



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

ÁREA SOCIO HUMANÍSTICA

TITULACIÓN DE LICENCIADO EN CIENCIAS DE LA EDUCACIÓN

MENCIÓN INGLÉS

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

TRABAJO DE FIN DE TITULACIÓN

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CENTRO UNIVERSITARIO QUITO

2014

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“Yo, Johanna María Pozo García, declaro ser autora del presente trabajo de fin de titulación: “The influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools” de la Titulación de Licenciado Ciencias de la Educación mención Inglés, siendo Dra. Rosario María Burneo directora del presente trabajo; y eximo expresamente a la Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja y a sus representantes legales de posibles reclamos o acciones legales. Además certifico que las ideas, conceptos, procedimientos y resultados vertidos en el presente trabajo investigativo, son de mi exclusiva responsabilidad.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents, thanks to them I'm here; thanks to their support and dedication towards me; and to my son, because he is my motivation, because he is the reason I want to be better, because thanks to him, I will be better.

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RESUMEN

Esta investigación muestra las consecuencias del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje, sean ventajas o desventajas, cuando se enseña a grupos grandes. Esta investigación se realizó con el fin de responder tres preguntas principales: ¿Qué implicaciones institucionales existen en clases grandes durante el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje? ¿Qué implicaciones sociales existen en clases grandes durante el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje? ¿Qué implicaciones psicológicas existen en clases grandes durante el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje?

Los métodos utilizados fueron bibliográficos, instrumentales, descriptivos, cualitativo y cuantitativo. La muestra estaba compuesta por estudiantes de octavo y décimo grado de Educación Básica como también de primer y segundo año de Bachillerato en el Colegio Juan de Salinas en el cantón Rumiñahui, Sangolqui, Ecuador.

Los estudiantes respondieron un cuestionario de 21 preguntas divididas en tres secciones las cuales se describen a continuación; 9 enfocadas al aspecto académico, 5 al aspecto social y 7 al aspecto psicológico. Los resultados fueron analizados mediante el método cuantitativo lo cual demuestra que el número de estudiantes por aula sí afecta al proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje.

Palabras clave: Estudiantes, psicológico, aprendizaje, lenguaje, enseñanza, clase, tamaño, espacio

ABSTRACT

This research shows the teaching-learning consequences, either advantages or difficulties, concerning large classes in Ecuadorian High schools. This investigation was carried out in order to answer three main questions: What instructional implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process? What social implications do large classes have on the learning-teaching process? What psychological implications do large classes have on the learning-teaching process?

The methods used in this work were the bibliographic, instrumental, descriptive, qualitative and quantitative. The sample population was comprised of students from eighth and tenth grade of Basic General Education and first and second year of senior high school at Juan de Salinas School located in canton Rumiñahui Sangolqui, Ecuador.

The students were surveyed using a questionnaire containing 21 statements divided into three sections such as follows: 9 items focusing on academic issues, 5 items of social issues and 7 items of psychological issues. The results were analyzed using quantitative method which shows that the number of students do affect the learning-teaching process.

Key words: Students, psychological, learning, language, teaching, large classes, space.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching of English in Ecuador has not given the expected results because of the large classes, which is part of the reality of Ecuadorian high schools. After six years of studying English, most of students are not able to communicate or speak fluently in English.

The Ministry of Education (2012) has implemented different policies and strategies such as the improvement of curriculum based on international standards. This is the reason why we decided to investigate “The influence of large classes in the English language teaching-learning process in Ecuadorian high schools.

The objective of the study is to answer the following questions:

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

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

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

In order to carry out this investigation, some studies made in other countries will be referred; the first study claims that teaching in large classes can be difficult, such as the one carried out by P. Jimakorn, W. Singhasiri, who investigated Teachers' Beliefs Concerning Large-Class English Teaching at the University Level, he used a questionnaire in order to access the opinions and perceptions of the teachers according to the participants, large classes were found to be more appropriate with a teacher-centred mode of teaching, reading-based contexts and grammar-translation methods as opposed to communicative approaches. To

illustrate, they considered that a large class makes it substantially more challenging for students to develop language skills, especially productive skills.

When students are in a group of work, some of them do a ‘hidden labor’ and do not like to participate with the rest. Thai teachers, as (“The effects of class size on English learning at a Thai university” by W. Richards in 2012 demonstrates) thought that teaching in large classes was difficult in several aspects such as relationships of teachers and students, monitoring and giving feedback and assessment. However, teachers also suggested ways to deal with large classes. For example, teaching management should be well-planned and well organized. This study had as a goal to investigate the relationship between class size and learning in the context of foundation English language courses at a Thai university. The author took the number of students and the grades they had obtained to process the information. According to the author, the significant correlations between class size and grades suggest that class size does affect learning.

A third study to be mentioned is “Large Class Teaching in Resource-Constrained Contexts: Lessons from Reflective Research in Ugandan Primary Schools” by Goretti, M., Opolot, C., Masembe, C., Samson, J., Byamugisha, A., which concentrates on the challenges of teaching and learning in large classes. All teachers who participated in study were female teachers, apart from one.

The methodology used in all of the cases were observation and the collection of interviews. The findings of the study are presented in regard to the challenges that the teachers experienced in the teaching of large classes, what strategies had been developed at individual and institutional levels to improve teaching and learning under the circumstances, and the implications of teachers reflecting on their lessons to large class teaching.

This project benefits to teachers, students, high schools and all Ecuadorian English-education system. It demonstrates worries that are present in a large English class and recommends several ways and techniques that could be used in classes of Ecuadorian high schools in order to improve English teaching-learning.

Some difficulties were found in this research, such as the teacher had not given permission for make surveys to the students, some students did not understand the questions well, even it was explained again it seemed that the questions were not clearly understood.

METHODOLOGY

Setting and Participants

This research was made at “Juan de Salinas” high school, located at Sangolquí-Ecuador. The sample population was comprised of students from eighth and tenth grade of Basic General Education and first and second year of senior high school; although their academic backgrounds differ a little, it did not pose much of a difference; for most of the classes had mixed-age students. They were mostly male students. The age group of the sampling ranged from 12-18 years old.

Procedures

The whole research was carried out approximately during a year. In order to understand the major social, academic and psychological implications that a large class has in the process of learning English in Ecuadorian high schools, some theoretical support was gathered regarding the theme to ensure the validity of this investigation. It was important to investigate theory about this subject in libraries. Several interesting books were found at Católica and Escuela Politécnica Nacional del Ejército universities’ libraries. Useful information was extracted of them and transcribed into information charts. Then, all information was compiled, analyzed and summarized.

The methods used were the bibliographical (also known as investigation), instrumental (the application of surveys), and descriptive (in order to interpret results).

In order to achieve the main goal, this investigation was divided into seven topics: Teaching approaches and methods, Class Size, Managing Learning,

Managing Large Classes, Seating arrangements and Classroom Space and Different Levels of Proficiency, each of which were profoundly surveyed.

The instruments used to gather information was a questionnaire (Annex 1) that included 21 statements. It was divided into three sections: 9 statements about academic implications, 5 statements about social implications and 7 statements about psychological implications. To apply this questionnaire, first authorization was granted from the administration of high school then arranged for a convenient day with the teacher of each class.

The instructions were given in Spanish in order to reduce misunderstanding about what was expected from the participants. Students were asked to fill in surveys designed to measure their level of satisfaction. Once the data was provided, the theoretical background was divided empirically into small chunks designed to cover all the required information to make this investigation possible.

The method used for this research was quantitative. Upon completion of the questionnaires the information was tabulated by hand and entered into an electronic spreadsheet. Here the information was converted into percentages for easier analysis of the three different sections.

DISCUSSION

LITERATURE REVIEW

Different teaching methods will be explained and analyzed according to linguistics and teaching points of view; the first method to be defined will be “Communicative Language Teaching”.

The Communicative Method

The goal of this method is to develop what Hymes (1972) calls the “communicative competence” Littlewood (1981:1) states that “One of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language”. For others, it means using academic procedures where learners work in pairs or groups employing available language resources in problem-solving tasks. Howat (2003) distinguishes between a “strong” and a “weak” version of Communicative Language Teaching; The “weak” version stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching. The ‘strong’ version of communicative teaching, on the other hand, highlights the idea that language is acquired through communication. If the former could be described as “learning to use” English, the latter entails “using English to learn it” (1984:279.)

The Communicative Language Teaching method is a system for the expression of meaning which implies the creation of activities involving real communication scenarios; carrying out meaningful tasks and using language to promote learning. The objectives of this method reflect the needs of the learners;

they include functional skills as well as linguistic objectives previously marked on a syllabus.

The communicative method has proven to be one of the preferred methods in language teaching worldwide; however, it has changed and adapted to new communicative goals. As a result of this change, the “Natural Approach” was born.

Natural Approach

Krashen and Terrell (1987) see communication as the primary function of language, and since their approach focuses on teaching communicative abilities, they refer to the Natural Approach as an example of a communicative approach. “It is similar to other communicative approaches being developed today” (Krashen 1985:1).

Krashen and Terrell (1983) state that “the Natural Approach “is based on an empirically grounded theory of second language acquisition, which has been supported by a large number of scientific studies in a wide variety of language acquisition and learning contexts” During the learning process, the learner may call upon learned knowledge to correct a statement when communicating; this is in line with the monitor hypothesis, which states that there are three conditions to be taken into consideration if the monitoring may succeed: time, form and knowledge of rules (Krashen and Terrell 1983).

The Natural Approach belongs to a tradition of language teaching methods based on observation and interpretation of how learners acquire both first and second languages in non-formal settings, based upon the idea that acquisition is the basis for production ability; therefore, in order for acquisition to take place, the acquirer must

understand messages. The theory of the Natural Approach contains deals mainly with communication skills, thus, comprehension precedes production, production emerges as the acquisition process progresses, and acquisition activities are central.

Due to what has been previously stated, a link between the characteristics of the Natural Approach and the Acquisition-Learning, hypothesis may be created. Another link may be made with the Natural Order Hypothesis which, allowing student errors to occur without undue emphasis on error correction, it allows the natural order to take its course. One of the main methods that share this social base is the Cooperative Language Learning (CLL).

“Cooperative learning is group learning activity organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others.” (Olsen and Kagant1992: 8). Educators were concerned that traditional models of classroom learning were teacher-fronted, and favored majority students.

Cooperative Learning in this context sought to do the following: raises the achievement of all students, including those who are gifted or academically handicapped; helps the teacher build positive relationships among students; gives students the experiences they need for healthy social, psychological, and cognitive development, to provide opportunities for natural second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair and group activities; to enable focused attention on particular lexical items, language structures and, communicative functions through the use of interactive tasks; to enhance learner motivation and reduce learner stress and creating a positive affective classroom climate.

