmer (2007) states that the atmosphere of the class is stressful because of many reasons. There are problems directly related to classroom organization in all senses. For example, teachers apply group work, and it results a chaos because there are so many chairs moving around the classroom. He indicates that this experience may cause a stressful language learning atmosphere.

Besides, Harmer mentions that teachers have to talk loudly to make sure everyone can listen to them clearly, which creates that teachers feel tired and somehow frustrated.

Students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest.

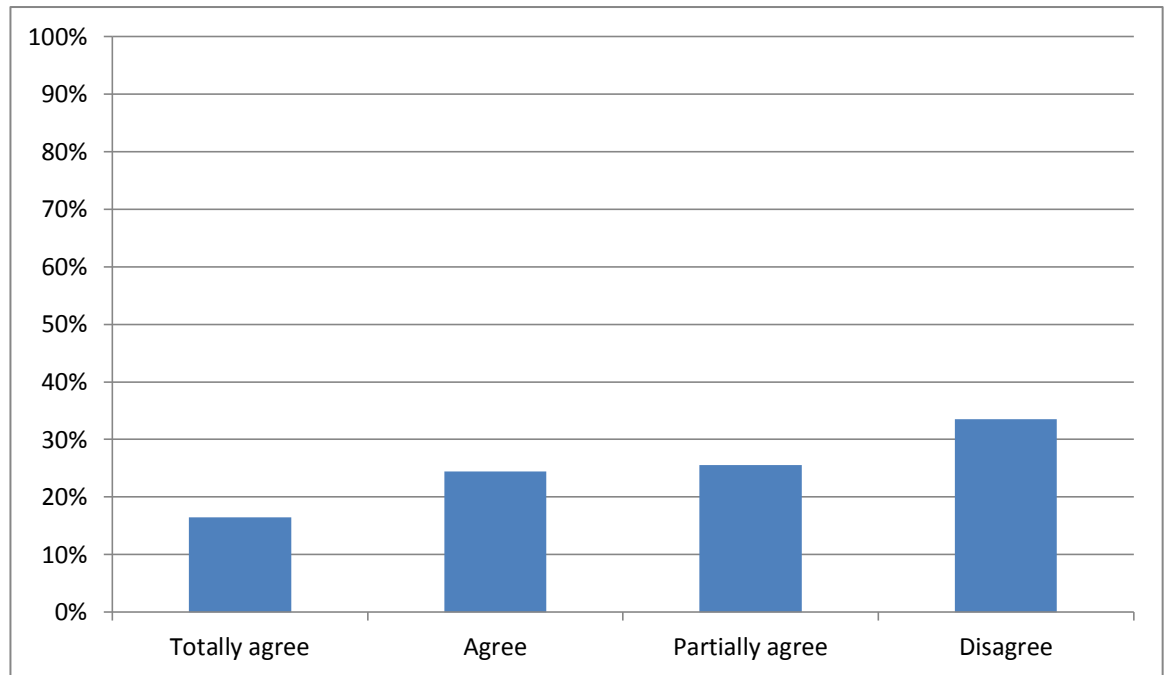
GRAPH 16



Graph 16 shows that students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest since the 18,75 percent of the students indicate that they totally agree, 23,29 of them agree, 21,02 percent partially agree, and 36,93 percent of them disagree. These results reveal that the majority of students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest. It is seen that teachers do not promote an environment of trust and mutual help causing in the students fear to be embarrassed in front of their mates. Miller and Cunningham (2009) state that to best deal with student fears of peer judgment the roll of the teachers is valuable since they have to offer students an atmosphere wherethey are more likely to feel safe to actively participate in class. On the other hand, the authors say that a light environment promotes a sense of personal connection between students and teachers through group and pair activities that help learners to get more familiar.

Students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions.

GRAPH 17



The seventh statement intended to know if students do not have the opportunity to express their opinion. It shows that 25,56 percent of the students believe that they could not share their opinions in class by answering somewhat satisfactory. Likewise, 24,43 percent of the students answered satisfactorily. And the rest of the total percentage showed in the chart indicates that there are not many students who express themselves with confidence.

