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Teaching strategies and their influence on the English language teaching and learning process in large classes.

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

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DEDICATION

To my parents Norma Soto and Silvio Narváez, the most important people in my live. They have always supported me to get here. To my brother Ronald Narváez for being by my side, for his support and help every day. To each person who has aided me in difficult moments by contributing with a grain of sand and encouraging me to move forward. All of them have made this achievement possible. I love you all.

Mayury Silvana Narváez Soto

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CONTENT

TABLE OF GRAPHS

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of the application of teaching strategies such as games, cooperative learning, information gap or role-play, on the English language teaching and learning process in large classes. Hence, students of a third year of Bachillerato were selected as a sample in a public institution in the city of Loja. A mixed-method approach was used in order to collect the data, that is, a qualitative and a quantitative method. Therefore, tests, surveys, interviews and observations were applied. The results of the case study reveal that during the lessons and with the application of the new strategies such as information gap, games and cooperative learning, the students worked with confidence and motivation all the time showing a noticeable improvement in the results provided in the post test.

KEY WORDS: Activities, cooperative learning, EFL teaching, large classes, strategies, techniques.

RESUMEN

El propósito de este estudio fue investigar la influencia de la aplicación de estrategias de enseñanza tales como juegos, aprendizaje cooperativo, *information gap* o dramatización, en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje del idioma inglés en clases numerosas. Para ello, se seleccionó como muestra una clase de 3ro de bachillerato de una institución pública de la ciudad de Loja. Se optó por el método mixto para recolectar la información, es decir, un método cualitativo y uno cuantitativo. Por lo tanto se hizo uso de exámenes, encuestas, entrevistas y observaciones. Los resultados del estudio de caso revelan que durante la aplicación las nuevas estrategias tales como *information gap,* juegos y aprendizaje cooperativo*,* los estudiantes trabajaron seguros y motivados mostrando un notorio avance de los contenidos en el post test.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Actividades, aprendizaje cooperativo, clases numerosas enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera, estrategias, técnicas.

INTRODUCTION

Class size is a really important factor to consider in the English language teaching and learning process because it is not the same to teach in a class with 10 students than to teach a class with 30 or more than 30 students. Hence, teaching larger classes involves more work resulting exhausting for both teachers and students. Besides, Hornsby, Osman and De Matos - Ala (2013) consider that the big number of students in a classroom may impact negatively in the quality of student learning. In addition, they state that a low student performance appears due to the diversity of learning contexts that among the learners in large classes exist.

Teaching in these environments can result very exhausting for trainers both physically, when they speak louder and move longer distances than they do in small classes, and psychologically when they feel intimidated to face a large number of students, especially when trainers do not have much experience on it (Hasan, n.d).

Therefore, considering the problematic situation that large classes cause, the current case study has as a main objective to investigate if the application of teaching strategies focused on large groups apply are useful to improve the English language teaching and learning process in large classes.

In order to get a better knowledge, the results of some studies related to teaching in large classes will be discussed in this part. Kerr (2011) carried out a study with the purpose of describing methods applied by Ontario teachers in order to maintain a good teaching and learning quality in large classes. The findings showed issues in large enrollment classes such as *student issues* in which the author noticed an increased disinterest from students; *course management* in large classes tend to be a weakness for large classes' instructors; *resource and institutional support issues* such as the inappropriate physical space in which there are inadequate writing surfaces, poor sound or lighting.

Andersson, Fäldt, Holmquist and Jansson (2002) conducted a study which is part of a big project based on improving and developing the teaching and learning process in large classes at Chalmers University of Technology. This study has the purpose of identifying good ideas which may be used in the teaching and learning process of large courses, the same which may help to improve the lessons. To sum up the results, it can be said that most of teachers tend to use the traditional lectures. However, the students want instructors to change those typical lectures by more interactive lessons. Finally, learners also suggested that educators should take their needs and learning styles into consideration at the moment of planning because they are really important factors in the teaching and learning process.

Abdalla (2016), conducted a study which purpose was to research the needs that English language learners have in large classes. The author contemplates the students' needs as a significant point "when designing the syllabus, course books, teaching methods and other aids" (p. 1). The results of the analysis exposed that the teachers must give more importance to the students' necessities which would allow a better planning of the lessons and a valid curriculum.

The information and results gathered during the study are included in three chapters that are divided as follows: In chapter 1, the literature review which discusses related literature on teaching English in large classes is included. The literature explains what are considered as large classes or what the number students' average is in a large class. Then, the review of the advantages and disadvantages of teaching English in large classes will be regarded. Besides, the classroom management in large classes, as well as the strategies applied for teaching in that environment, will be addressed.

The chapter 2 involves the methodology applied during the case study. A mixed-method approach was used for collecting the data. As Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011) declare, the combination of the two methods "provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone" (p.5).

The chapter 3 covers the results and findings analyzed from the data collected after being applied the several instruments such as interviews, tests, questionnaires, strategies and activities.

Thus, the following study will discuss the different kind of strategies and activities that teachers trainers may use when teaching in large classes with 30 or more than 30 students. The application of such strategies and activities will benefit those educators who teach in large classes and they help to maintain the quality of the teaching and learning process regardless of the large number of pupils.

CHAPTER I

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will discuss related literature on teaching English in large classes which will allow to know what has been done about the teaching and learning process in large classes. Therefore, the explanation of large classes will be covered as a first theme. This theme will explain what are considered as large classes or what the number students' average is in a large class. Then, the review of the advantages and disadvantages of teaching English in large classes will be regarded. Besides, the classroom management in large classes, as well as the strategies applied for teaching in that environment, will be addressed.

Large Classes

According to Lewit and Schuurmannn (1997), it is very common that educators, parents and students prefer to have fewer people in a classroom. These authors think that the fewer students in a course appear, the bigger improvements in education will appear. Moreover, they state that teachers feel better in smaller classes because a less number of pupils allows them to "encourage increased student-teacher interaction, allow for more thorough evaluation of students, and promote greater teaching flexibility" (p. 112). The same authors have defined class size as the number of students of which the teacher trainer is primarily responsible along a whole school year.

Other authors share the same idea about class size. For instance, Ramana (2011) has defined class size as the number of students or the average number of students that are enrolled in a classroom or course. Hence, depending on the number, a class would be considered as small or large.

What is a large class?

The UNESCO (2015) considers that a large class does not have an exact size. It considers that the class size depends a lot on the place each one resides. In some countries, to have 25-30 students in a single classroom is considered as large. While other countries considered these number as a small class. In addition, the UNESCO contemplates that the teachers' perspective influences on what a large class involves. For example, "while a class of more than 50 students is usually considered a large class, to those who normally teach 25 or fewer students, a class of 35 can be large and overwhelming" (UNESCO, 2016, p. 1).

Scrivener (2012) has considered a classification that helps distinguish small classes from larger ones:

- ✓ One-to-one teaching.
- ✓ A very small class (2 to 6 students).
- ✓ A small class (7 to 13 students).
- ✓ A standard class (14 to 25 students).

✓ A large class (26 to 45 students).

✓ A very large class (45+ students).

However, the same author claims that, "what is a large class depends a lot on what you are familiar with" (Scrivener, 2012). That is, large class standards vary depending on the country you are. There are several countries in which it is really common to have enormous groups with 70, 90 and even 120 students in a single room. Therefore, as those teachers are accustomed to teach such number of children, when they have the opportunity to be in front of a class with 30, 40 or 50 students, they may perceive those classes as small courses. However, the opposite occurs in Ecuador where classes with 30, 40 or 50 students are considered as very large classes. Hence, the idea of teaching in a classroom with more than 100 students is impossible to conceive for Ecuadorian educators.

Besides what Scrivener stated, the authors Lewit and Schuurmannn (1997) also contemplate large classes as those classrooms in which 30 or more pupils study. They presented some statistics which showed the average of students in a class of some United States of America's states. For instance, the averages of learners per class in Nevada, California, Maryland, New York, Arizona or Utah, indicated ranges of students from 40 to 60 children. That was the case of Utah, the state that reached almost 60 scholars in a single course.

Other statistics presented by the author James (2015), about some East Asian countries, show that the average number of students per class in lower secondary levels in Asia are the following:

✓ Hong Kong – 31.0

✓ China – 17.5-54.6

✓ Japan – 32-7

✓ Korea – 35.0

✓ Malaysia – 31.0

✓ Singapore – 36.0

To sum it up, a large class has not an established definition. Authors around the world have tried to define this term; however, most of them consider that large classes have different perceptions depending on the place of residence, and the capability each professor has acquired along his/her experience.

Disadvantages and Advantages of Teaching English in Large Classes

After analyzing what a large class involves, some advantages and disadvantages come to light. As teachers tend to consider small classes better for managing or acquiring the

language, and large classes as a great challenge and as a problematic aspect for language learning, more disadvantages seem to exist. However, it is also important that teacher trainers are aware of the advantages that this environment can provide in the English teaching-learning process.

Disadvantages.

Teaching English is seen a great challenge mainly because students do not have the predisposition to take English classes. They feel obligated to study English because it is a requirement for passing the year (UNESCO, 2015). As a consequence, a big number of negative aspects have been exposed by many researchers.

Among the negatives facts that large classes present, some authors such as Rohin (2013) asserts, "large classes create lack of communication, discipline, assessment and individual attention". Akthar et al (2012), agree with Rohin by adding that "large classes affect directly on teachers' morality and increase the stress". As the number of students is really big, and considering that not all children learn in the same way, because of the learning styles, Akhar et al state that both students and teachers have to deal with more work in the courses which leads to an uncomfortable physical and mental feeling.

Another disadvantage of large classes is the lack of time. The time is an aspect which influences severally in the English language teaching-learning process. It has to be considered that in public institutions, the hours established for teaching English are few and the time for each lesson is really short too. Keeping in mind this aspect, it is obviously that it results almost impossible to give attention and support for each student in a single lesson. Learners, in most of the cases, are not able to solve all doubts they may have about a certain topic. Thus, language deficiency and bad results begin to appear.

An additional negative factor is the evaluation. As there are many students, it results difficult for educators to monitor the whole class in order to know who is acquiring the new language or who needs more attention and extra support explanations. As a consequence of these aspects, Rohin (2013) considers that most of the time, teacher trainers are not able to reach all of the established objectives.