The word “cooperative”, in Cooperative Learning emphasizes another important dimension of CLL. It seeks to develop classrooms that foster cooperation rather than competition in learning. Advocates of CLL in general education stress the benefits of cooperation in promoting learning.

Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups through which students work together to maximize their own and each other’s learning. It may be contrasted with competitive learning in which students work against each other to achieve an academic goal (Johnson et al., 1994:4.) In the last decade there has been a growing interest among ESL/EFL teachers in using cooperative learning activities. Cooperative learning principles and techniques are tools which teachers use to encourage mutual helpfulness in the groups and the active participation of all members. These principles can be seen in the cooperative learning technique Numbered Heads Together (Kagan, 1992) that can be used, for example, in an ESL/EFL reading class. There are four steps in doing Numbered Heads Together: Each student in a group of four gets a number: 1, 2, 3, or 4. The teacher or a student asks a question based on the text the class is reading and students in each group put their heads together to come up with an answer or answers. They should also be ready to supply textual support for their answers. The teacher then calls a number from 1 to 4 and the person with that number gives and explains their group’s answer.

Another method designed to provide “knowledge” in a quick and easier way is the Grammar Translation Method.

As the names of some of its leading exponents suggest (Johann Seidenstücker, Karl Plötz, H. S. Ollendorf, and Johann Meidinger), Grammar

Translation was the offspring of German scholarship and its objective was to know everything about something rather than the thing itself.

The main characteristics of the Grammar Translation Methods are these: Language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating into and out of the translation methods; reading and writing are the major objectives; words are taught through bilingual word lists, dictionary study, and memorization; the sentence is the basic unit of teaching and language practice; accuracy is emphasized (Howatt 1984: 132); grammar is taught deductively; the student's native language is the medium of instruction. Although the Grammar-Translation Method often creates frustration for students, it makes few demands on teachers. The communicative ability is usually acquired quite rapidly; grammatical accuracy, on the other hand, increases only slowly and after much experience using the language. Thus, any grammar-based method which purports to develop communication skills will fail with the majority of students. This usually happens in the American educational system in the third or fourth years of language study or often even later. What is clear, is that most students never make it through this ordeal.

Given the lack of acquired results in learning using memory, the "Total Physical Response" (TPR) was set in action.

Total Physical Response (TPR)

The possibility of the students making errors in early stages is limited simply because the possibilities of oral production are also limited. The students may err only by failing to understand and by executing the command incorrectly. In the other activities of the pre-speaking stage, the only responses which are required are the

names of the other students in the class and perhaps a simple yes or no. Mistakes with these activities usually stem from a misunderstanding of the question or from forgetting the name of the student being described. In either case, unless the instructor has asked the question of an individual student, correction is automatic and immediate since, as in TPR, most of the class will have answered correctly at the same time. Initially, TPR commands are normally given only in oral form. Later, the instructor may wish to write them on the board and let the students copy them in a notebook. This is of course only a copy exercise, but it does allow for the opportunity to see in print what they already have comprehended in the spoken language. Asher's Total Physical Response is "Natural Method" inasmuch as Asher sees first and second language learning as parallel processes. Asher sees three processes as central: Children develop listening competence before they develop the ability to speak; children's ability in listening comprehension is acquired because children are required to respond physically to spoken language and once a foundation in listening comprehension has been established, speech evolves naturally and effortlessly out of it.

The general objectives of Total Physical Response are to teach oral proficiency at a beginning level; grammar is taught inductively. Learners in Total Physical Response have the primary roles of listener and performer. Total Physical Response states that the second language learning is the same as first language learning by allowing comprehension to be 'imprinted' before production through carrying out commands and by the reduction of stress. Its goal is to teach oral proficiency to produce learners who can communicate uninhibitedly and intelligibly with native speakers, based on a sentence-based syllabus with grammatical and lexical criteria, but focusing as well on meaning and not form.

There is more than one parameter to consider; the next one to be described is the class size. Most teachers would hope for a small class size, although that is not always possible; this less-than-ideal situation often leads to the use of teaching methodology which does not promote optimal learning. For example, teacher-centered methodology is, unfortunately, still ubiquitous in many ESL classrooms (Ur, 1996, p. 233). A great question often occupies the minds of principals and directors: how big should groups be? Well, even two people are a group; generally speaking, the smaller the group, the more each member talks and the less chance there is that someone will be left out; larger groups are good because they provide more people for doing big tasks; many books on cooperative learning recommend groups of four.

Class size (number of students)

English language classes vary greatly in size. Some students opt for private lessons, so the teacher only has to deal with one student at a time. However, some teachers have classes of as many as 100 and more. A special teaching context is private classes, which have considerable advantages over classes with two or more students in the group. One-to-one students get greatly enhanced feedback from their teachers. It is also much easier to be flexible when teaching individuals than it is when managing a class. Another parameter to consider is the “management of learning” or classroom organization,

Managing learning (instructions, feedback, discipline, and timing)

Such as conducting individual, pair, or group work; maintaining order; dealing with disruptive behavior; and handling daily business, such as collecting assignments and taking roll calls. Well-established classroom norms and routines are important means

of preventing disruption and managing learning in the classroom (Kounin, 1970; Anderson, Evertson and Emmer, 1980; Calderhead, 1984). Norms and routines are necessary because of the very complex and relatively unpredictable nature of classroom teaching. Some teachers are concerned about students' motivation: Students in our schools are learning English because they have to. It makes motivation really difficult for the teacher. Students prefer their own language in class. Organization may help; however, how can we organize group work when the desks are all fixed to the floor in rows? Our classes are huge. Whenever I organize tasks, things get messy, such as some students finishing ahead of the others. An ongoing aspect of motivation is dealing with the behavior of particular students. Experienced teachers usually have a scale of responses to off-task behavior, which helps them decide whether to ignore or attend to the problem.

Here is one example of how a teacher might move through stages in managing a particular type of behavior: lack of discipline. The same student always sits at the back and distracts others. Managing constraints may be done as follows: Use eye contact while continuing to speak. Stop mid-sentence and stare until the student stops. Talk with the student after class to investigate the cause. Another example is boredom. Some tips to prevent it are: Make the activities age-appropriate, avoiding word games with older learners; make the purpose of each activity clear beforehand; call for student's feedback on group activities; start with self-selected groupings. One way of considering a teacher's role is in terms of metaphors.

The teacher has to manage a number of situations, predictable as well as unpredictable. Let's consider two aspects of classroom management: one being the way time is managed, and the others the managing of students' questions. The

teacher has different roles at different times. For example: Answering or asking questions, up-front roles or supporting individuals, language informant or eliciting language, congratulating or encouraging individuals, designer of tasks or materials. A second, and unplanned, aspect of classroom management is dealing with students' spontaneous questions. Teachers have to make quick decisions about whether to answer, postpone, or dismiss a question. Being honest about why a question is not being answered can give students information about the learning process. The instructional side of a teacher's role is likely to be goal-oriented, task-dependent or knowledge-based and underpinned by a set of attitudes and beliefs, not only about knowledge, but also the appropriate instructional strategies to employ in the classroom.

The aspect of interaction in classrooms is probably that generally referred to as feedback, which includes the notion of error correction. Feedback has been widely investigated in information theory and general communication research outside classroom or language learning contexts (Annett 1969). In any communicative exchange, speakers derive from their listeners' information on the reception and comprehension of their message. Aside from general instruction, the primary role of language teachers is often considered to be the provider of both error correction, a form of negative feedback, and positive sanctions or approval of learners' production. In most other social interactions, no one participant is specified as having the automatic right to impose judgment on the other's behavior, especially linguistic behavior. If correction of another is to be done, it is done discreetly, with difference, since there is a strong preference to allow speakers to correct themselves. From the language teacher's point of view, the provision of feedback, or "knowledge of results" (Annett 1969), is a major means by which to inform learners of the accuracy

of both their formal target language production and their other classroom behavior and knowledge. From the learners' point of view, the use of feedback in repairing their utterances and involvement in repairing their interlocutors' utterances; may constitute the most potent source of improvement in both target language development and other subject matter knowledge.

The teacher, in order to improve the capacity of the student to utter correctly, may elaborate certain activities. These acts can be constructed in perhaps an infinite variety of ways to indicate several basic feedback functions or purposes, of which Allwright (1975a:104) lists the following: Fact of error indicated, blame indicated, location indicated, model provided, error type indicated, remedy indicated, improvement indicated, praise indicated, opportunity for new attempt given. Thus, not only cognitive information regarding the fact, location and nature of the error is possible, but motivational and reinforcement functions are possible.

An extra parameter to consider is the "management of time". Time spent on any given activity should be directly related to the experience, needs, and interests of the teachers. Taking new ideas on board takes much time and much consolidation. It also may take time for teachers to feel they have expressed their ideas adequately. It follows that the relevance of any one activity will vary considerably from group to group. In general, therefore, although we have recommended an approximate timing for the completion of specific tasks, we appreciate the need for flexibility in this area. However, we do recommend that you pay careful attention to the variety of activities within a training session.

For example, a training sequence should involve passive, semi-passive, active and adventurous activities, in order to satisfy every need or requirement of the

student. Similarly, variety implies change of training approach from, e.g. trained directed to trainee centered to trainee autonomous. Once again, training in this manner reassures the teacher of the importance of variety in their own classroom. Provided that the teacher has found a way to “manage the learning” he or she may turn his or her attention towards the actual process of managing a large class.

Managing large classes

Many commentators talk about large classes as a problem, and it is certainly true that they present challenges that smaller classes do not. However, there are also many benefits to teaching large classes. As Natalie Hess points out (Hess 2001: 2-4), in large classes there are always enough students to get interaction going, and there is a rich variety of human resources.

There are a number of key elements in successful large-group teaching: Be organized, establish routines, and get into pairs and groups. They will be done far more quickly and more efficiently if students know what is expected because they are routine operations. Maximize individual work. We can get students to write individually offering their own responses to what they read and hear. We can encourage students to make full use of a school library or self-access center. We can direct them to language learning websites, or we can get them to produce their own blogs. One criteria can be supported on the type of activity that is going to be developed. Thus, we would have the Big Group, students between 60 and 200 or more, the Medium Group, between 16 and 20 students, and the Small Group from 5 to 7 students.