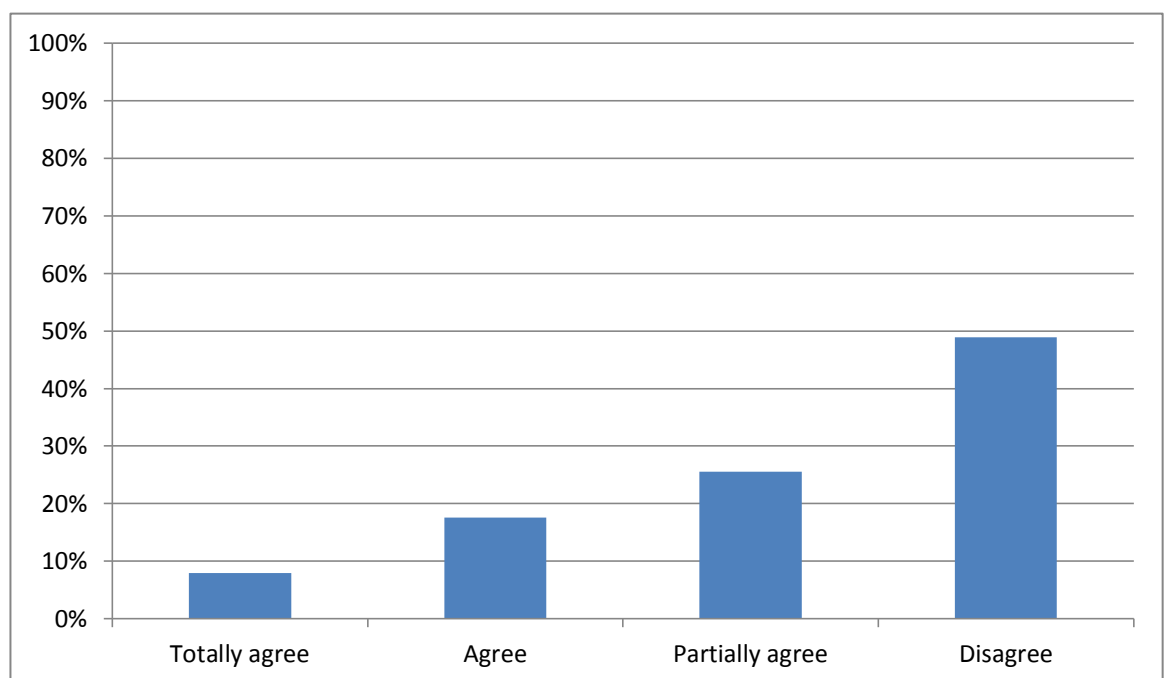
It can be seen that large classes do not provide students the opportunity to say what they think and this situation is reflected in the results.

It is noticed that sometimes one student dominates the group talking too much while the others just sit and listen to him/her, getting bored or feeling frustrated because they do not have the opportunity to give their opinions, or because the dominant student keeps interrupting them.

In order that a teacher could succeed in a class, Harmer (2007) says that there should exist some key elements in large classes to give students the chance to express their points of view, such as: be organized, establish routines, use a different pace for different activities, maximize individual, pair and group work, use chorus reactions, take account of vision and acoustics, and if worked in groups take advantage of the size.

Students do not like to participate because they feel afraid.