As the authors declared before, the time is a factor that goes against teaching in large classes by hindering the one to one attention on learners. Another author, such as Loh (2016), agrees with Rohin and Akthar explaining that the quality of learning is affected directly by the time together with the number of students in a classroom. He stated, "teachers have limited time to focus on the needs of slow learners and are forced to neglect them to keep pace with the prescribe time allocation for each learning area".

Another problem caused by large classes is the lack of respect for teacher trainers and classmates. What typically tends to occur in these classrooms is "the side-talking during the lecture, arriving late, leaving early, causing a commotion during the final few minutes of class, skipping class, side-talking during class discussions…" (Carbone, 1998, p.75). This author contemplates the physical space as the main aspect that affects the teaching and learning process as well as the relationship between the professors and learners. Hornsby, Osman and De Matos-Ala (2013) also claim that teaching in large classes affects negatively the direct contact between teachers and students, and obviously it reduces the opportunity of providing feedback which will limit the English teaching-learning process.

To sum up, students do not become engaged academically and socially when they are involved in a single classroom with many other students. Pupils tend to retain the doubts because of fear or embarrassment. Furthermore, they distract easily, lose attention by talking with the classmates, and motivation also disappears leading to a mess in classrooms because of misbehavior and difficult management. These aspects cause that the objectives established by the educator cannot be achieved. For that reasons, several authors have considered that teaching in small classes shows better results. Professors feel more comfortable and confident in small courses allowing them to motivate the learners and engage them into the learning process (as cited in James, 2015, p. 18).

Advantages.

On the other hand, not all factors are negative when teaching in large classes. Everything has its positive side. There are some authors and researchers who have considered this environment as an opportunity to challenge those negative aspects. For instance, Xu (2001), found that a large classroom is a chance for pupils to overcome insecurities and give more ideas or opinions while they work with many people. That is, it exists more co-students' interaction which creates a cooperative, creative and innovative environment (Qi and Wang, 2009). Rohin (2013) agrees with Xu, Qi and Wang, and shares the same ideas by claiming that students learn better in a class in which pupils learn from others. As there are many students with different thoughts, experiences and learning styles, "students can share their ideas and create an effective discussion or positive classroom atmosphere that support language learning with close cooperation to each other" (Rohin, 2013. p.7).

Some other authors believe the same about the benefits of teaching in large classes. For instance, Wang and Zhang (2011) supports the mentioned ideas, and says that students acquire more responsibility while studying in large class size contexts. According to him, teachers are only the suppliers of the information, and states that pupils are who should work independently

through engaging methods that teachers use in order to make students work outside classrooms with enjoyment and pleasure.

Tomlinson (2016), through his experience, says that large classes produce positive energy by the interaction between trainer and learner. This interaction starts at the beginning of the classes with a stimulus from teachers' part. Then, this stimulus continuous with a positive response from learners during the whole lesson. It helps create a comfortable environment in which both, professors and learners will feel motivated to work as a united team. Besides, he considers that English language confidence and interaction among all the participants is achieved. In large classes activities, interruption and debate are encouraged, and "interaction in English is quite common, especially if the activity achieves affective and cognitive engagement" (Tomlinson, 2016).

In conclusion, not all facts about teaching in large classes are negative. Professors should know that teaching in this atmosphere could result an opportunity to face their fears and to improve some skills by trying several and different ways to engage pupils in English classes, above all the larger ones. As many authors stated, teachers can make use of large classes in order to overcome the existing issues that in these kind of classes appear. As the UNESCO (2015) claims a class is very rich because of the diversity that among the students exists. Each learner has a different learning style and the professor has to take advantage of that in order to create a diverse and an engaged way to teach. Thus they will grow professionally and interpersonally in this field as well as students will achieve all the objectives.

Classroom Management in Large Classes

Adequate classroom management is really important for educators to teach in a good way. But what does classroom management mean? Roth (2015) considers classroom management as an art in which the educator has to combine relationships (among the actors of an institution), routines, procedures and instructional techniques in order to create a right and effective space in which students will be aware of all the expectations that the teaching-learning process implies.

In addition, as Prevention First (2014) claimed, classroom management includes the good interaction between the students and teachers. Moreover, PF (2014), considers that students cannot learn in a chaotic environment because they may not feel totally comfortable transforming a class into a mess. Therefore, classroom management involves creating an organized, engaging and respectful space in which trainers and pupils can work adequately.

Conversely, Ramana (2011), considers that teachers' and learners' personality and behavior do not have influence in classroom management. This author declares "the most

effective teacher-student relationship is characterized by the specific behavior of the teacher such as exhibiting the dominance at appropriate levels, extending cooperation and being aware of the needs of the students". (Ramana, 2011).

Other authors such as Garret (2014), states that the learning process is not necessarily a quiet environment; that it exists always a little noise caused by the activities performed in a class such as talking, sharing ideas, discovering, questioning and experimenting. All these aspects can take teachers to face the most difficult challenge in classroom management, above all beginner trainers (Gordon, 2001).

The larger a classroom is, the more difficult to manage a class results (Graduate Teaching & Laboratory Assistance Orientation, 2012). A large class implies not only an engaging lesson that motivates students for a while, but also, it requires more work, extra planning and management techniques that aid to perform and control the whole class (Garret, 2014). As a consequence, professors become frustrated and performance in classrooms turns unsatisfactory.

One way to solve these issues in classes is the arrangement of the seats. Hanna (2013), says that a proper seating arrangement may affect the manner in which pupils learn and interact in very large courses. Scott and Ytreberg (1991) have reflected a kind of seating arrangement that they considered is beneficial when working in pairs or groups of four because it facilitates the interaction among the participants (as cited in Cabrera and Lombaida, 2016, p. 27).

The seating arrangement that Scott and Ytreberg (1991) suggested is the following:
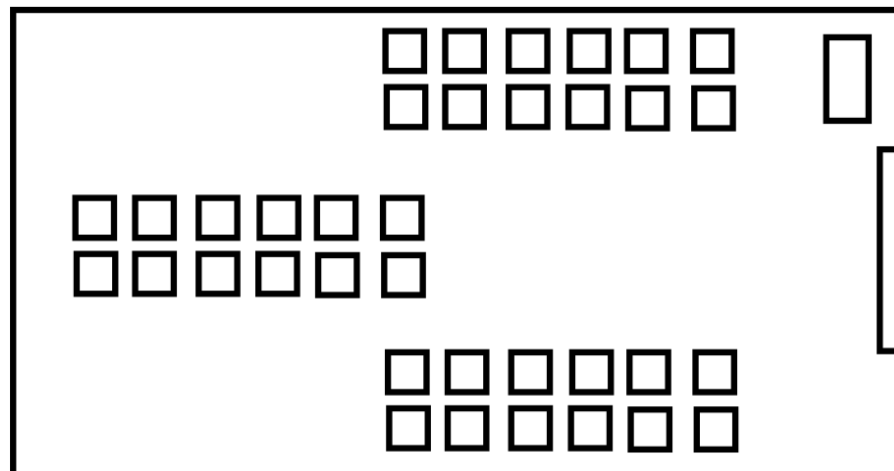
Strategies for Teaching Large Classes

Strategies are specific plans or procedures used in order to introduce, practice and produce the content the educator is teaching. Several activities are included on the strategies

that help professors to manage the classroom (Picard, 2004). Hence, teaching strategies are the methods, techniques or procedures used during an entire lesson for supporting the learning process.

As large classes have presented some difficulties at the moment of teaching, specific strategies that help to manage the course correctly have to be utilized. Nevertheless, there are people who consider that "anything that could be done with 15 students could be done in a class of 100 students" (as cited in Burns and Richards, 2012, p. 98). This is an idea that Scrivener (2012) shares totally; he considers that the strategies used for a small group could be used perfectly for a larger group by finding ways to engage learners from a large class, and make them work properly in that context. In addition, he mentions some techniques that he considers helpful for working with large classes.

The techniques suggested by Scrivener (2012) in order to manage better large groups are the following: 1) Pair and group work in which students use the language by themselves; 2) Know students and learn their names in order to show confidence in the classroom; 3) Efficient materials and classroom management by training students in organization, autonomy and independence; 4) Arrange students according to their needs; 5) Make use of the whole classroom by moving around it and having conversations with pupils. Walking around, keeping eye contact with pupils and showing them confidence while they work can result really favorable for teaching large classes and obtaining better effects (Ishiyama, Miller and Simon, 2015); 6) Make and work with small groups of four or five students in order to teach them independently; 7) Offer short particular lessons after classes to those students who require it; 8) Work with an assistant that helps to distribute materials, to organize the seating changes, etc.; 9) Take advantage of those students who have a higher level in order to make them help the ones who need it.

Creating smaller teaching units and encouraging pupils' independence by establishing clear and well-structured routines are procedures that Smith and Warburton (1997) share with Scrivener considering them as the most beneficial techniques used in large classrooms. The authors Burns and Richards (2012) also recommend working with small-group work in large classes in order to manage the class better by "dividing the class into three or four proficiency and levels, (…) then subdivided them into smaller groups, give them exercises of different difficulty level" (as cited in Burns and Richards, 2012, p.97). This technique will involve lower and higher students in a mixed group in which the higher ones will help the lower ones to solve doubts and clarify the content of a lesson.

The challenge of teaching large classes can result less tedious if learners are involved in innovative and creative pedagogical approaches. Taking advantage of the rapidly developing technology and the learners' interest about it, educators can introduce more interactive activities by making use of cell phone technology and social networking platforms. Thus, students will be more engaged in classes because they always will prefer watching any video clip rather than looking a picture or reading a textbook (Hornsby, Osman and De Matos – Ala, 2013).

Lectures.

UNESCO considers lecturing as "the oldest and still most commonly used teaching method, and it is one most often used for large classes". It is a good strategy because in lectures, the professors have the control of the class, it is the faster way to present the information, and no student intervention is required.

In lectures, it is important to have in mind several aspects. 1) Formulate a question to be answered at the end of the lecture; 2) list the main point to be discussed on the whiteboard; 3) present the lecture in a motivating way. For instance, vary the voice projection, walk around the classroom, get close with pupils and maintain eye contact; 4) make use of the sense of humor, which will maintain learners engaged and focused in the lecture.

Active learning.