What if the class is very big? In big classes, it is difficult for the teacher to make contact with the students at the back and it is difficult for the students to ask for

and receive individual attention. Frequently, big classes mean that it is not easy to have students walking around or changing pairs. Despite the problems of big classes, there are things which teachers can do: Use pair work and group work in large classes because it assures student participation, think about vision and acoustics; ensure that what is shown or written is received by all; use the size of the group to your advantage so that humor, for example, is funnier, drama is more dramatic, a good class feeling is warmer and more enveloping. No one chooses to have a large group: It makes the job of teaching even more challenging than it already is. Some of the suggestions above will help to turn a potential disaster into some kind of a success.

Activities for working with large classes

Having organized the time, and special managing of a large class, we came to the next challenge, the creation of activities. In language learning, motivation is more specific and important than in a content-based subject. Teachers encourage language use through both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Teachers supply interesting additional reading materials, they may show a video to follow a difficult language task, or they invite guest speakers so that students can use the new language in an authentic way. In monolingual classes teachers report particular difficulty in persuading students to speak English. The following ideas have worked in small and large classes in different countries: Role-play, with one student taking the role of foreigner and the other student acts as native-speaking visitor answering questions on specific topics; pen friends, by mail or E-mail; group presentations of topics students have researched; interclass debates; speech competitions; concerts with plays and singing. Furthermore, one solution is for teachers to hand out worksheets for many of

the tasks which they would normally do with the whole class and all the students will benefit. The use of pair work and group work play an important part since they maximize student participation. Even where chairs and desks cannot be moved, there are ways of doing this: first rows turn to face second rows, third rows to face fourth rows, etc. In more technologically equipped rooms, students can work round computer screens. When using pairwork and groupwork with large groups, it is important to make instructions especially clear, to agree how to stop the activity (many teachers just raise their hands until students notice them and gradually quiet down) and to give good feedback.

The following activities usually involve larger groups (7-15) or the class as a whole. For example, have the students in the class bring a single small object which is in some way identified with themselves. Put all of the objects in a grab bag. Then have a student select a single item. The members of the class should try to guess to whom the item belongs. The guess should be accompanied by a reason or justification. The next idea to be considered is the “spatial organization.” The flow of interaction and communication is greatly influenced by the spatial organization in which we operate daily. While teachers may have little choice as to the shape of the room, the available furniture and the size and location of the windows, they do usually have more options concerning the arrangement of the desks and chairs.

Seating arrangement and classroom space (physical space- big/small rooms)

Taking advantage of these options can have potentially powerful effects. A creative teacher can use various arrangements to suite the activities that they are planning. Although we often may have difficulty saying why, we tend to agree about what room feels ‘good’ or ‘bad’. Teachers know from experience that the space

available for the group affects relationships and that, for example, a small group sitting in the back of a room while we teach in the front is uncomfortable. Experienced teachers will either ask students to come sit up front or walk toward the back to teach, taking control somewhat of the environment by bringing people closer together. And if just a few students are scattered in a large room, we ask them to sit together. Distance between the participants determines the feeling of intimacy. Too much space will usually be perceived as impersonal and can cause psychological distance and the feeling of insignificance, emptiness, isolation and anxiety (MacLennan and Dies 1992). Teachers who wish to create a friendly, positive environment in classes will arrange things so that people are close enough to interact and make friends (see Fosyth 1999). On the other hand, if there is too little space, members may feel crowded and confined and avoid interaction. Students sitting in more conspicuous places in the classroom are on the receiving end of more attention and interaction, and thus are likely to get more involved in the learning process.

The most traditional spatial arrangement involves columns and rows of desks and chairs with the students facing the teacher. It is appropriate, during an activity, if communication is planned only between the leader and the group members. It has been found to be very effective if the goal is to make sure that students pay attention to the presenter or perform independent seat-work without disruptions – after all, this arrangement does not offer any environmental support for peer interaction. From the perspective of group dynamics, there are two main disadvantages of this spatial structure: It creates inequality among students and, the teacher-fronted arrangement is extremely controlling. Some teachers prefer doing away with these desks altogether. Not having desks that separate people from one another can sometimes create a feeling of closeness and enhance interpersonal communication. At the same time,

desks can also be seen as the students 'private territories', where they keep everything they consider necessary for their studies. Thus, at first they may feel vulnerable without the safety of their desks and resist letting them go. In accordance with our suggestion that seating arrangements may depend flexibly on the activity, it is nice to have the option to have desks or not, depending on the tasks you want to do.

Probably the most common arrangement for small groups is a semi-circular seating arrangement, with the teacher sitting in the middle of the open end of the U-shape arrangement allows students to have direct visual contact with each other to increase communication, but still reinforces the leader's status because of his or her being in the center of the communicative network. On the other hand, circular seating structure: This arrangement has no predetermined leadership position as it physically includes the teacher in the group, equalizing influences. A further advantage of sitting in a circle is that it fosters interpersonal attraction and involvement: Ehrman and Dörnyeu (1998) report on studies that have found that people sitting in circle groups rated each other as more friendly than in their typical arrangements and that the circular arrangement resulted in shorter pauses in conversation. However, some investigations have found that imposed intimacy can also be associated with negative feelings of confinement. It is easy to believe that the circle is the ultimate solution to 'spatial equality'. However, several studies have shown that people seated opposite each other interact more than people who are seated side-by-side. This means, that usually students in directly facing seats to the teacher will participate more than members sitting on either side. For building student autonomy and responsibility, tasks that call for a seemingly ad hoc positioning of the furniture in small groups of chairs/desks, such as games and small-group activities, are particularly useful. The

big advantage of this spatial arrangement is that the teacher is not present in the students' primary communication networks. Such small-group activities, role-play performances, drama techniques, etc, require space and movable furniture, something which is unfortunately often not available in the L2 second language classroom.

Another important variable in the furniture arrangement is the students themselves. Not only can we arrange the chairs and desks in different places, but we can also ask students to change seats and to be seated in a variety of group formations. Fixed position preferences which often get figured during the first few classes can lead to the emergence of rigid, fossilized patterns of 'private spaces' that can negatively affect contact and interaction among students. Another commonly used organizational strategy is to put the class into small groups for certain tasks. For example the class can be divided into discussion groups of between two and eight students. The solution of these tasks is the responsibility of the learners –although ultimate control of the class arrangement is still in the hands of teachers. Moreover, they can curtail activities at any time they choose. A variety of seating arrangements may be employed during the course of a single lesson. For example: To say that reading is a silent and personal activity does not imply that it only lends itself to individual work. On the contrary, it is particularly interesting to encourage comparisons of a text which will lead to discussion and probably a need to refer back to the text to check. Here are possible steps: Silent reading followed by an activity which each student does on his own; the students now work in pairs, each one trying to justify his answer; the groups exchange partners and students compare their results; a general discussion involving the whole class may follow (Gellet 1983: 11).

Teachers usually conduct their classes from the center of the front of the room. From this position they have easy access to the blackboard, which is almost always the only resource in the classroom other than the textbook. Thus, teachers directly face the middle two rows, but they can also “keep an eye on” students sitting in the two wings on the left-and right-hand side in the front two or three rows. Thus the front of the classroom lies within the surveillance zone of the teacher. The back of the classroom is outside the teacher’s attention zone. This seem to affect the behavior of the students in different locations of the classroom. As mentioned earlier, the classroom space is perceived by the teachers and students as divided into two distinct zones: the front and back of the classroom. In the present study “In or Out of the Action Zone: Location as a Feature of Interaction in Large ESL Classes in Pakistan” by Fauia Shamim, it was found that teachers and students can attribute certain character traits to students who sit in the front and the back. For example, the students in the front were considered to be hardworking. In contrast, the students who sat in the back had a very negative view of what they perceived as “tricks” used by the students in the front for getting the teacher’s attention. It seems significant that both teachers and the students in the front have a low opinion of students in the back (Shamim, 2006). There was a general consensus among students about the advantages of sitting in the front, the most important being a “better” understanding of the lesson. Also, there is less distraction and noise in the front. The reasons for the better classroom performance of students located in the front zone can be summarized as follows: Students in the front fall within the attention zone of the teacher; students in the front do not interrupt; students in the front can see the blackboard and hear the teacher clearly.

Different levels of proficiency

One extra challenge concerning teaching large groups is the different levels of proficiency in one class. One of the aims of this investigation is to help partners describe the levels of proficiency required by existing standards, tests and examinations in order to facilitate comparisons between different systems of qualifications. For this purpose the Descriptive Scheme and the Common Reference Levels have been developed. Between them they provide a conceptual grid which users can use to describe their system. There does appear in practice to be a wide, though by no means universal, consensus on the number and nature of levels appropriate to the organization of language learning.

An important distinction in relation to scaling can be made between the definition of levels of proficiency, as in a scale of Common Reference Levels, and the assessment of degrees of achievement in relation to an objective at one particular level. A proficiency scale, like the Common Reference Levels, defines a series of ascending bands of proficiency. It may cover the whole conceptual range of learner proficiency, or it may just cover the range of proficiency relevant to the sector or institution concerned. In teaching and supervising language programs at very advanced levels of instruction, we have noticed that a qualitative difference exists between teaching students at lower levels of proficiency and teaching superior-level students. At the lower levels, students need to acquire the basic linguistic system and some understanding of culture. At the higher levels, they need to acquire the uncommon, as well as the common, and the infrequent as well as the frequent, in linguistic, discourse, and sociolinguistic expression. Further, the emphasis on cultural appropriateness in the definition of higher proficiency levels presumes substantial

interaction with native speakers, which is not a typical experience of basic and intermediate students.

Unfortunately, many teachers of lower-level students argue over whether they should teach grammar when they should be asking how and when to teach it. As a result, more and more students appear to be reaching the Advanced level of proficiency without the strong grammatical base that is required to reach Superior and Distinguished levels. However, it was a particularly daunting task for the grammar lectures. Although smaller groupings might have been desired, there is no evidence that sharing grammar lectures with participants with lower levels of proficiency in any way adversely affected the increasing proficiency of the superior-level participant. The significance overall, however, was the need to teach, in Russian, new teachers, experienced teachers, and heritage speakers with varying amounts of teaching experience and education together in one group with varying proficiency levels. This situation had the greatest impact on the Methodology Seminar; it was handled best by having participants work in small groups, where similar levels of linguistic proficiency and content knowledge could be combined advantageously.