GRAPH 18

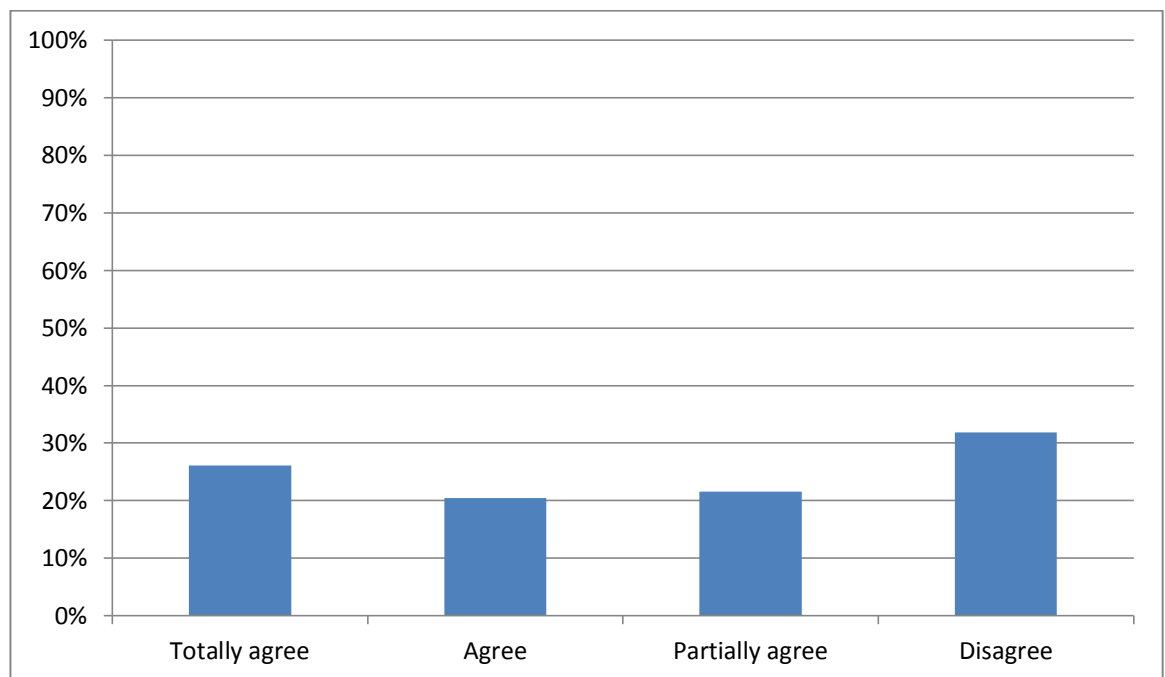


This chart shows that most of the students, 48, 86 percent do not feel afraid of participating in class, the 7,95 percent of them feel very satisfied, 17, 61 percent are somewhat satisfied, and the 25, 56 percent of the participants feel satisfaction. The class is seen as having different levels of fear because teachers do not pay equal attention to all their students. It can be seen that most of the time, the teachers give students the opportunity to engage with class questions and challenges reducing students' fear and thereby promoting participation.

Something worthy to mention is stated by Vogt and Echeverria (2008) who argue that teachers need to determine the English language acquisition levels of their students to understand their language needs providing activities and opportunities to increase students' proficiency and to know also students' progress and how they might respond in each instruction.

The teacher does not pay equal attention to all the students.

GRAPH 19



The results of the ninetieth statement was used to know if teachers do not pay equal attention to all their students, show that most students, that is to say 31, 81 percent disagree. On the other hand, 20, 45 percent of them agree, 21, 59 percent partially agree, and 26, 13 percent totally agree.