Active learning, in contrast to lectures, involves learners performing an activity about the topic that is being explaining by the teacher. Instead of just giving a lecture to the whole class, invite students to participate in short activities in class (UNESCO, 2015). For instance:

- ✓ Draw and label a map, diagram or a chart.
- ✓ Make an outline of how the might solve a problem.
- ✓ List how and why a concept is useful in daily life.
- ✓ Brainstorm why a certain solution might be correct or incorrect.
- ✓ Short in-class writing assignments, in which some students present their writing or pictures to the class in order to motivate discussion.
- ✓ Surveys, questionnaires, quizzes.
- ✓ Reports on how the lecture's topic can be used in real life.
- ✓ Solving a problem by the students.

Games are included in good active-learning strategies for maintaining the learners' interest and motivation in large classes. "Games are very useful in communicative language teaching since they have the three features of communication: information gap, choice and feedback" (as cited in Cabrera and Lombaida, 2016, p. 33). The games proposed for large classes are:

Word Relay.

Dividing the board in two, ask student to form 2 teams. The teacher will write a word on the board. Then, each member of the team will write a word that begins with the last letter of the previous word.

Hot seat.

Placing a chair in front of the board, each member of two teams will sit on the "hot chair". A vocabulary word will be written on the board and their teammates will give him/her clues in order to the participant guess.

Charades.

Dividing the class into two teams, give each team some pieces of paper in which participants will write an action verb. After that, each member of the two teams will pick up one paper from the other team he/she will mime it in order to their teammates guess the action.

Bragging Rights.

Show to the class a dialogue on bragging. Then, provide students with different topics with the purpose of creating their own bragging rights. The funniest bragging rights will win.

Role-play.

Role play consists on "participation in simulated social situations that are intended to throw light upon role/rule contexts governing real life episodes" (as cited in Oduke, 2014, p. 31.) Using this strategy teacher helps students to use the language in real contexts with the aid of short dialogues. Students will prepare their own scripts or they may be given by the instructor, thus students will just memorize it.

Dictogloss.

It is a very simple and interesting activity which consists on a teacher's short dictation about a story. First of all, students will listen to the passage a first time in order to take notes for finding the main idea. Then, they will listen to the passage a second time in order to gather more specific details. Finally, students will work in small groups and they will reconstruct the story with their own words (as cited in Cabrera and Lombaida, 2016, p. 37).

Graphic organizers.

This strategy results very useful when much information is presented and students need to "reduce" it in an easier way in order to understand it clearly. A graphic organizer is a kind of diagram in which the concepts, ideas or knowledge are organized (McKnight as cited in Cabrera and Lombaida, 2016, p. 38).

More activities suggested for working with the communicative method in large classes are the following:

- ✓ Oral summaries of previous lessons.
- ✓ Questions about the current lesson.
- ✓ Ungraded tests to asses understanding.
- ✓ Work with content related to students' real life.

Cooperative learning.

When students are involved in a group work, they tend to work and discuss more, it is possible because learners feel more confident when working in a small group in which, maybe, the participants have more confidence among them. According to UNESCO there are three main group exercises in order to work with cooperative learning.

- ✓ Cognitive development exercises. Involve each group in a real situation or problem that students have to solve.
- ✓ Area exploration exercises. Each group is assigned a topic to be analyzed with the use of printed material, technology, people, etc.
- ✓ Psychomotor exercises. It is a strategy that will help to develop skills such as drawing, editing, quick problem solving, etc. Then, students will evaluate the member of their group.

In cooperative learning, a big number of activities can be performed for facilitating the teaching and learning process. Cabrera and Lombaida (2016) compiled some activities for being used in large classes:

Information gap activities.

Jigsaws and problem solving that contains some parts of information needed to solve.

Numbered heads together.

To answer a question asked by the professor. Only one student of the group answers.

Four corners.

Giving each corner of the classroom a topic, each students will choose one of those topics and they will discuss about it with the other classmates that are in the same group.

Roundtable.

In 4 groups of 10 students, the teacher will formulate a question and each student have to response it until the time is over (1-2 minutes). The team with more correct answer will win.

The performance of learners in the teaching-learning process must be evaluated in order to know whether the objectives and goals are being achieved. Taking the evaluation as a relevant aspect in the teaching-learning process, Cabrera and Lombaida (2016) have considered some activities to be performed in large classes which help students to develop better during the evaluations.

Oral interviews.

Propose four or five questions about a familiar topic. Preferably with questions that requires short answers.

Story retelling.

Listen to a story about a familiar topic. Then, ask students to retell such story in their own words. Work with the aid of flashcards or any other object that helps understand the story.

Cloze test.

Students fill the blanks of a text that the teacher has presented before in order to verify if students have understood the passage.

Writing samples.

Students write short texts about personal and easy topics (ask opinions if students are in an advanced level).

In the following section, several studies will be presented in order to understand better the situations that the teaching-learning process in large classes involves. Researches from around the world have been considered for this section.

Solis and Turner (2016) conducted a study focused on the educational strategies and techniques that professors teaching large classes can use in order to create a positive teacher-learner interaction. Thus, for collecting the data, the author made use of a mixed method considering that the qualitative data will show numerous essential aspects necessary to understand the significance of a positive relationship between teachers and learners in large courses. On the other hand, the quantitative data will show measurements or degrees about the interaction between teachers and learners in large classes.

In addition to these instruments, two online surveys were taken to 222 undergraduate students. From these 222 students, only the 44.1% of them completed the first online Student Perceptions of Teaching Survey, and the 27% of students completed the Building Positive Students-Instructor Interactions in Large Classes online survey.

When the data was analyzed, it was found that three strategies will help the development of the teacher-student relationship. Those strategies are: self-disclosure which comprises

storytelling, disclosing instructor's personal stories and sharing peer stories; caring leadership which includes: fostering mutual respect, valuing students' opinions and connecting the course material to students; and lastly, making the class feel smaller which implicates knowing students' names, using general information about students, and encouraging students' participation.

Finally, those strategies exposed the following results: an increased motivation in classes when the professor showed a clear leadership, shared personal experiences and motivate all students to participate in the classroom. Furthermore, learners felt engaged in the class when they were involved in activities related to real world experiences.

Kerr (2011) carried out a study with the purpose of describing "approaches undertaken by faculty at Ontario universities in dealing with the challenge of maintaining teaching and learning quality in large-sized classes" (p.2). A qualitative method was utilized in the form of consultations which were audio-recorded. The sample was a group of professors from the university who were recommended by the principal authorities of the institution.

The findings showed issues in large enrollment classes such as *student issues* in which the author noticed an increased disinterest from students. They tended to be more distracted with anything and teachers are not able to take the total control of the class. Such situation led to a passive role to the lessons; *course management* in large classes tend to be a weakness for large classes' instructors. They have to employ more time in class planning taking into account each detail, circumstance or event that may occur when teaching in a large course; *resource and institutional support issues* such as the inappropriate physical space in which there are inadequate writing surfaces, poor sound or lighting. Additionally, the instructors have to face with these kind of issues without any support from the authorities; *assessment* is a typical problem of large classes. The majority of the educators consider that the methods for assessing learners in large course are limited. Thus, they tend to use only the typical multiple choice assessments leading to a superficial evaluation in which it is not possible to know whether students are learning well or not.

The author suggested some strategies addressed to instructors in order to conduct large classes properly. The creation of a sense of community was considered for encouraging learners to be more responsible in their own learning. Kerr (2011) also considered reallocation of time and resources and leaving lectures aside as helpful strategies that help to maintain good large classes' management. This can occur by taking advantage of technological resources as a way to maintain students' engagement. Another technique is the promotion and support of a culture of teaching. That is, professors need to be supported by the institutional center with a continuous training.

Andersson, Fäldt, Holmquist and Jansson (2002), conducted a study which is a part of a big project based on improving and developing the teaching-learning process in large courses at Chalmers University of Technology. This part has the purpose of identifying good ideas used in teaching-learning process of large courses. First of all, the authors select the sample which consisted on more than 100 learners from four different courses (Algebra, Computer programming, Strength of materials and Physics). Questionnaires and interviews were applied to teachers and students.

To sum up the results of the questionnaires and interviews it can be said that these instruments aided to show that teachers tend to make use of traditional lectures and students want instructors to change those typical lectures to more interactive lessons in which the students' needs and learning styles to be considered as the most important factor in the teaching-learning process.

Abdalla (2016), conducted a study which aim is "to investigate the need of English language learners in large classes". The author contemplates the students' needs as a significant point "when designing the syllabus, course books, teaching methods and other aids" (p. 1). 89 samples were chosen from 4 faculties for the study. They were randomly selected and they were taken from a second year English course as a University of Khartoum requisite to graduate. These samples study classes with 122 to 208 enrolled students. The instrument employed for gathering the data was a questionnaire.

The results of the analysis exposed the clear importance of being aware of students' necessities. Teachers need to consider all prerequisites that students learning a new language may have in order to create a valid curriculum and to achieve the objectives.

Abdalla suggested to take advantage of the new and modern technology. Making use of these resources, trainers will maintain a good control of the classroom and keep the interaction and the interest from students during the whole lessons.

Nan (2014) carried out a study to discover the effectiveness of cooperative learning in college English large courses in China. The author took samples from two large courses with more than 100 learners at the Guangxi University of Science and Technology. Nan applied two questionnaires, a pre-test and a post-test in order to gather the needed data.

Having analyzed the results of the instruments, it was found by the author, that the cooperative language teaching approach is accepted by students. However, it was also found that the method resulted effective only to a certain degree in large classes.

Nan experienced the following: the cooperative learning method motivates pupils in English and showed better results in comprehensive skills; the cooperative learning method

encourages large classes' students to participate more in classes making the English classes more interactive; the cooperative learning method helps change the traditional teacher-centered model to the student-centered model.

Iipinge (2013), conducted a paper in which he wanted to share his experience with fellow professors who have experimented similar situations when teaching to large classes. The author worked in a public University of Namibia in which more than 17,000 students are enrolled, and the classes are formed by around 1000 pupils. Iipinge chose narration as the main system to conduct his paper. He considers the narration as an appropriate method for sharing the experiences.