Many teachers are extremely worried about the fact that they have students in their classes who are at different levels of proficiency. Indeed, mixed-ability classes are a major preoccupation for most of us because they appear to make planning – and the execution of plans in lessons – extremely difficult. Many teachers see mixed-ability classes as especially problematic. Yet in a real sense all classes have students with a mixture of different abilities and language levels. We know this to be true given what we said about multiple intelligences and differing primary perceived

systems. And it is inconceivable that any two students will have exactly the same knowledge of English at any one time. Even if we were able to assemble a class of complete beginners, it would soon be clear that some were learning faster than others – or learning different things. Within other school environments, students are grouped according to abilities. There is particular concern for the needs not only of students who are having difficulty at the lower end of the scale, but also for ‘gifted’ children (Dinnocenti 1998). And even in placed and streamed groups, we will have a range of abilities in front of us.

Now that the theory has been set in place we shall refer those who made this investigation possible: The first study to be mentioned is the 2006 investigation called “Teachers' Beliefs Concerning Large-Class English Teaching at the University Level” by P. Jimakorn and W. Singhasiri (2006), which had as objective to investigate teachers' beliefs towards teaching English in large classes, asking questions to 75 lecturers from the Department of Language, School of Liberal Arts, KMUTT in Thailand; by analyzing the results the conclusions were that Thai teachers thought that teaching in large classes was difficult in several aspects such as the relationships of teachers and students, monitoring and giving feedback and assessment. Another work worthy of citing is “The effects of class size on English learning at a Thai university” by W. Richards in 2012, which had as a goal to investigate the relationship between class size and learning in the context of foundation English language courses at a Thai university. The author took the number of students and the grades they had obtained to process the information; therefore his method was investigative and descriptive. According to the author, the significant correlations between class size and grades suggest that class size does affect learning. A third study to remember is “Large Class Teaching in Resource-

Constrained Contexts: Lessons from Reflective Research in Ugandan Primary Schools” by M. Goretti, C. Opolot, C. Masembe, J. Samson, A. Byamugisha, which concentrates on the challenges of teaching and learning in large classes. All teachers who participated in study were female teachers, apart from one. The methodology used in all of the cases were observation and the collection of interviews. The findings of the study are presented in regard to the challenges that the teachers experienced in the teaching of large classes, what strategies had been developed at individual and institutional levels to improve teaching and learning under the circumstances, and the implications of teachers reflecting on their lessons to large class teaching. Two hundred and seventy nine responses were generated from interviews with the teachers regarding the constraints they experienced with their large classes. Resource constraint came up as a major issue as; the teachers felt the available resources did not match the large numbers of learners.

The fourth study; “The Impact of Class Size and Number of Students on Outcomes in Higher Education” by Monks, J.; Schmidt, R., (2010), indicates that the general consensus among researchers examining this issue is that class size matters at all its influence is most pronounced at the lowest grade levels. In terms of class size, courses with larger enrollments continue to receive significantly lower ratings on amount learned, instructor rating, and course rating. Even conditional on class size, student load has a negative and statistically significant impact on amount learned, and a positive and statistically significant impact on expected grade, and is near statistical significance, at the 90 percent level, for the instructor and course ratings. Qualitatively similar results were found when using a dummy variable for super-sized versus non-super-sized sections, rather than the continuous actual class

enrollment. Similarly, a quadratic in class size was also attempted and found not to be statistically significant.

The evidence found in this analysis leads to the conclusion that both class size and the total number of students that a faculty member is responsible for teaching have a negative impact on the self-reported outcomes of amount learned, instructor rating, course rating, and expected course grade. For example, large class sizes and higher student loads are correlated with less critical and analytical thinking, less clarity in class presentations, and lower ratings on the instructor's ability to stimulate student interest.

The last study to be referred is "The Effects of large class on EFL Students at An-Najah National University" by Thaer, M., (2005). The subject population of the study was limited to non-English major EFL students who study English as a university requirement. All the subjects have had at least eight years of English instruction at school. The findings of this study indicate that large classes affect students' educational practices and performance. It would affect their psychological development and would generally lead to inattentiveness. Therefore, the relationship between them and their teachers should be a friendly one. The instructional, psychological, and social results of the different domains show that no significant differences for students' gender, level of study, college, and placement test marks across the three domains. It is found in this study that classroom interactions in large classes are negatively associated with class size. Students demonstrated negative and positive responses towards large classes. It seems that, large classes in many developing countries are unavoidable. They are the typical features of the education systems of these countries, and reducing class size seems to be an obvious way to

facilitate learning and increase achievement. Therefore, teachers of large classes should encourage students' interaction either by pair or group work, provide opportunities for students to learn from each other and through more meaningful feedback from their teachers. The researcher has observed through her teaching experience at An-Najah that the number of the students in the whole university per semester is greatly increasing. Despite teachers' complaint about large classes, the problem still exists and its consequences on teaching are reflected in the students' attitudes and achievement.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Having devoted this time to the collection of the needed bibliographical background, it shall continue with the analysis of the collected data.

These were the three main questions: What academic implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process? What social implications do large classes have on the teaching learning process? And what psychological implications do large classes have on the teaching-learning process?

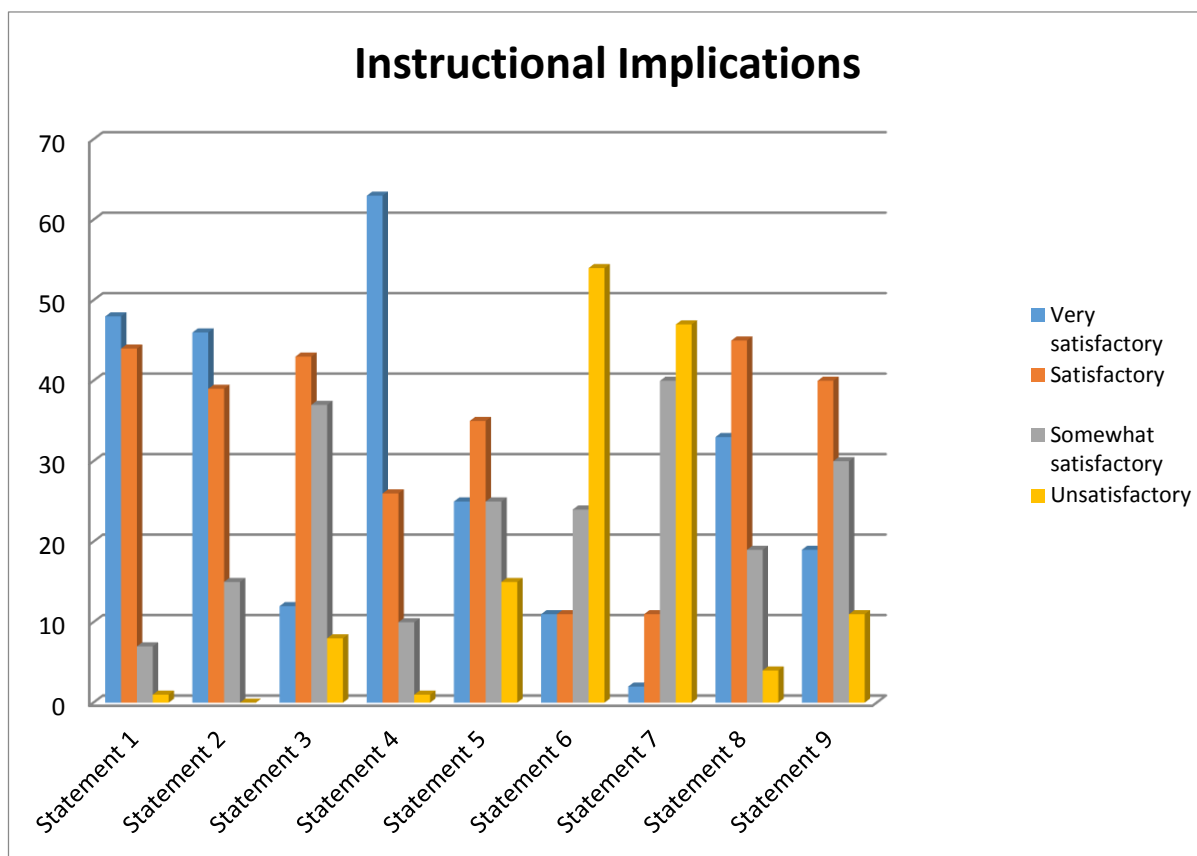
The survey was divided in three parts, an instructional or academic part, a social part and a psychological part. Each of these parts contained several questions to be answered in an augmentative scale, that is, from 0 to 4 “Disagree”, “Partiality Agree”, “Agree”, “Totally Agree”. The first part contained 9 questions, the second part 5 questions and the third part 6 questions, which gives a total of 21 questions.

Here are presented the results in rough of surveys; the whole survey is available in annex 2:

The results gathered determined that a total of 197 questionnaires were carried out during this investigation. Provided that the students have a vast knowledge concerning their school system, the results vary amazingly, despite the fact that they all share the same school. To continue, the results of the questions shall be presented and analyzed according to each category:

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

N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Very satisfactory		Satisfactory		Somewhat satisfactory		Unsatisfactory		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class.	95	48	87	44	13	7	2	1	197	100
2.	The activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.	91	46	77	39	29	15	0	0	197	100
3.	The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those sitting at the back of the classroom.	24	12	85	43	72	37	16	8	197	100
4.	Varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc.	124	63	52	26	19	10	2	1	197	100
5.	Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class.	49	25	68	35	49	25	31	16	197	100
6.	Students can cheat during the test.	21	11	21	11	48	24	107	54	197	100
7.	Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects.	4	2	22	11	79	40	92	47	197	100
8.	The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class.	65	33	88	45	37	19	7	4	197	100
9.	Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students.	37	19	78	40	61	31	21	11	197	100



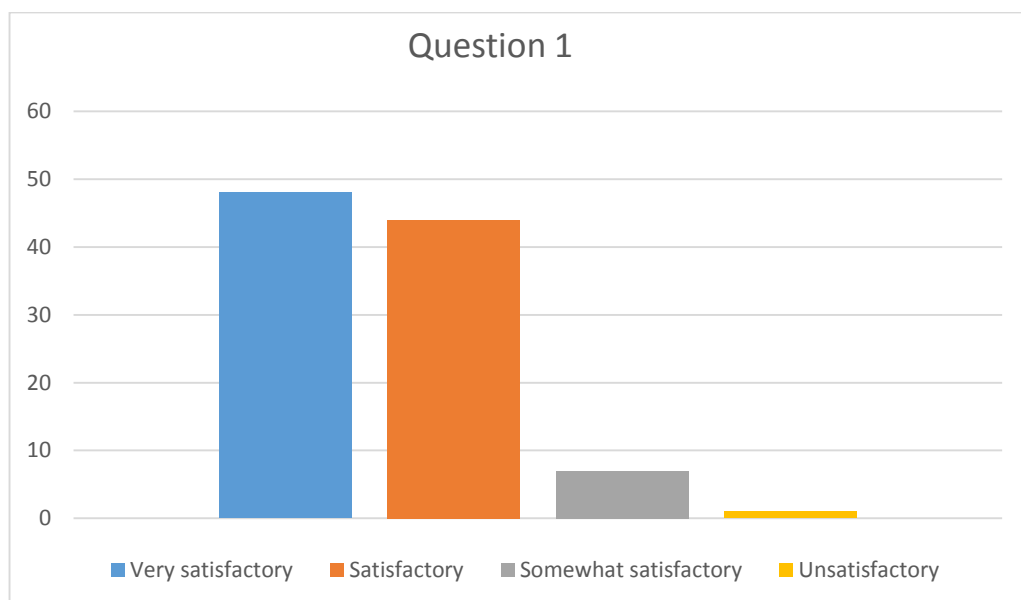
Academic aspects

It is notorious that there is a major difference concerning the answers between the first nine questions, most of them obtained high values concerning the two first options “Very satisfactory” and “Satisfactory” which by deduction may evidence that the students in this particular class are satisfied with the teacher’s methodology, the variety of activities to be performed and the class handling (Seat placing). Besides in this part it is noticed that teacher used several kind of methods according to the activities that it is detailed in each question, for example activities allowing to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills and grammar.