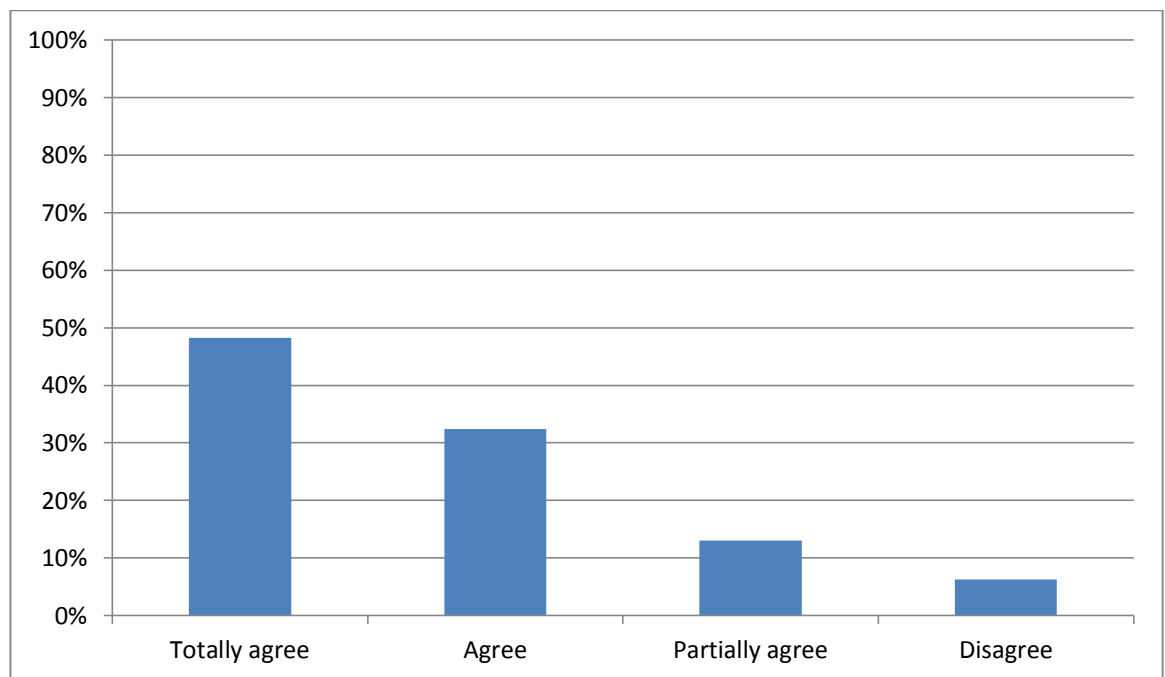
The results of this statement seem logical as the teacher finds some difficulty at providing the same quantity of attention to all the students in a large class.

Thus, a low percentage of students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed. Additionally, it is showed that the teachers cannot guarantee students' participation in interaction for effective learning

Regarding this topic, Rryam (2002) thinks that the difficulties experienced in large classes consist of matters about management and class room organization, how to guarantee students participation in interaction for effective learning, how to evaluate each student, and affective repercussions of numerous classes for teachers and students.

Students feel they can act competitively with other students.

GRAPH 20



The results of the twentieth question that aims to find if students feel they can act competitively with other students showed that 48, 29 percent totally agree and the 32,38 percent agree. On the other hand, 13, 06 percent of them partially agree, and 6, 25 disagree.

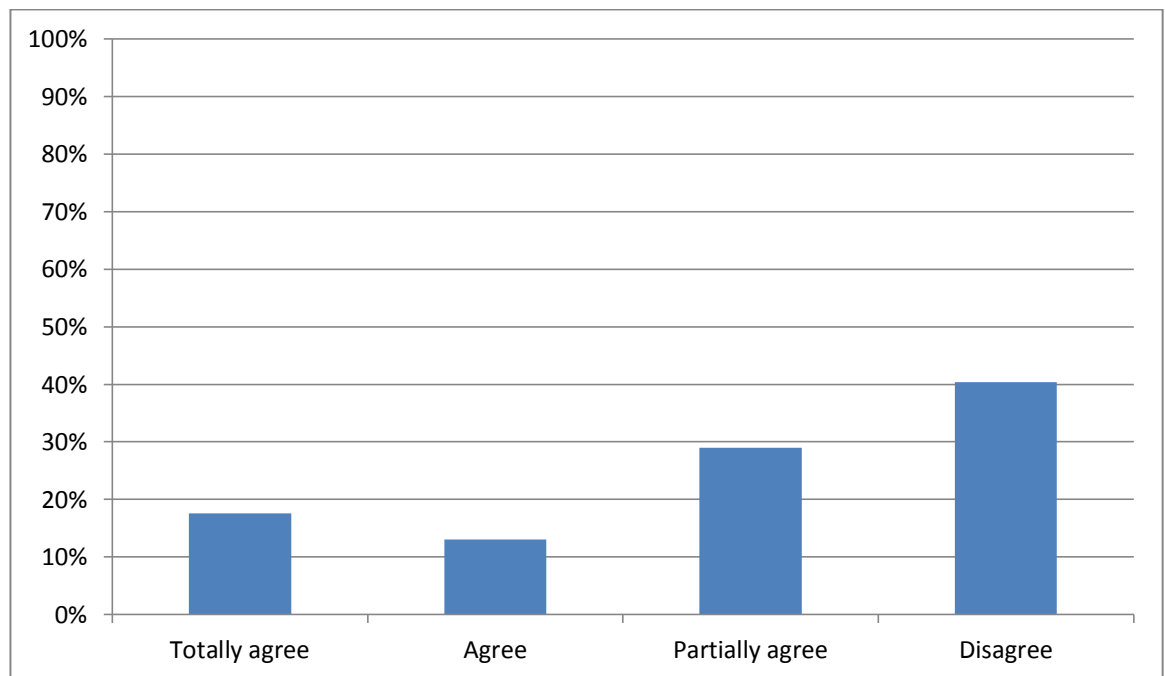
The results show that most students learn actively engaged with class material which allows them to act competitively with others. They also indicate that a high