In the findings, the researcher talked about his experience when starting to teach large classes. He mentioned that was a great challenge for him because he has never taught large courses before even when he had a "small class" of 170 students in such university. He thought many time to give up. However, the moral support from his colleagues, the diversity of views and learning styles in his group motivated him to continue.

The main challenges he experienced were to maintain the interaction and students' interests in the class. In order to face that situation, Iipinge took advantage of Information and communications technology (ICT). This resource aided him to elaborate creative Power Point presentations with several animations, pictures and video clips helping maintain the learners' motivation.

As large classes present a difficulty to take attendance, the author made use of two strategies that students appeared to appreciate. Those strategies were: taking unannounced quizzes and presenting case studies which students had to find a suitable solution to problems related with real context.

In conclusion the author considered that planning has to be focused to the following factors in order to give a proper lesson in large courses: use of the time, management of large classes, strategies of teaching large classes, student motivations, creativity in classes and organization strategies.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

In this chapter, the method used to conduct the study will be presented. Principally the sample selected, the methods employed, the techniques applied and the instruments required will be explained. In order to achieve the established objectives, a case study was developed considering that it allows researchers to closely investigate real-life phenomenon from a specific area selecting a small sample of individuals (Zainal, 2007).

Setting and participants

In order to develop this case study and to apply the different strategies and activities for working with large classes, a public high school in the city of Loja was selected. In this institution, students per class ranged from 30 to 40.

The sample was a class of 35 students who are around 17 years old. The seating arrangement used by the teacher was "traditional classrooms", that is, in several rows in which students are always in front of the teacher. In this large group, many students caused quite lack of discipline and distracted their classmates. Nevertheless, when working the students were focused, worked in a well manner, and respect the commands that the teacher gave during the assigned tasks

Procedure

A mixed-method approach was used for collecting the data. On the one hand the qualitative method aids to obtain useful information that helps to understand the problem deeply by gathering ideas, reasons or opinions directly from the participants. On the other hand, the quantitative method requires mathematical models and statistics for obtaining better and more precise information about the problem (Odetta, 2016). Taking into account the characteristics of both methodologies, working with a mixed-method results the best option because the combination of the two methods "provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone" (Creswell and Plano-Clark, 2011, p. 5).

One interview for the teacher at the beginning is necessary in order to know the experience that the professor has had with the methodology used by her during her classes. In addition, a pre-survey and a pre-test, at the beginning of the study were applied to students in order to know their English level and the way in which they have been working during the English lessons. Moreover, a post-test was applied in order to know whether or not the strategies and activities used have had a positive influence on the English language teaching and learning process. Students' artifacts were collected too. These instruments helped to check the students' initial level, the progress they have during the application of the new strategies and activities, and their final level at the end of the case study after having applied such strategies and activities as well as.

Once the pre-survey was taken and the information was collected, the researcher proceeded to tabulate such information. The data, about the ten questions was introduced into a computer program in which graphs for each question were created in order to visualize the data in a better manner. In total, ten bar graphs were generated. In the graphs, the options and the percentage of each option was visible.

After the information about the pre-survey and the interview was analyzed, the application of several strategies and activities were considered relevant in order to help the teacher work in a better way with large classes. The strategies applied in the selected group of students were role-plays, interviews, games, information gap activities, oral presentations, graphic organizers, syntax surgery, dictogloss, writing samples and cloze tests. These strategies were applied during eight weeks in which the students received sixteen lessons in total. That is, the learners had two lessons per week of around one hour each. For gathering information about the effectiveness of the lessons by the use of several strategies and activities, observations during the lessons were conducted.

In order to conduct this case study, some important considerations were taken into account. The literature review was one of the most important steps during the process because it allowed the researcher to have a clear understanding on the topic and to compare the results of other studies with the results of this study. Moreover, the researcher's notes from the class observations were useful because they could reflect on the way in which the teacher applied the different strategies and activities, and the reaction of the students when working during the application of those strategies and activities.

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the results and findings from the data collected will be discussed. An interview to the teacher was applied, which objective was to know her opinion about the use and effectiveness of different strategies applied in large classes. In addition, a pre test, a post test, and a questionnaire were applied to the students of 3rd year of "Bachillerato" in a public institution. When analyzing the data several aspects about teaching English in large classes tend to be more prominent. These aspects, will be discussed below and such information involves teacher's methodology, students' behavior, classroom features, among others.

Students' survey
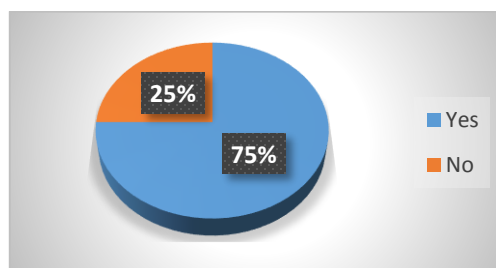
Graph 1. Do you like to study English?
Source: Students' survey.
Author: Narváez Mayury, 2018.

The results in graph 1 show that 75% of the students like to study English. Among the reasons the students provide, it is essential to distinguish the important role the English language plays in their future. They also mention that English is helpful for communicating with people around the world and learning about different cultures. These results show that a great percentage of the students are really interested in learning English because they know the benefits that this language would bring to them.

On the contrary, 25% of the participants indicate that they do not like to study English because they consider that English grammar and pronunciation are difficult for them and hard to learn. Students also indicate that the textbook used during the lessons is boring. These results indicate that the students are not interested in English because they find it really complex in several aspects.
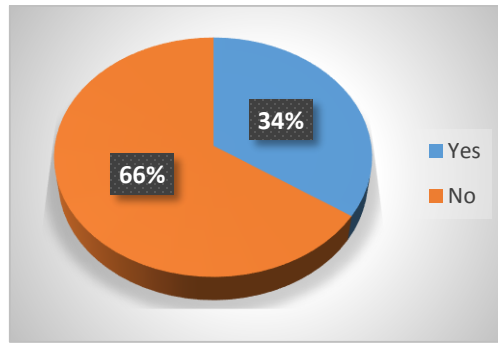
Graph 2. Do you like to study English in large classes?
Source: Students' survey.
Author: Narváez Mayury, 2018.

The results in graph 2 show that a great amount of students (66%) do not like to study English in large classes. There are some reasons why the participants do not like to study in large classes; for example, it is not easy for them to share opinions or ideas, the space in the classroom is not enough for all of the students, there is much mess and lack of discipline in the classroom. The lack of discipline tends to occur in different ways such as "the side-talking during the lecture, arriving late, leaving early, causing a commotion during the final few minutes of class, skipping class, side-talking during class discussions…" (Carbone, 1998, p.75).

On the contrary, 34% of the participants claim that they do not have any problems in a large class. They consider that when studying in large classes the atmosphere and interaction among all the students is good. Another reason is that they learn better through their classmates' experience, personalities or ideas while working in small groups. According to Qi and Wang (2009), working in large classes, learners tend to interact much more. Thus, learners can learn better from others thoughts and experiences (Rohin, 2013).
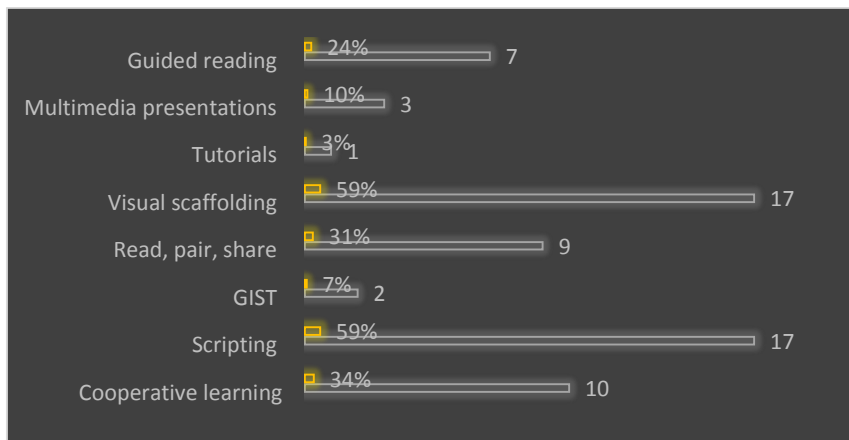
Graph 3. Which of the following strategies and activities are used by the teacher during the lessons?
Source: Students' survey.
Author: Narváez Mayury, 2018.

Graph 3 shows the strategies that are applied by the teacher during the English lessons. The results show that 17 students which represent 59% of the participants claim that the teacher uses visual scaffolding and scripting strategies respectively. Ten students that represent 34% indicated that the teacher also uses cooperative learning to provide them with the opportunity to work in small groups during the lessons. Furthermore, 9 and 7 participants (31% and 24%) state that the English teacher applies *Read, pair, share* and *Guided Reading* strategies accordingly. Finally, 3 students claim that the teacher uses activities such as multimedia presentations, 2 of them say that the teacher applies GIST and 1 of them mention tutorials.

To sum up, it is noticeable that the teacher not only focuses her classes on monotonous lectures, the use of the board or the use of the book, but also she makes use of different and varied activities in order to provide students with opportunities to work in more engaging lessons.
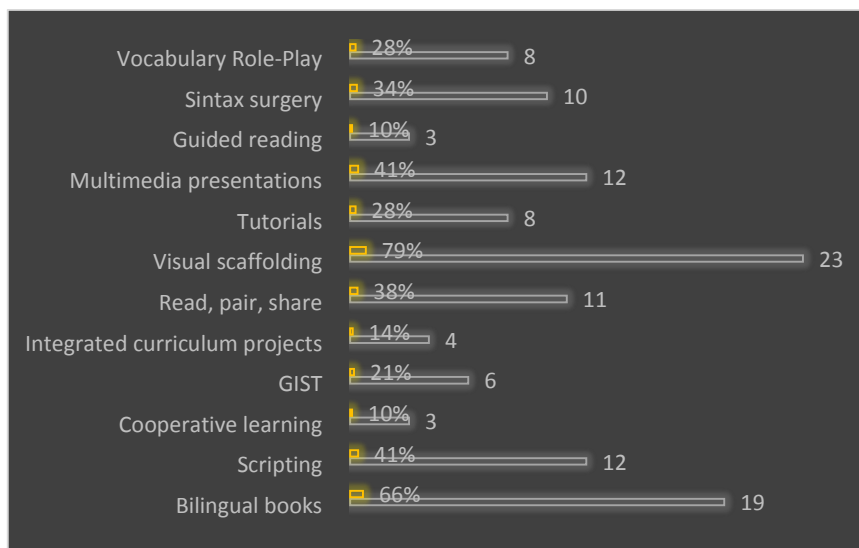
Graph 4. Which of the following strategies and activities help you to improve your understanding?
Source: Students' survey.
Author: Narváez Mayury, 2018.