Thus, it is notorious that teachers used methods such us Cooperative Language Learning, Grammar translation Method, Communicative Language

teaching among others. In order to describe them, let's continue with an individual analysis for question:

Question 1. The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class.



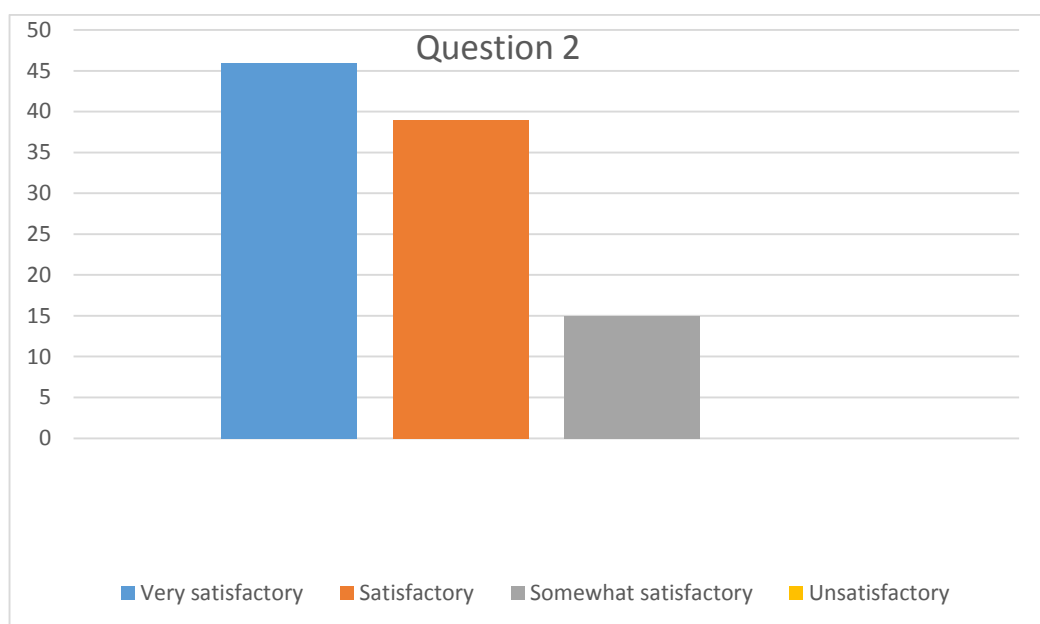
48% Very satisfactory, 44% Satisfactory, 7% somewhat satisfactory, 1% unsatisfactory

Most of students affirm that the teacher makes them practice what they learn in classes meaning that the teacher was able to apply various methods for teaching English is performed.

For example it can be shown that using the Grammar Translation Methods which has as main feature the analysis of its grammar rules, followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating into and out of the translation methods; reading and writing are the major objectives; words are taught through bilingual word lists, dictionary study, and memorization; the sentence is the basic unit of teaching and language practice; accuracy is emphasized (Howatt 1984: 132); grammar is taught deductively; the student's native language is the medium of

instruction. The communicative ability is usually acquired quite rapidly; grammatical accuracy, on the other hand, increases only slowly and after much experience using the language.

Question 2. The activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.



46% Very satisfactory, 39% satisfactory, 15% somewhat satisfactory and 0% unsatisfactory

Most of students consider that their reading, speaking, listening and writing abilities are constantly stimulated by practicing through making several activities.

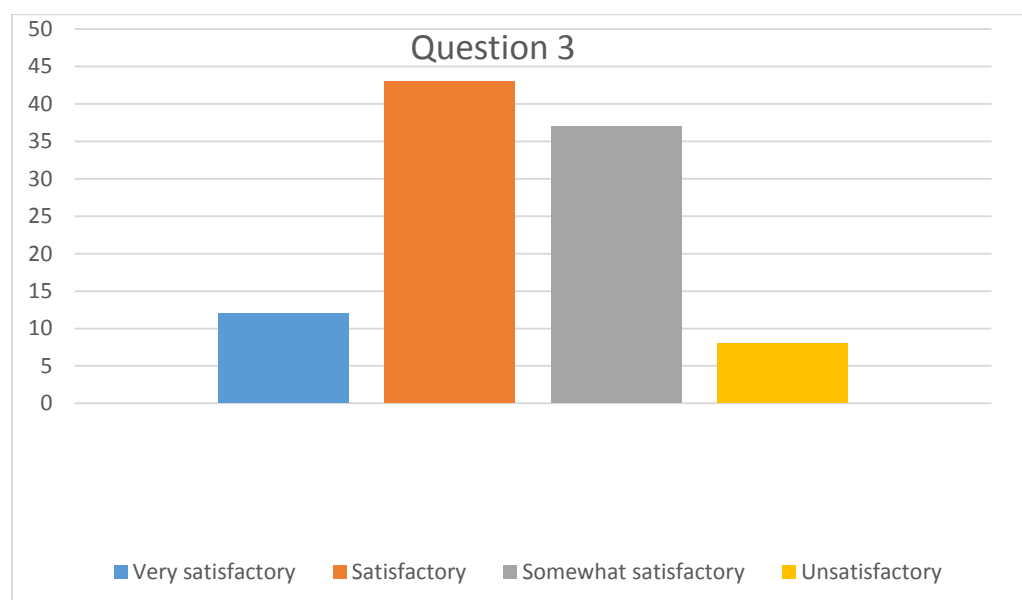
In this case can also quote the Grammar Translation method mentioned in question 1 since this method mainly focuses on reading and writing but pays little attention to talk or listen, thus the activities can be the following:

Vocabulary selection is based solely on the reading texts used, and words are taught through bilingual word lists, dictionary study, and memorization.

It is noticed that teacher used the Task-Based Instruction:

According to Nunan (1999), task-based instruction (TBI) uses tasks or stand-alone activities which require comprehending, producing, manipulating or interacting in the target language. The amount of listening, speaking, reading and writing involved to complete the problem posed by the task is dictated by the task itself; however, most complex (multi step) real-life tasks that take learners into the world outside the classroom will utilize all four skills. TBI helps learners explore the multitude of communication opportunities provided in their surroundings. The tasks themselves are scaffolded according to the cognitive demand required to complete them and can be carried out individually, in pairs or in small cooperative groups.

Question 3. The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those sitting at the back of the classroom.



12% Very satisfactory, 43% satisfactory, 37% somewhat satisfactory and 8% unsatisfactory.

There is a major percent satisfactory and somewhat satisfactory which demonstrates that students are not satisfied at all with the number of opportunities they have to participate in class, although a little percent are unsatisfactory due to seating arrangements and classroom space that causes distractions and lack of attention in students.

According to Dörnyei, Z., & Murhey, T. (2003). "The flow of interaction and communication is greatly influenced by the spatial organization in which we operate daily. While teachers may have little choice as to the shape of the room, the available furniture and the size and location of the windows, they do usually have more options concerning the arrangement of the desks and chairs (let us, for the moment, try and forget about all those benches bolted to the floor..). Taking advantage of these options can have potentially powerful effects.

A creative teacher can use various arrangements to suite the activities that they are planning."

The most traditional spatial arrangement involves columns and rows of desks and chairs with the students facing the teacher. It is appropriate if communication is planned only between the leader and the group members (e.g. at formal presentations). It has been found to be very effective of the goal is to make sure that students pay attention to the presenter or perform independent seat-work without disruptions – after all, this arrangement does not offer any environmental support for peer interaction.

Location as a feature of interaction in large classes

As mentioned earlier, the classroom space is perceived by the teachers and students as divided into two distinct zones: the front and back of the classroom. As the two

major sources of input (i.e., the teacher and the blackboard) are situated up front, the front becomes the place where all the action takes place. This seems to be particularly true in large classes, where the teacher is the major and/or only resource available in the classroom. Bailey, K. M. & Nunan, D. (1996)

Learner characteristics and patterns of classroom behavior

In the study “In or out of the action zone: location as a feature of interaction in large ESL classes in Pakistan” by Fauia Shamim, it was found that teachers and students can attribute certain character traits to students who sit in the front and the back. Further, specific patterns of behavior are associated with students who prefer different locations in the classroom.

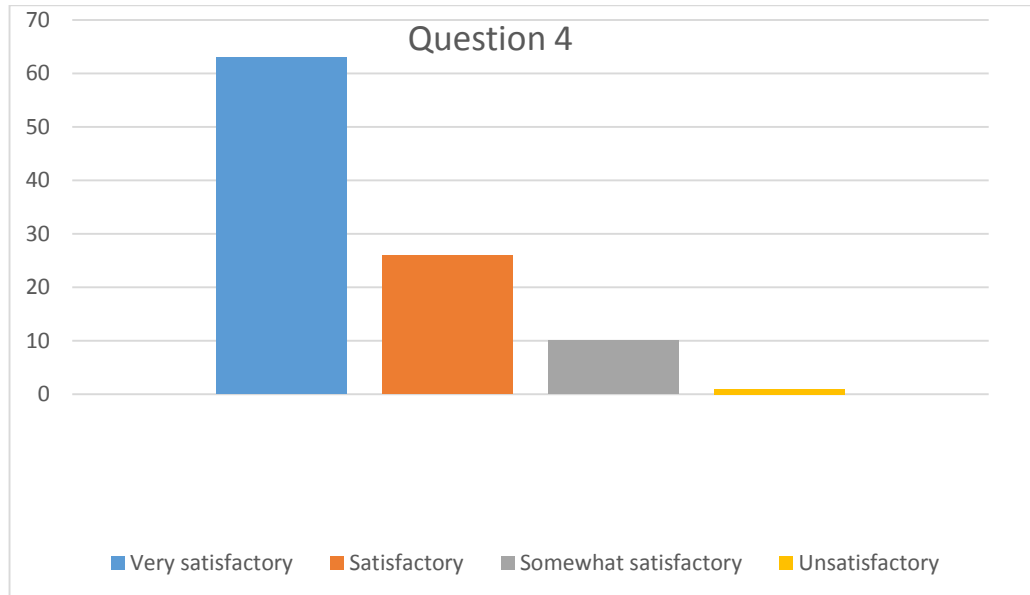
The majority of students in this study perceived a link between different types of students and their location in the classroom. For example, the students in the front were considered to be industrious and hardworking.