percentage of students feel comfortable in the class, in this way they increase their learning.

To this, Thaher (2005) argues that in large classes there is a sense of competition and a well-established relationship among students inside and outside the class.

Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed

GRAPH 21



The last but not least statement aims at finding if students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed, the results show that the 17,61 percent of students indicate that they totally agree, 13,06 of them agree, 28,97 percent partially agree, and 40,34 percent of them disagree.

It is seen that a low percentage of students go unnoticed in the large classroom setting. Consequently, those students who need extra help, generally get the opportunity to work individually with their teachers. Then, there is not lack of individual time to be shared between teachers and students. According to Zhang (2008) the success of a class is focused on the teachers' ability to assess students'

strengths and weaknesses, and in this way provide them the right tools to improve and develop their language learning process.

Conclusions

Students of large classes find group work activities very helpful, since they are encouraged to develop their language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

A high percentage of students said that teachers apply activities that put into practice what they have learned. It is noticed that large classes are not an obstacle at the moment of planning and applying a variety of activities.

It is not difficult for teachers to organize seats since the size and shape of the classroom, is big enough to develop different tasks and activities such as group work.

The atmosphere of large classes brings a lot of problems related to classroom organization. There are situations which cause a stressful English learning atmosphere. For example; the teacher has to talk loudly to make sure everyone can listen to her/him clearly, which will create him/her feel tired. Language interaction between the instructor and students become difficult and this situation represents a threat for the teacher.

Some participants need different kind of help from the teacher, in the field of group work and social participation. The students consider that the activities done in class are varied and allow them to work in groups, individually and in pairs too. All of the students learn in some way with varied activities which allow them to get a better learning of the lessons.

Most of the students are totally satisfied because there is interaction between student-student and teacher-student. In fact teachers do not strictly focus one

teaching method or strategy, but they prefer to combine different factors of several strategies to create assertive classroom interaction.

Recomendations

In those large classes that could not be broken down as a result of different situations, group work should be put into practice. This will give space for efficiently monitoring students' participation in class, and in this way to identify their weakness and strengths as well.

Government should provide more language instructional materials and favorable and peaceful learning environment, with the purpose of improving teachers' and students' comprehension of English language.

Teachers should attend to seminars regularly, for being updated about new techniques or technology and at the same time to learn how to apply this knowledge in the classroom.

There should be catch up classes, at least once a week, for giving students feedback about the classes they missed or did not understand.

Foreign universities should organized workshops and seminars for teachers of English Language regularly. So that, they can improve their classroom effectiveness.

English teachers should not apply only one particular teaching method because some students may admire it, and, some others might dislike it. Methodology must be applied according to student's needs, most of the time they are related to social and psychological factors.

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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 large classes on teaching and learning English*. The following information will only be used for academic/research purposes. Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible based on the following criteria.

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

Informative data: Please fill in the information below

Name of 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:	Totally agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
	The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class.				
	The activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.				
	The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those sitting at the back of the classroom.				
	Varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc.				
	Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class.				
	Students can cheat during the test				
	Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects.				
	The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class.				
	Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students.				

B. Social issues

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

C. Psychological issues:

	In classes with a large number of students:	Totally agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree
	The atmosphere is stressful.				
	Students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest.				
	Students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions.				
	Students do not like to participate because they feel afraid.				
	The teacher does not pay equal attention to all his/her students.				
	Students feel they can act competitively with other students.				
	Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed.				