According to the results in graph 4, most of the participants 23 (79%) say that visual scaffolding strategy is helpful for a better comprehension of the language. This strategy is based on the presentation of pictures which allow learners to understand better the concepts (Herrell and Jordan, 2015). Of course, by showing pictures to introduce the lessons/vocabulary or to clarify some doubts students tend to catch the information easier. "Bilingual books" is another strategy that can be used in the English classroom; in fact, 19 students which represents 56% of the participants believe that the use of bilingual books is also useful for them. Forty-one per cent of the participants (12) claim that multimedia presentations and scripting are the most convenient strategies when learning English. In addition, the strategy *read, pair, share* is perceived by 11 students (38%) as appropriate and 10 participants (35%) think that *syntax surgery* is another strategy that may help them to improve their understanding. Moreover, eight of them consider the *vocabulary role-play* and *tutorials* strategies as the most helpful in order to comprehend the English in a better way. Furthermore, the graph also shows that only 3 participants opt for the *guided reading* and *cooperative learning* strategies as good ones for learning this language. Finally *integrated curriculum projects* and *GIST* strategies were consider as suitable for 4 and 6 students respectively.
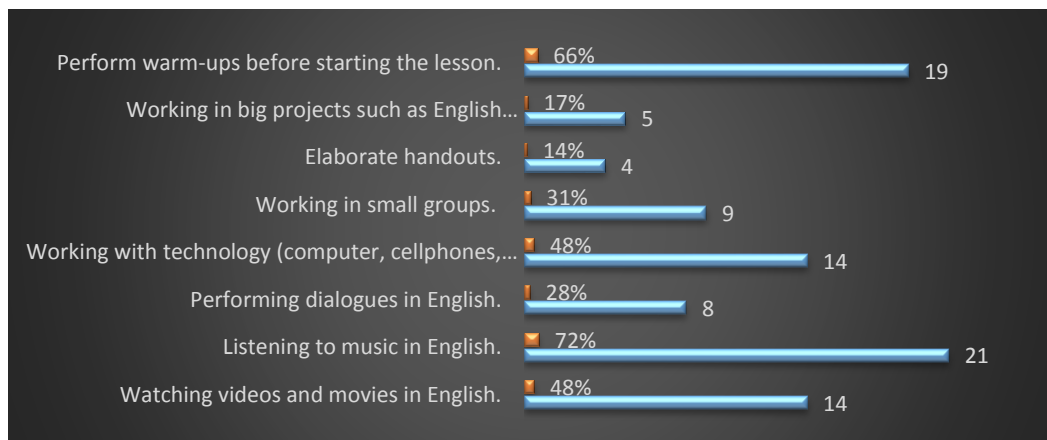
Graph 5. Which of the following activities motivate you to participate during the English lessons?
Source: Students' survey.
Author: Narváez Mayury, 2018.

Motivation plays a relevant role in education. Oxford and Shearin (1994), as cited in Huang 2007, state that motivation has a great impact on how often learners continue using the second language learning strategies, and how long they continue using the second language skills after completing the studies. The results in graph 5 reveal that 21 students, which represent 72% of the participants, consider *listening to English music* activity as the most motivating when participating in English lessons. Nineteen students state that *performing warm-ups* before beginning the classes is motivating. In addition, 14 learners believe that activities such as *working with technology* and *watch videos/films* in the foreign language are the most motivating. Other activities were less considered as motivating or convenient by the ones polled. For example, *working in small groups* results an interesting activity for only 9 students (31%). However, it is commonly used by their teacher during the lessons as shown in graph 3. Other activities such as *performing short dialogues* is considered as motivating by 8 learners, *participating in big English projects* by 5 of the students and, *make brochures* by 4 of them.
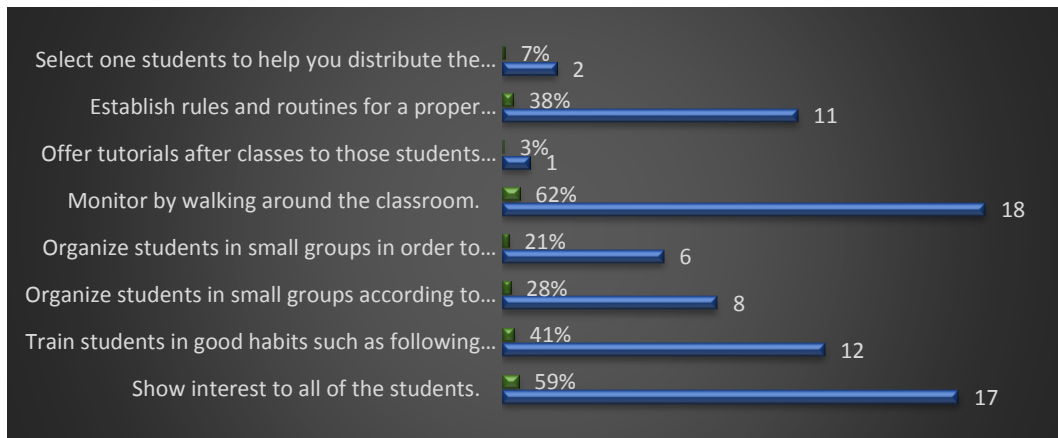
Graph 6. Which of the following techniques does your teacher use during the English lessons?
Source: Students' survey.
Author: Narváez Mayury, 2018.

The results in graph 6 show that 18 students claim that *monitoring the class by walking around the classroom* is the technique mostly used by the teacher. This technique is really useful in order to obtain better effects when working in large classes according to Ishiyama, Miller and Simon (2015). In addition, 17 students (59%), indicate that another common technique used by the teacher during the lessons is the following: *to show interest and confidence to students*. The technique "*To establish rules for a proper functioning in the classroom"* is applied during the English lessons according to 11 learners. In addition, a less amount of the participants indicate that their educator also employs the following techniques: *to organize the pupils in small groups according to their level, to form groups in order to teach them independently, to select students that help the teacher to deliver material or monitor the class,* and *to offer tutorials after classes* which is the technique less applied by the teacher according to 1 student.
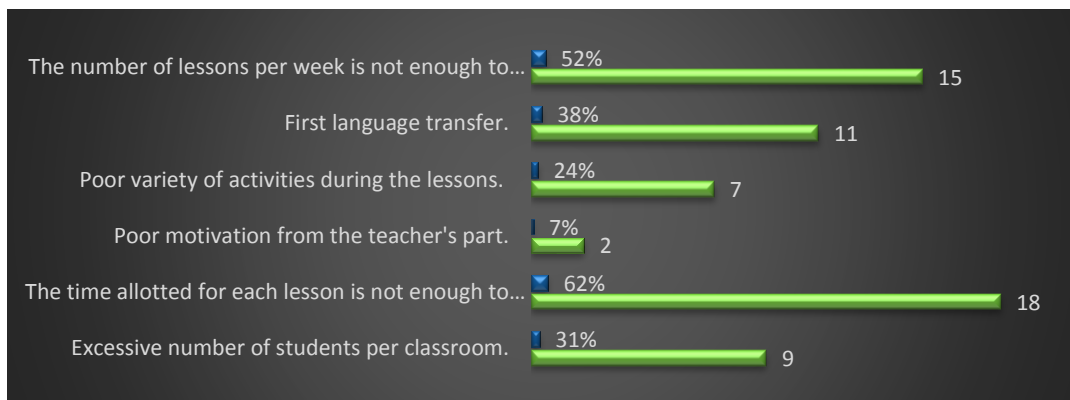
Graph 7. Which of the following aspects do you think affect negatively the English lessons?
Source: Students' survey.
Author: Narváez Mayury, 2018.

Graph 7 shows results about what are the aspects that affect negatively the English lessons. According to the majority of the participants (18 and 15 students respectively), the time alloted for English lessons per week is not enough for developing all the activities, practicing the language or paying attention to all students, which cause poor understanding of the language. As Loh (2016) claims, in large classes, "teachers have limited time to focus on the needs of slow learners and are forced to neglect them to keep pace with the prescribe time allocation for each learning area". Besides that, 11 of the participants claim that the most relevant aspect that affects the English understanding is the language transfer. For example, they tend to translate Spanish words literally into English which leads to many misunderstandings. In addition, 9 students which represents 31% of the participants believe that large classes is the main aspect that affects negatively to the English subject, meanwhile 7 pupils (24%) state that a little variety of activities is the main cause for not good lessons. Finally, 2 students say that a poor motivation from the teacher is the main aspect that disturbs the teaching process in this subject.
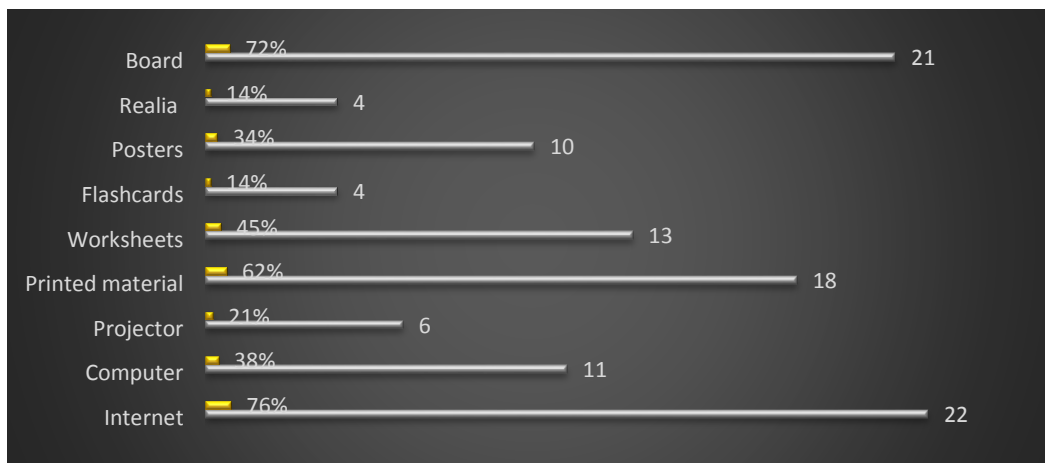
Graph 8. Which of the following resources or materials do you consider as helpful for learning English?
Source: Students' survey.
Author: Narváez Mayury, 2018.