Students who sat in the front seemed to have more self-confidence. This could be due to their personality type, but it could also be a result of their location in the classroom.

The teachers also thought that students in the front were “usually clever”, perhaps due to the learners’ strong personality type, which may have helped them to get a seat in the front in the first place.

In contrast, the students who sat in the back had a very negative view of what they perceived as “tricks” used by the students in the front for getting the teacher’s attention.

Question 4. Varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc.



63% Very satisfactory, 26% satisfactory, 10% somewhat satisfactory and 1% unsatisfactory

Most of students stated that they liked the class methods. Interactive activities are making the students practice with others.

Many books on cooperative learning recommend groups of four. For example, Kagan (1992) suggests foursomes and uses many cooperative learning techniques in which students first, work in pairs, and then the two pairs of the foursome interact with one another.

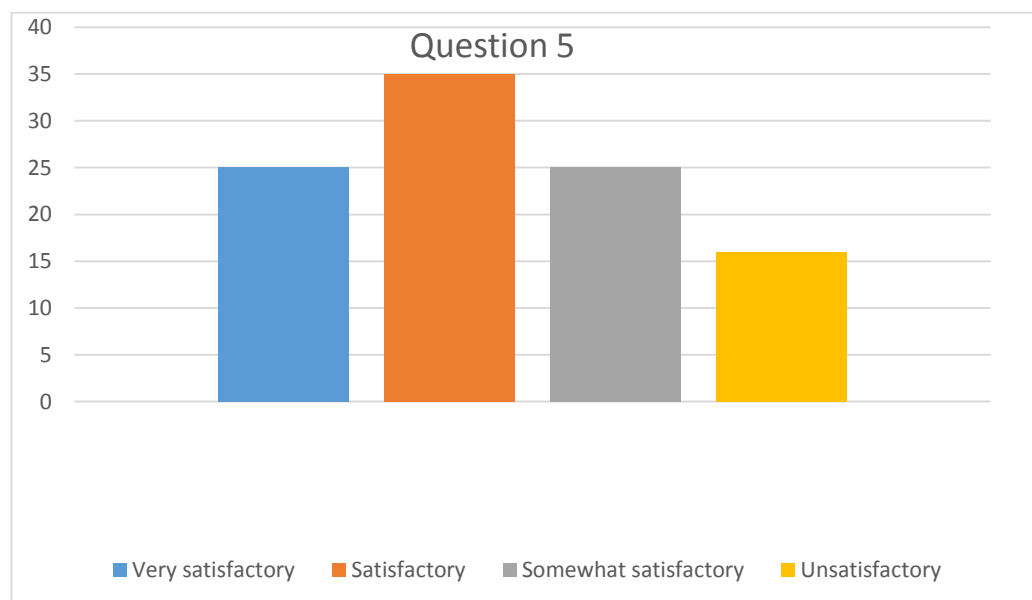
Cooperation is working together to accomplish shared goals within cooperative situations, individuals seek outcomes beneficial to themselves and all other group members. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups through which students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. It may be contrasted with competitive learning in which students work

against each other to achieve an academic goal such as a grade of “A” (Johnson et al., 1994:4)

With Cooperative learning, students work together in groups whose usual size is two to four members. However, cooperative learning is more than just putting students in groups and giving them something to do. Cooperative learning principles and techniques are tools which teachers use to encourage mutual helpfulness in the groups and the active participation of all members.

In second and foreign language learning, theorists propose several advantages for cooperative learning: increased student talk, more varied talk, a more relaxed atmosphere, greater motivation, more negotiation of meaning, and increased amounts of comprehensible input (Liang, Mohan, & Early, 1998; Olsen & Kagan, 1992).

Question 5. Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class.



25% Totally Agree, 35% Agree, 25% Partially Agree and 16% Disagree

60% of students affirm that they realize some activities like dramatizations, contests and debates, making the classes more interesting and funny. That helps students to lose fear of speaking English. Improve their achievement and social healthiness.

This question refers to managing large classes, which shows some kind of activities for large classes. According to Harmer, J. (1998), it is difficult for teachers to make contact with the students at the back and it is difficult for the students to ask for and receive individual attention. It may seem impossible to organize dynamic and creative teaching and learning sessions.

Despite the problems of big classes, there are things which teacher can do.

Use pairwork and groupwork: in large classes, pairwork and groupwork play an important part since they maximize student participation.

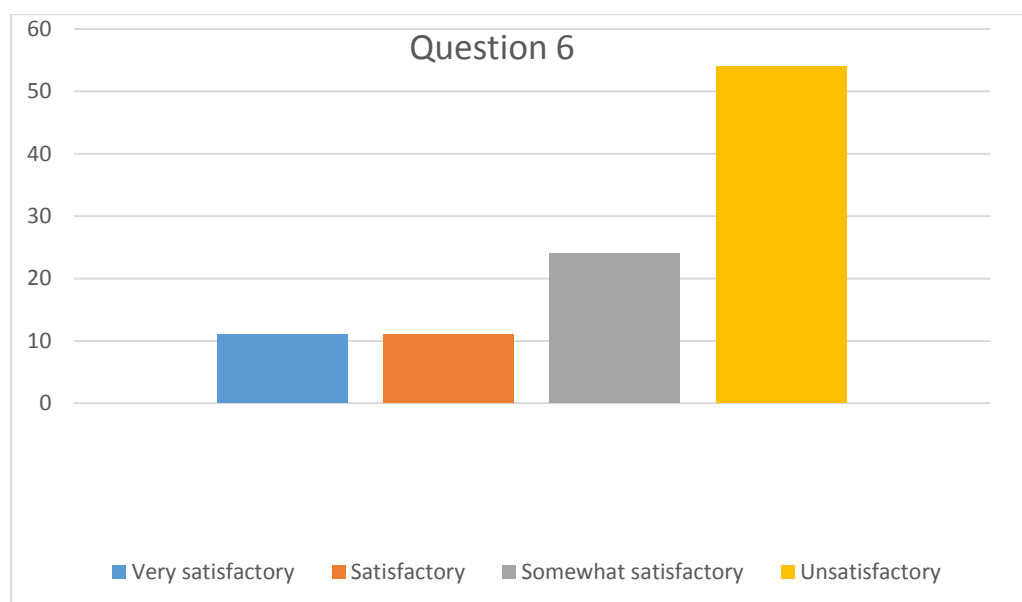
Use the size of the group to your advantage: big groups have disadvantages of course, but they also have one main advantage – they are bigger, so that humor, for example, is funnier, drama is more dramatic, a good class feeling is warmer and more enveloping. Experienced teachers use this potential to organize exciting and involving classes.

Besides, it can be noticed in this part some activities for working with large classes. According to Richards, J.C, & Renandya, W.A. (2002). In monolingual classes teachers report particular difficulty in persuading students to speak English. The following ideas have worked in small and large classes in different countries:

Role play, with one student taking the role of foreigner, Native-speaking visitors answer questions on specific topics, Pen friends, by mail or E-mail, group

presentations of topics students have researched, Interclass debates, Speech competitions, concerts with plays and singing.

Question 6. Students can cheat during the test.



11% very satisfactory, 11% satisfactory, 24% somewhat satisfactory and 54% unsatisfactory

According to the results, it is notorious that discipline takes a very important role at the moment of learning a second language. In this case, to better support implying classroom discipline plan is the subject of managing learning.

Well-established classroom norms and routines are important means of preventing disruption and managing learning in the classroom (Kounin, 1970; Anderson, Evertson and Emmer, 1980; Calderhead, 1984). Norms are rules governing what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, and routines are procedures that have been established over time to control and coordinate specific

sequences of behavior (Yinger 1979). Norms and routines are necessary because of the very complex and relatively unpredictable nature of classroom teaching.

According to Richards, J.C, & Renandya, W.A. (2002). Here are three examples of how a teacher might move through stages in managing a particular type of behavior

Discipline

Case I: The back-row distractor

The same student always sits at the back and distracts others.

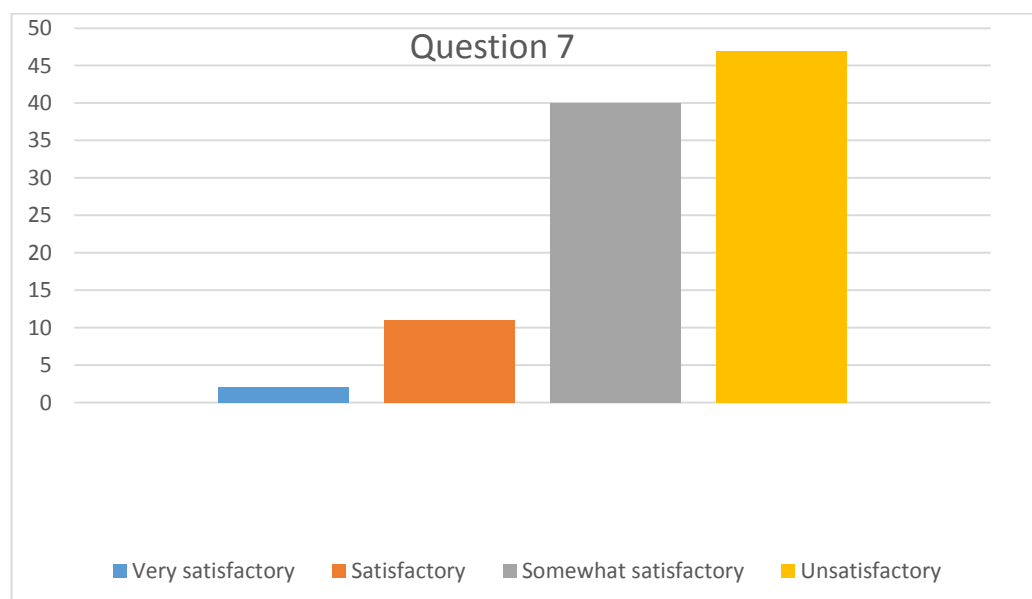
Use eye contact while continuing to speak

Stop mid-sentence and stare until the student stops.