The resources are really important in the English language teaching-learning process because they help educators to create and put into practice diverse strategies for more interactive and interesting lessons. The results in graph 8 show that most of the students, 22 and 21, consider the Internet and the board as the most helpful resources for learning English respectively. According to Hornsby, Osman and De Matos – Ala (2013), the use of cell phones and social networking platforms will engage pupils in classes because they will prefer watching any video clip rather than looking a picture or reading a textbook. Besides that, 18 and 13 learners (62% and 45%) state that the best resources are the printed material. For example: worksheets, magazines, books, etc. The pupils also consider others kind of resources as relevant for the teaching – learning process. Those resources are: the computer, mentioned by 11 students; posters are important for 10 students; *realia* and flash cards are consider the most significant for 4 students.
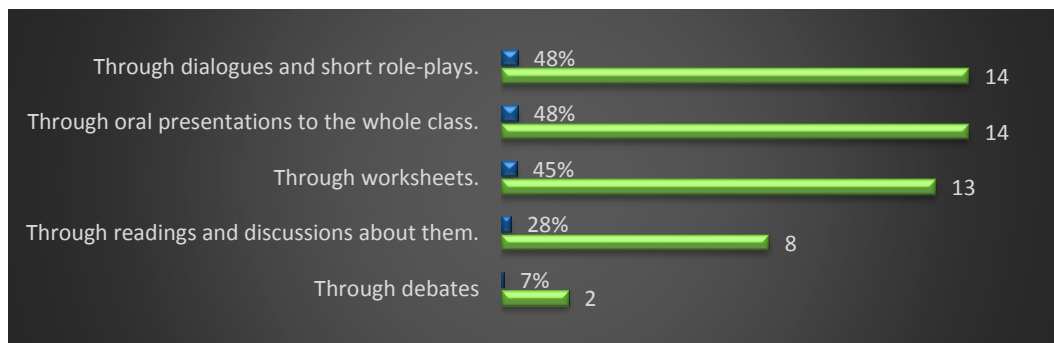
Graph 9. In which way do you like to work in groups?
Source: Students' survey
Author: Narváez Mayury, 2018.
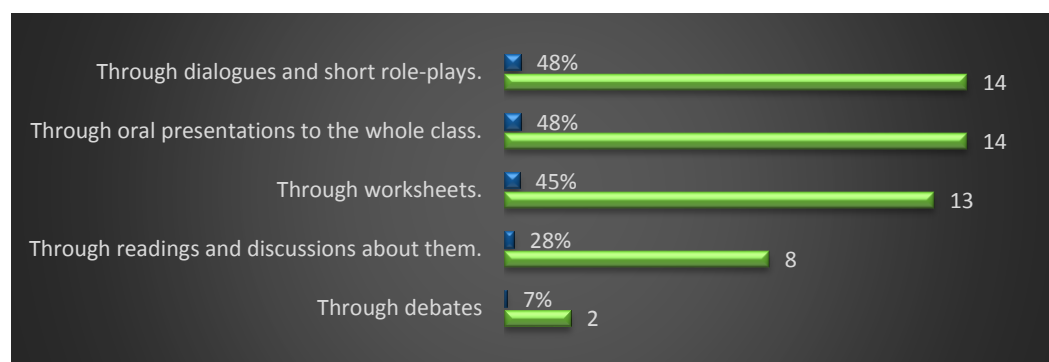
Graph 10. In which way do you like to work in pairs?
Source: Students' survey
Author: Narváez Mayury, 2018.
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According to graphs 9 and 10, when working in small groups or pairs, 16, 14 and 13 students which represent 55%, 48% and 45% of the participants accordingly, prefer to work through dialogues and short role-plays, oral presentations in front of the class and with worksheets. That means, learners feel more comfortable when working on dynamic activities in which they have to prepare something such as a dialogue and to act it out, or explain a presentation to the whole class. On the other hand, 8 pupils (28%) claim that they prefer to work with readings and discussions about those readings. Finally, only 3 of the participants (10%) prefer to work with debates during English classes.

To conclude, the students are conscious that studying in large classes is hard even more when the time allotted for the English lessons is not enough. They consider that the best option is to work with the cooperative learning strategy in which all the learners have to work together. In this way, they feel more confident and participative during the activities.

Application of the strategies

      Week 1.

In the first week, games, syntax surgery, and role-play were the strategies selected for the application during the English lessons. In order to apply these strategies, the teacher had to divide the class into small groups. Then, when working with the first activity, several students had a few difficulties at the moment of thinking on the participle form of a verb, they did not remember it or they did not know it. So, in this activity not all of the students felt confident to participate. With the syntax surgery activity, students felt confused, it was difficult for them to find any mistake in the sentences because they did not understand them, so they tended to reorder the sentences in either way regardless of the coherence of the sentence. For that reason, the teacher decided to change some difficult sentences into easier ones, which allowed students to work better. Lastly, another strategy was applied in this first week, it was role-play which consists on stimulating students to participate and using the language in real situations (as cited in Oduke, 2014, p. 31). In this case, students worked in pairs in order to write and perform a short dialogue. However, not all pairs had the opportunity of performing the dialogue because the time allotted for the lesson was not enough, so the teacher could not check if all their pupils were using the past perfect tense correctly. After the application of the strategies, it can be said that students did not feel motivated in the first week so they did not show much interest in the lesson.

      Week 2.

During the second week, information gap activities were selected and applied. First, the teacher introduced the new vocabulary with the use of some flashcards. Then, the students had to work in small groups of four in which pairs were also formed. Hence, in each group, pair 1 had to read a short story to the pair 2 in order to the pair 2 complete a table with missing information about the story. The students did not show difficulties for understanding the story. Conversely, the students did not understand the questions so the teacher tried to explain them in other words. Nevertheless, the learners did not understand the questions yet, hence the teacher translated them into Spanish. Furthermore, most of the students did not make use of complete sentences for answering the questions as the teacher asked. They only wrote single words directly, so the teacher could not check if those students were able to use the present perfect tense correctly. Most of the students who wrote complete sentences did it in a correct manner with very few slips in the use of the participle form of the verbs which showed a little advance. In week 2, students showed a little more confidence and they were more focused during the development of the activities.

Week 3.

In the third week, games and writing samples strategies were applied. In this case, students also worked in small groups during games. Some of the pupils showed more confidence, participation and collaboration with their classmates during this activity. Moreover, as the students had to provide the verbs to work with, they chose regular verbs mostly, so they did not have much difficulties to write them into their participle form. On the other hand, when writing samples, learners worked individually in order to write a short text about what had they done at a specific hour of the day yesterday. As the learners seemed a little worried because it was the first time they had to work alone without any help, the teacher decided to model the activity providing a structure to follow accompanied by few examples. In spite of that, many of the students opted for asking help to other classmates. During this week learners did not feel very confident when working alone and they needed the aid of the teacher to model the activity first or to explain the activity a second time. In this case teacher controlled the activity in a good manner by modelling the activity when she noticed that is was not clear for the students.

Week 4.

Throughout the week 4, the pupils worked with gerunds and infinitives. Three new activities were applied: games, cloze test and information gap strategies were selected. Students worked in groups of 4 during the game and the cloze test. They did not show much difficulties in understanding the instructions of the game, hence they played it comfortably. Nevertheless, they seemed a little more confused during the cloze test because they did not know whether to use infinitive or gerund. Thus, most of them opted to use the infinitive form of the verb even though they forgot the "to" particle in some cases, which is a typical error that they usually commit.

When working with information gap activities, students did not follow all the instructions that their teacher explained. They were supposed to guess the information about a classmate. However, they asked for almost all the information to the other classmate. As a consequence, the teacher had to repeat the instructions, but this time in Spanish. In spite of that, some of the pupils continued to asking the information to their classmates and some of them did it in Spanish. These facts mean that students always need a little bit of their first language during the lessons in order to understand and work correctly.

During the application of the strategies, it was observed that the students showed confidence during the activity; however, they still need an extra explanation, some examples or a model to follow in some activities in order to students have the ideas very clear.

Week 5.

In this week, students continued working with gerunds and infinitives, and the strategies applied were: games and gap information. As games resulted dynamic, interesting and motivating for students in large classes (UNCESCO,2015), it was considered suitable to continue working with games. In this case, students felt more comfortable and participative, although not all pupils participated most of them did it. Besides that, when working with the gap information activity, students needed teacher's help for developing the activity because they did not understand some words. Furthermore, they did not have enough time to finish the activity, it was incomplete. However, while working on it they felt comfortable and they worked well with the activity. In conclusion, during this week the students feel more confidence in comparison to the first weeks. This means that the teacher has used in a proper way the strategies during this week. She did all her best to motivate the students to participate actively in the lessons.

Week 6.

In the sixth week, pupils worked with the same topic through the following strategies: games, gap information, graphic organizer and oral presentations. These activities were worked in groups. The game resulted a little difficult to develop because the students had to make complete sentences. Thus, they tended to omit the "to" particle before the verbs and they wrote the verb only in its base form. This indicates that students still have problems at the moment of writing complete sentences by themselves, and that they need a structure or example used as a guide. When working with the gap information strategy, students only had to complete sentences by writing the correct form of the verbs already given. So this activity was easier for the students who had few mistakes in the activity.

For the oral presentation strategy, students had to make a graphic organizer in which they included the rules about the use of gerunds and the infinitives. Students worked in small groups which were provided with the information about the topic. They did not have any complication, however, the time was not enough to present the information to the rest of the class. The oral presentations were developed the next class.

During the oral presentations, only one or two pupils had the opportunity to talk and explain the topics because of the limited time. Few students showed confidence on what they were saying and most of them just read the information from the signs.

To sum up, during this week the students worked with some difficulties above all with the activity in which they had to work individually or when they had to present something in front of the class. This means that the students did not feel very comfortable with these kind of activities.

Week 7.

In the seventh week, students studied verbs and adjectives followed by prepositions. For this week, interview and graphic organizer strategies were applied. During the interview, students seemed a little confused, so the teacher decided to write the questions on the board. Thus, the pupils were able to answer them easily even though not all the students had the opportunity to participate because of the time.

When working with the graphic organizer, students had fill the table with their own information and then ask for information to other classmates. Most of them tended to ask and answer in Spanish despite of the teacher insistence of talking in English. They did not have many problems in this activity. As the time was not enough, students had to discuss the information the next class. Hence, during the next class, the teacher selected some students randomly. It was noticeable that the pupils were able to express themselves in a good manner although not all of them had the opportunity to participate.

During the application of the strategies in week 7, it was observed that the teacher put the strategies into practice really well by providing a guide that helped the students to understand the questions, thus they felt more confident. Moreover, when the teacher selected the participants randomly in the two strategies, she tried to do it by giving the opportunity to all students for participating.

Week 8.

In the last week, the students worked with the same topic, verbs and adjectives followed by prepositions. In this case, one of the strategies selected was role-play in which students had to create a short dialogue with some questions provided by the teacher. Students were comfortable during the activity because they already had worked with those questions before. The teacher monitored the class every moment clarifying doubts that the learners had. Finally, not all the groups were able to present their dialogues and those groups had to present the role-play the next class. Another strategy used was information gap. In this activity students had to complete some information about other 2 classmates, then someone read it aloud in order to other students guess the person he/she is talking about. Students only had time to complete the information about their mates, however they did not share such material with the rest of the class. Therefore, the teacher did not have the opportunity to check the whole work. As a consequence, she had to review the information individually from the worksheet. The teacher noticed that the dialogues were clear and that the students made a good use of the prepositions. Even though she was not able to check the performance and development of the role plays, she perceived the learners engaged when working on such task.

It was obvious that the main problem in a large class was the not enough time for developing all the activities already planned. Sometimes it was necessary to take some minutes of the next class to complete the previous activity which decreased the time of the new lesson. In addition, as some authors claim, large classes always will "create lack of communication, discipline, assessment and individual attention" (Rohin, 2013).

Students' Pretest and Post test

The application of a pretest and a post test is relevant for this case study because the results will help to determine whether the strategies and the way they have been applied have allowed to the students to acquire the English language skills according to their level or not.

The pretest was applied at the beginning of the study and it included 10 questions which were designed by the researcher. The questions covered the following topics: Present Perfect Tense, Past Perfect Tense, Gerunds and Infinitives, Prepositions after Verbs and Prepositions after adjectives. The sample were 29 students who filled out the tests.

On the other hand, a post test was applied after the application of the strategies. The post test covered the same topics and it included 10 questions as well.

After analyzing the results of the pretests, it was clearly noticeable that students do not have a good level of the English language. Even though most of them filled out almost the entire test, many of the answers were incorrect. They had more difficulties with the use of the present perfect tense. Students got confused and used the past simple form instead of the correct form which was the present perfect form. Besides that, they wrote incomplete answers in which the auxiliary verb "have" was omitted. On the contrary, in the post test, pupils already made use of this auxiliary verb when writing the sentences in this tense. Furthermore, most students had less mistakes when using the participle form of the verbs.

When dealing with gerunds and infinitives in the pretest, several learners got good results. However, the most common mistake the learners had is that many of them tended to omit the particle "to" when writing a verb in its infinitive form. Besides that, some of the learners tended to write all the verbs in their base form regardless if they had to be written in gerund or infinitive. Nonetheless, in the post test, some students showed a little advance and made use of the particle and use the gerund form of the verbs too. Although in many cases, the form of the verb was incorrect. That is, when the sentences required an infinitive form, some students wrote the gerund form, and vice versa.

The last topic that students work with during the pretest was prepositions after verbs and after adjectives. In this case, most of the pupils did not make a correct use of the prepositions. Many of them did not know the meaning of the prepositions, verbs or adjectives which

complicated the development of the test' activities. Moreover, the students did not present much improvement when took the post test. Most of them were still confused about what is the correct preposition that comes after some verbs and adjectives, hence they just wrote

In conclusion, after the pre and post-tests analysis, it can be said that the new strategies and activities applied during the lessons in the third year of Bachillerato were suitable and helpful for the learners because many of them showed positive results in the post test. Such improvement indicates that the strategies selected are appropriate for working with large classes.

Teacher's interview – before and after the application of the strategies

In order to collect the teacher's information about her experience teaching English in large classes, a survey with 6 opened questions and 6 multiple choice questions were designed and applied; 12 questions in total.

The teacher was asked about her experience during the time she has been working as an English teacher. She states that she has been working as an English teacher for 12 years, but only 5 years in large classes with 35-40 students. Furthermore, she says that it is hard to work with these kind of courses because not all of the learners have the opportunity to participate and it is not possible to perform more interactive activities such as warm-ups or games.

Other aspects she considers as negative when teaching in large classes are the following: the poor interest from the students' part and the time allotted for each lesson, which is not enough for students learning the lessons and working in all the planned activities, even more when the lessons per week are few. Also as Loh (2016) says, the quality of learning is affected directly by the time together with the number of students in a classroom. For that reasons, and according to her experience, she considers that teaching in small classes is better for performing more different activities.

In addition, she believes that the writing and speaking skills are the ones that have caused more difficulties when teaching in large classes. For that, she makes use of group works, role-plays and games because she considers those strategies help to motivate learners to pay more attention. Nevertheless, she states that she does not like to teach in large classes because of the time which is very limited to provide equal attention to all learners. Another reasons she considers as negative are the following: in large classes it is difficult to control the discipline and the classroom space it is not enough for a large class. Consequently, she has made use of rows as seating arrangement because she can have more control on the student's discipline.

However, Scott and Ytreberg (1991) considers that working in small groups of four helps to interact better among the participants.

The teacher claims that she makes a lot of use of the cooperative learning, scripting and syntax surgery strategies to teach large classes. Thus, during the lessons, she applies activities such as watching videos, listening to music, performing dialogues, working in small groups and performing warm-ups when it is possible. These activities are applied with the aid of forming groups for teaching them independently, monitoring them while the activities and training pupils in good habits, for example when entering to the classroom they should follow an order, or when other classmates are talking, the rest of the class should respect and make silence.

To sum up, the teacher asserts that teaching in large classes is kind of hard because the time is limited so she cannot apply as many strategies as she would like. In addition, she states that the lack of discipline is a constant problem. She has to work with small groups in order to control and manage the group in a better way.

On the other hand, another teacher's survey with 5 questions was elaborated after the application of the new strategies. In the survey, the teacher was asked about her experience during the application of such strategies and activities for large classes.

The teacher claims that she noticed her students more motivated and they participated actively in all the activities performed in class. She also states that some of the strategies helped the students to understand better the new contents, so she could apply the strategies in practical exercises for her pupils.

According to the teacher, the learners felt more motivated to learn English when learning through games and group activities because they felt more engaged to participate and they enjoyed a lot. She also considers that Information Gap Activities showed good results in her classes.

In conclusion, the teacher claims that she clearly noticed an improvement in her lessons and her students were motivated when working with the new strategies. Besides that, she states that she will continue working with these strategies and activities because she believes that they are easy to implement in all classes, they increase students' motivation and they are practical to work with large groups. Therefore, with the aid of such strategies and a good seating arrangement the teacher can create a good environment in which students work adequately as Roth (2015) stated.

CONCLUSIONS

- The lack of time and the lack of discipline are aspects that limit the appropriate application of the strategies.

- The use of cooperative learning helped the teacher to have a better control of the discipline in the classroom because working in groups allow each student to be assigned a task, hence they were very focused on completing each task as part of a team.

- The students felt very comfortable, confident and motivated when working with engaging activities in which they are able to participate actively. Such strategies are the following: role-play, information gap, and games.

- The results in the post test reveal that the application of some strategies such as information gap, games and cooperative learning are useful to provide students with opportunities to learn the language in a more meaningful and dynamic way.

- Present perfect, gerunds and infinitives are the topics in which the students revealed more advance in the results provided in the post test.

- Modelling the activity and providing examples before starting to work with the activity result really suitable because of the learners work with more confidence on what they are doing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The teachers that are in charge of large classes should make use of more active, dynamic and motivating strategies such as cooperative learning and games in order to catch the students' attention, work and control the class better.

- In large classes, the teachers should work in small groups of no more than 3 or 4 students because in that manner the teacher can teach them independently by providing individual feedback, giving examples or modelling the activities.

- The teachers should make a suitable use of seating arrangement creating a proper environment to work. For that, it would be proper divide the classroom into three smaller groups arranged in two lines or in circles each one.

- Teachers who work in large classes should be trained in the use of suitable strategies that can improve the teaching-learning process in these environments.

- The teachers should make use of enjoyable warm-ups which engage students in all activities from the beginning of the class.

- The teachers should model the activities before working with them because learners would know what to do immediately. Thus, the teacher would avoid much lack of time.

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ANNEXES

MODALIDAD PRESENCIAL

TITULACIÓN DE INGLÉS

Dear teacher:

This survey has as objective to know your opinion about the use and effectiveness of different strategies applied in large classes.

The information that you will provide below will be used only with academic and research purposes.

TEACHER'S INTERVIEW

1. **How long have you worked as an English teacher? And, how long have you taught in classes with more than 30 students?**

_____
_____

2. **Use the following lines to share your teaching experience in large classes.**

_____
_____

3. **Do you consider that teaching in small classes is better? Why?**

_____
_____
_____

4. **According to your experience, what are the skills that have caused more difficulties when teaching in large classes?**

Reading	( )
Writing	( )
Listening	( )
Speaking	( )

- What kind of strategies or activities have you used in order to aid students to improve such skills?

_____
_____
_____
_____

5. Do you like to teach in large classes? Why?

Yes	( )
No	( )

Mark with an X your reasons.