Talk with the student after class to investigate the cause.

As indicated managing learning should always set rules and standards for avoiding misunderstanding then do not arise or in this case a call to attention for trying to cheating on a test or do things that do not correspond to the subject matter of the class is taking in then.

Question 7. Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects.



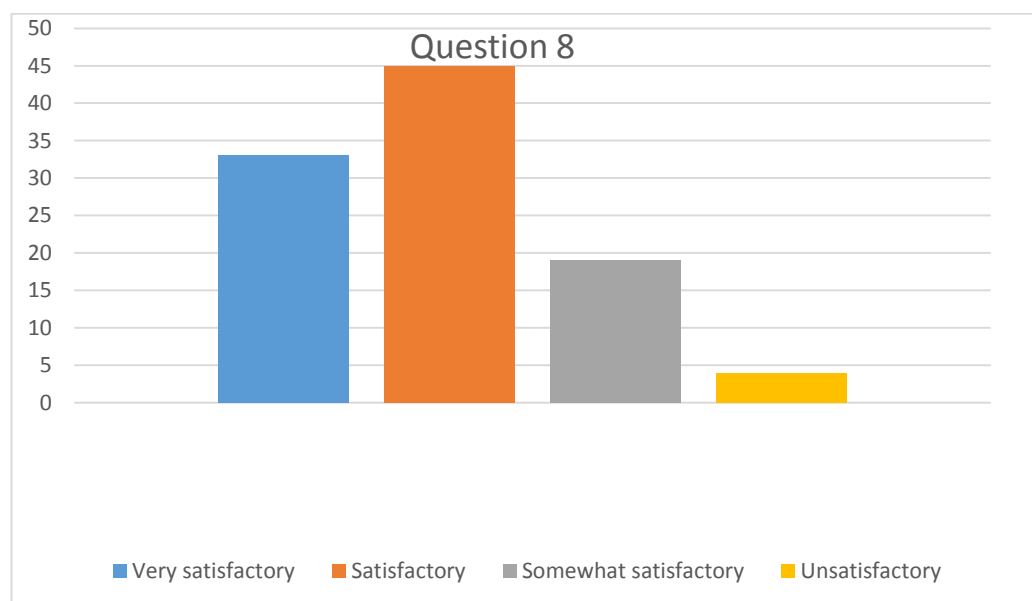
2% very satisfactory, 11% satisfactory, 40% somewhat satisfactory and 47% unsatisfactory

In this case the results are shown as a large majority unsatisfactory and somewhat satisfactory, in order to sustain the question may be referred to the statement of the previous question.

Norms are rules governing what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, and routines are procedures that have been established over time to control and coordinate specific sequences of behavior (Yinger 1979).

As indicated, managing learning should always set rules and standards for avoiding misunderstanding then do not arise or in this case a call to attention for trying to cheating on a test or do things that do not correspond to the subject matter of the class is taking in then.

Question 8. Seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class.



33% very satisfactory, 45% satisfactory, 19% somewhat satisfactory and 4% unsatisfactory

Most of students are satisfied with the space they have in their classes. It does not mean that is the perfect way of class' physical distribution. This will be analyzed below.

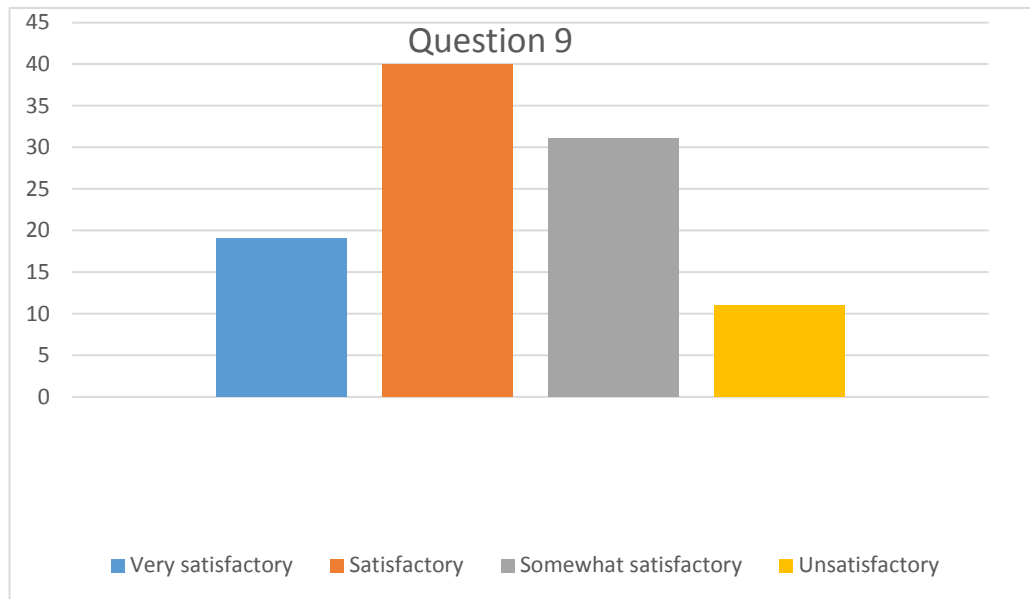
Spatial organization: Flow of interaction and communication are greatly influenced by the spatial organization in which we operate daily. While teachers may have little choice as to the shape of the room, the available furniture and the size and location of the windows, they do usually have more options concerning the arrangement of the desks and chairs (let us, for the moment, try and forget about all those benches bolted to the floor).

Taking advantage of these options can have potentially powerful effects. A creative teacher can use various arrangements to suite the activities that they are planning.

Experienced teachers will either ask students to come sit up front or walk toward the back to teach, taking control somewhat of the environment by bringing people closer together. And if just a few students are scattered in a large room, we ask them to sit together.

Distance between the participants determines the feeling of intimacy: Too much space will usually be perceived as impersonal and can cause psychological distance and the feeling of insignificance, emptiness, isolation and anxiety (MacLennan and Dies 1992)

Question 9. Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students.



19% Very Satisfactory, 40% satisfactory, 31% somewhat satisfactory and 11% unsatisfactory

Whereas in this graphic, it is observable that 40% represents the most of students, who were unsatisfied with a proper closure due to the amount of students. The participants stated that the large number of students in a class did not allow them to listen or to pay attention.

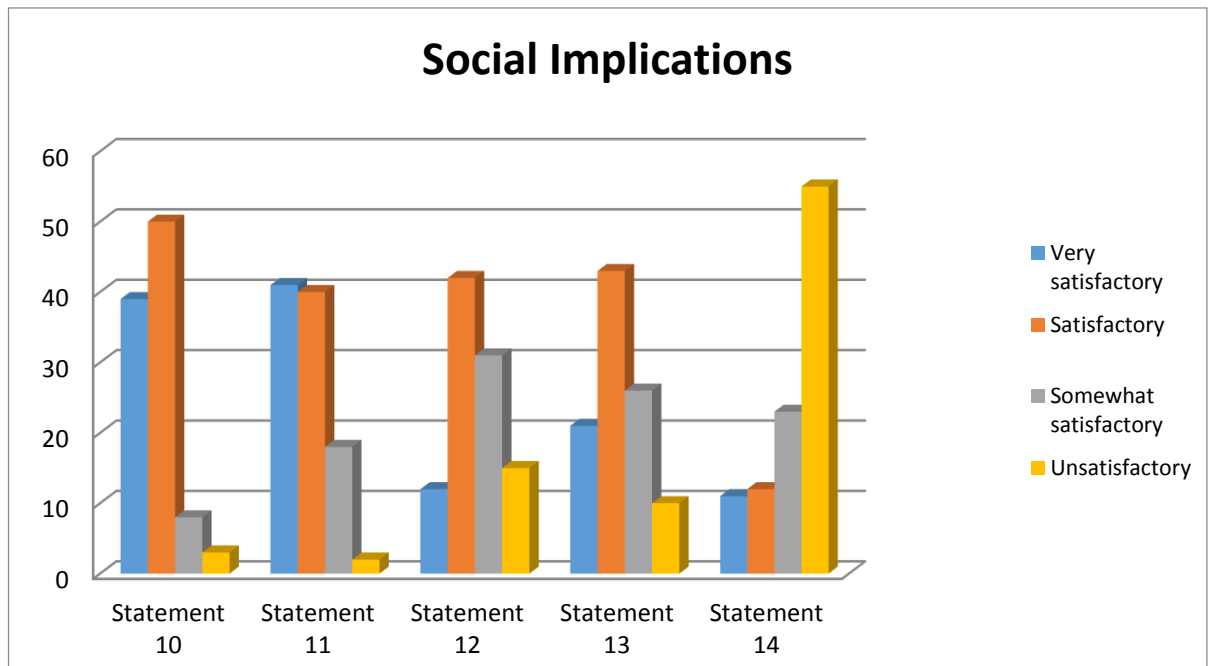
From the language teacher's point of view, the provision of feedback, or "knowledge of results" (Annett 1969), is a major means by which to inform learners of the accuracy of both their formal target language production and their other classroom behavior and knowledge. From the learners' point of view, using feedback in repairing their utterances, and involvement in repairing their interlocutors' utterances; may constitute the most potent source of improvement in both target language development and other subject matter knowledge. One-to-one students get greatly enhanced feedback from their teachers.

It is also much easier to be flexible when teaching individual system than it is when managing a class. Changing an activity and moving on to something completely different presents less of a problem with one student than with 30.

Some teachers find individual students difficult to deal with – sometimes simply because they don't like them very much –and the same can be true of a student's feelings towards the teacher.

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

N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Very satisfactory		Satisfactory		Somewhat satisfactory		Unsatisfactory		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
10.	There is a proper balance of student-student and teacher-student interaction.	76	39	99	50	16	8	6	3	197	100
11.	Students have the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates.	80	41	78	40	35	18	4	2	197	100
12.	The teacher has problems remembering all the students' names.	23	12	82	42	62	31	30	15	197	100
13.	The atmosphere is less stressful since the teacher does not ask several questions to the same student.	42	21	84	43	51	26	20	10	197	100
14.	It is easier for students to use their cellphone or any other mobile device without being seen by the teacher.	21	11	23	12	45	23	108	55	197	100



Social aspect

Now, the second graphic demonstrates the variety of answers provided by the students concerning the social aspects in the classroom; as we can see in most of the questions all of the students seem to be very satisfactory or satisfactory with the social environment of the class; however, it seem that they do not like at all when the teacher does not remember their name.