Because the class can be divided in small groups.	( )
Because more ideas, opinions and suggestions are proposed by the students.	( )
Because students learn better through their classmates' experiences and personalities.	( )
Because there are more opportunities for teacher-student and student-student interaction.	( )
Because the time is not enough to provide equal attention to all of the students.	( )
Because it is difficult to manage discipline issues.	( )
Because classroom space is not enough for a big number of students.	( )
Because it is complicated to have a total control of all the pupils.	( )

Others:

_____
_____

6. Which of the following strategies and activities do you use during the lesson?

Cooperative learning (Work in groups assigning to each member a duty).	( )
Bilingual books	( )
Scripting (Work in groups/pairs with short dialogues).	( )

GIST (Work in groups reading a text and making summaries among all members).	(	)
Read, pair, share (Work in groups reading texts and answering informative questions).	(	)
Visual scaffolding (Work with the use of pictures or any visual material.	(	)
Tutorials (Extra classes at the end of the day in order to enrich the content.	(	)
Multimedia presentations (Use of audio and video equipment, computers, etc.	(	)
Guided reading (Work in small groups reading a book and discussing about it.	(	)
Sintax surgery (Make students know the correct order of the words).	(	)
Vocabulary Role-Play (Perform skits using new vocabulary in real contexts).	(	)

Others:

_____
_____
_____

7. Which of the following activities have helped you in order to motivate the students to participate in English classes?

Watching videos and movies in English.	(	)
Listening to music in English.	(	)
Performing dialogues in English.	(	)
Working with technology (computer, cellphones, etc)	(	)
Working in small groups.	(	)
Elaborate handouts.	(	)
Working in big projects such as English festivals/fairs/exhibitions for the whole institution.	(	)
Perform warm-ups before starting the lesson.	(	)

Others:

_____
_____
_____

8. Which of the following techniques do you use during the lesson?

Show interest to all of the students.	( )
Train students in good habits such as following an order when entering to the classroom, raising the hands when they want to talk, respecting when others talk, etc.	( )
Organize students in small groups according to their level and necessities.	( )
Organize students in small groups in order to teach each group independently.	( )
Monitor by walking around the classroom.	( )
Offer tutorials after classes to those students who require it.	( )
Establish rules and routines for a proper management of the lesson.	( )
Select one students to help you distribute the material, monitor the class, etc.	( )

Others:
_____
_____
_____

9. Which of the following aspects do you think affect the teaching process in large classes?

The time allotted for each lesson is not enough to complete the assigned activities.	( )
The number of lessons per week is not enough to teach English in large classes.	( )
Poor interest and dedication from the students' part.	( )
First language transfer.	( )
Variety of learning styles.	( )
The age in which students started to study English.	( )

Others:
_____
_____
_____

10. What kind of material do you consider are helpful at the moment of teaching English in large classes?

_____
_____
_____
_____

11. What kind of seating arrangement do you use in order to management large classes in a better way? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____

12. What technique have you used in order to control discipline in large classes? Have they showed good results? In which way?

_____

_____

_____

_____

MODALIDAD PRESENCIAL

TITULACIÓN DE INGLÉS

Estimado estudiante:

This questionnaire has as objective to know your opinion about the activities and strategies performed in large classes.

The information you will provide below will be used only for academic and research purposes.

STUDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

1. **Do you like to study English?**

Yes	( )
No	( )

¿Why?

Mark with (X) the reasons.

English is important for my academic/work future.	( )
English allows me to communicate with people around the world.	( )
English allows me to know other cultures.	( )
English is the most learned language arounf the world.	( )
English grammar is difficult.	( )
There is no motivation from the teachers.	( )
The text book is boring.	( )
The pronunciation is difficult.	( )

Others:

_____
_____

2. **Do you like to study English in large classes?**

Yes	( )
No	( )

Why?

Mark with (X) the reasons.

Because we can work with group ativities.	( )
Because there are more ideas, opinions and suggestions from students.	( )
Because we learn better through the classmates' experiences and personalities.	( )
Because there are a proper interaction between the students and the teacher creating a good environment in the classroom.	( )
Because the teacher does not have enough time to pay attention to all students.	( )
Because there are much mess and lack of discipline.	( )
Because the classroom is not appropriated for many students.	( )
Because it is not easy to give opinions or ideas when working in a large class.	( )

Others:

_____

_____

3. **Which of the following strategies and activities are used by the teacher during the lessons?**

Cooperative learning.	( )
Scripting.	( )
GIST.	( )
Read, pair, share.	( )
Visual scaffolding.	( )
Tutorials.	( )
Multimedia presentations.	( )
Guided reading.	( )

Others:

_____

_____

4. **Which of the following strategies and activities help you to improve your understanding?**

Bilingual books.	( )
Scriptin.	( )
Cooperative learning.	( )
GIST.	( )
Integrated curriculum projects.	( )
Read, pair, share.	( )
Visual scaffolding.	( )
Tutorials.	( )
Multimedia presentations.	( )
Guided reading.	( )
Sintax surgery.	( )
Vocabulary Role-Play.	( )

Others:

_____

_____

5. **Which of the following activities motivate you to participate during the English lessons?**

Watching videos and movies in English.	( )
Listening to English music.	( )
Performing dialogues.	( )
Working with technology (computer, cellphone, etc).	( )
Working in small groups.	( )

Elaborate handouts.	(	)
Working in big projects such as English festivals/fairs/exhibitions.	(	)
Performing warm-ups before starting the lesson.	(	)

Others:
_____
_____

6. Which of following techniques does your teacher use during the English lessons?

To show interest to all of the students.	(	)
To train students in good habits such as following an order when entering to the classroom, raising the hands when they want to talk, etc.	(	)
To organize students in small groups according to their level and necessities.	(	)
To organize students in small groups in order to teach each group independently.	(	)
To monitor the class by walking around the room.	(	)
To offer tutorials after classes to those students who require it.	(	)
To establish rules and routines for a proper management of the lesson.	(	)
To select one student to help distribute the material, monitor the class, etc.	(	)

Others:
_____
_____

7. Which of the following aspects do you think affect negatively the English lessons?

Excessie number of students per classroom.	(	)
The time allotted for each lesson is not enough to complete the assigned tasks..	(	)
Poor motivation from the teacher's part.	(	)
Poor variety of activities during the lessons.	(	)
First language transfer.	(	)

The number of lessons per week is not enough to teach English in large classes.	(	)

Others:
_____
_____

8. Which of the following resources or materials do you consider as helpful for learning English?

Internet	(	)
Computer	(	)
Projector	(	)
Printed material	(	)
Worksheets	(	)
Flashcards	(	)
Posters	(	)
Realia	(	)
Board.	(	)

Others:
_____
_____

9. In which way do you like to work in groups?

Through debates	(	)
Through readings and discussions about the texts.	(	)
Through worksheets.	(	)
Through oral presentations.	(	)
Through dialogues and short role-plays.	(	)

Others:
_____
_____

10. In which way do you like to work in pairs?

Through debates.	( )
Through readings and discussions about the texts.	( )
Through worksheets.	( )
Through oral presentations.	( )
Through dialogues and short role-plays.	( )

Others:

_____
_____

UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA
La Universidad Católica de Loja

Titulación de Inglés

Pre – Test and Post - Test

Name: _____

Grade: _____

Date: _____

1. Write the participle forms of the following irregular verbs.

Be	
Go	
Come	
Buy	
Have	
Do	
Sing	

2. Write sentences in present perfect simple.

- **They/ask/a question**_____
- **He/speak/English**_____
- **I/be/in my room**_____
- **We/not/sing/in the karaoke**_____
- **Annie/not/forget/herhomwork**_____

3. Write the past participle form of the following verbs.

Be	
Catch	
Understand	

Write	
Become	
Fly	
Speak	

4. **Complete the sentences in Past Perfect simple.**

- **She lost the book that my mum (gave) _____ to me.**
- **I run downstairs because I (hear) _____ a ghost.**
- **They were angry because he _____ (not/help) them to finish the project.**
- **He (not/play) _____ tennis before that day.**
- **(you/finish) _____ your homework before you went to the mall?**

5. **Fill in the blanks with the verbs in brackets.**

- **I like _____ (go) out with friends.**
- **She doesn't like _____ (play) any sport.**
- **He hates _____ (cook).**
- **She loves _____ (swim).**
- **My mother likes _____ (run).**

6. **Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.**

- **Do you like _____ (buy) clothes?**
- **I want _____ (have)guitar lessons.**
- **Carmen doesn't like _____ (clean) her room.**
- **My mother hates _____ (drive).**
- **We would like _____ (go) shopping.**
- **I want _____ (watch) TV tonight.**

7. **Fill in the blanks with the correct prepositions from the box.**

> ## in / by / for / with

- I want to speak _____ the manager please.
- The TV is _____ the corner of the room
- A university is where you study _____ a degree
- The window was broken _____ my brother.

8. **Fill in the blanks with the correct prepositions.**

- I will specialize _____ physics. (*IN, FOR, WITH*)

- Biology is a degree that appeals _____ me. (*TO, BY, IN*)

- My best friend applied _____ medicine degree. (*ON, TO, ABOUT*)

- I have not decided _____ what to study at the university yet. (*WITH, ON, FROM*)

9. Fill in the blanks with the correct prepositions from the box.

> ## about/ about / for / with

- We are very excited _____ our trip to Spain next week.

- I was not satisfied _____ the exam results.

- I am responsible _____ training the new students.

- They are serious _____ how to plan the final project.

10. Fill in the blanks with the correct prepositions.

- Are you interested _____ your health? (*FROM, IN, WITH*)

- They are not familiar _____ this topic. (*TO, WITH, FOR*)

- Sophia is really good _____ writing. (*OF, FOR, AT*)

- Children are curious _____ everything. (*ON, ABOUT, FROM*)

MODALIDAD PRESENCIAL

TITULACIÓN DE INGLÉS

Dear teacher:

This survey has as objective to know your opinion about the use and effectiveness of the new strategies applied in large classes.

The information that you will provide below will be used only with academic and research purposes.

TEACHER'S INTERVIEW

1. **Use the following lines to share your teaching experience after applying the new strategies. Have you noticed any change?**

_____
_____
_____

2. **According to your experience, how did the students work with the use of the new strategies?**

_____
_____
_____

3. **How has been the students' behavior after the use of the new strategies?**

_____
_____
_____

4. **According to your experience which of the new strategies were the most useful for teaching in large classes? Why?**

Role-play	( )
Interview	( )

Game	( )
Information gap activities	( )
Oral presentations	( )
Graphic organizers	( )
Syntax surgery	( )
Dictogloss	( )
Writing samples	( )
Cloze tests	( )

_____
_____
_____

5. Would you continue working with those strategies? Why?

_____
_____
_____