Interactive activity is clearly observed between teachers and students. It generate a high level of confidence, opening the link needed to improve the teaching-learning process.

Question 10. There is a proper balance of student-student and teacher-student interaction.



39% very satisfactory, 50% satisfactory, 8% somewhat satisfactory and 3% unsatisfactory

Interactive activity is clearly observed between teachers and students. It generate a high level of confidence, opening the link needed to improve the teaching-learning process.

In this case, it has demonstrated through managing large classes the following;

As Natalie Hess points out (Hess 2001: 2-4), in large classes there are always enough students to get interaction going, and there is a rich variety of human resources. Furthermore, there are many possible ‘teachers’ in the class, and, as she says, we will never get bored because the challenge is great!

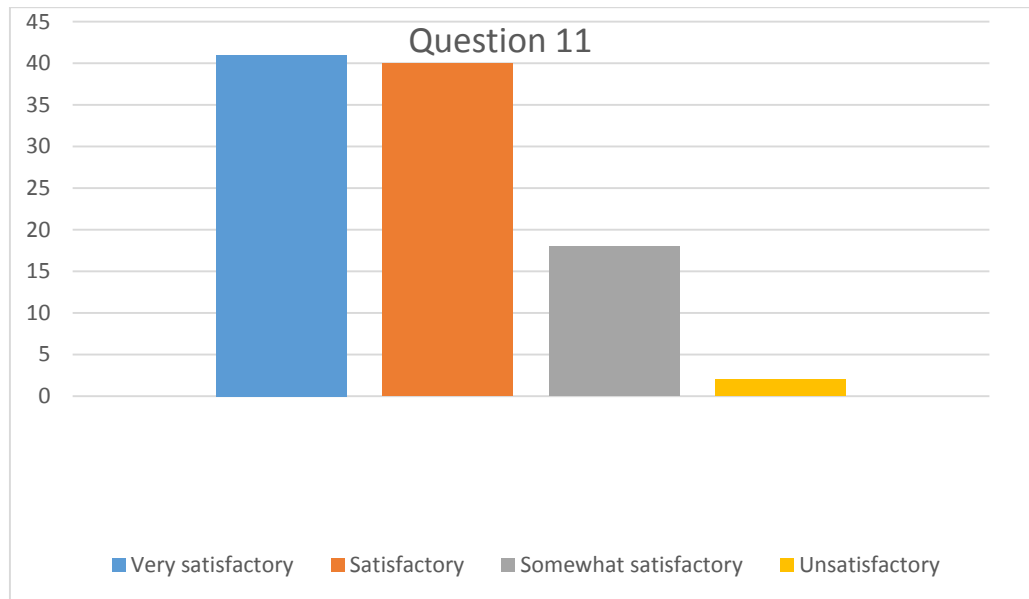
There are a number of key elements in successful large-group teaching:

Be organized: the bigger the group, the more we have to be organized and know what we are going to do before the lesson starts. It is much more difficult to change tack or respond to individual concerns with a large class than it is with a group of four or five students.

Establish routines: the daily management of a large class will be greatly enhanced if we establish routines that we and our students recognize straight away. This will make jobs like taking the register, setting and collecting homework. Getting into pairs and groups, etc. far easier. They will be done far more quickly and more efficiently if students know what is expected because they are routine operations.

Maximize individual work: the more we can give students individual work, even in a large class, the more we can mitigate the effects of always working with a large group 'as a whole'. Perhaps we can get students to use graded readers as part of their individual reading program. When we get students to build their own portfolio of work, we are asking them to work as individuals, too. We can get students to write individually – offering their own responses to what they read and hear.

Question 11. Students have the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates.



41% very satisfactory, 40% satisfactory, 18% somewhat satisfactory and 2% unsatisfactory

The most of students answered very satisfactory and satisfactory, what means that students agree with method that teacher used referring to interaction, to give a more detailed explanation it will be made reference to classroom space and seating arrangement.

Spatial organization and member status

Students sitting in more conspicuous places in the classroom are on the receiving end of more attention and interaction, and thus are likely to get more involved in the learning process. In contrast, as Schmuck (2001) argues, a marginal seating position can give rise to feelings of being peripheral and unimportant, leading to a reduction of communication with others.

Besides of the seating arrangement can mention the Communicative Language Method which considers the following activities: communicative engage learners in communication, involving processes such as information sharing, negotiation of meaning and interaction.

Learner roles: Learner as negotiator and interactor who gives as well as takes.

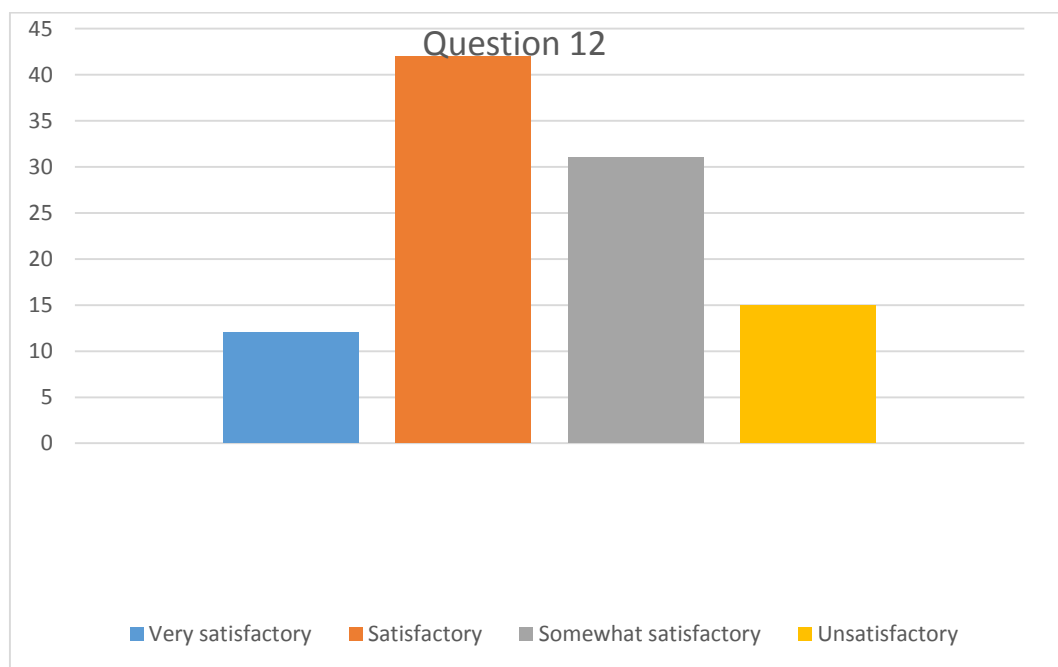
Teacher roles: facilitator of the communication process; needs analyst counselor; process manager.

Finally, such as the beginning, the Cooperative Language Learning Method will be mentioned again, it is a group learning activity organized so that learning is dependent on the socially structured exchange of information between learners in groups and in which each learner is held accountable for his or her own learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others. (Olsen and Kagan 1992: 8)

In second language teaching CLL has been embraced as a way of promoting communicative interaction in the classroom and is seen as an extension of the principles of Communicative Language Teaching.

Thus the chance of relationship is based on more people, according to the degree of interaction as the main factor in the methods named.

Question 12. The teacher has problems remembering all the students' names.



12% very satisfactory, 42% satisfactory, 31% somewhat satisfactory and 15% unsatisfactory

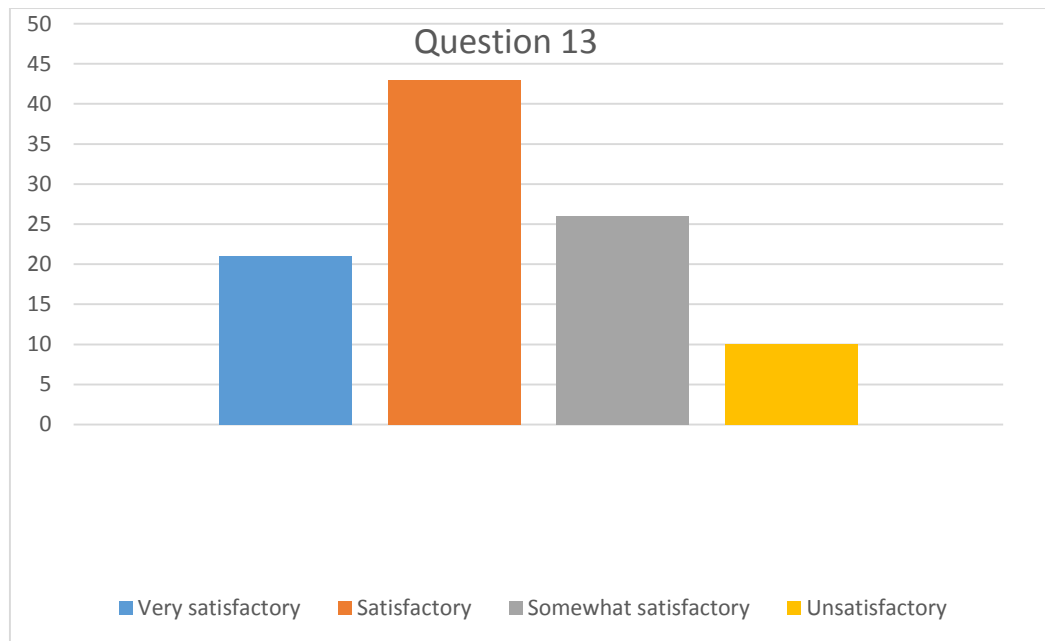
Concerning the social aspects, it was interesting to identify that 54% of students stated that their teachers did not remember their names, which influenced them to avoid conversation with them; ergo causing a lack of confidence in him or her. Hymes' concept of weak communicative competence demonstrates that concept.

This graph clearly shows how strongly the students feel concerning this social matter; which allows teachers to understand that even something as small as not remembering an individual name can affect the whole classroom.

“Managing large classes” explains about big classes, in which it is difficult for the teacher to make contact with the students at the back and it is difficult for the students to ask for and receive individual attention. It may seem impossible to organize dynamic and creative teaching and learning sessions. Frequently, big classes mean that it is not easy to have students walking around or changing pairs

etc. Most importantly, big classes can be quite intimidating for inexperienced teachers.

Question 13. The atmosphere is less stressful since the teacher does not ask several questions to the same student.



21% very satisfactory, 43% satisfactory, 26% somewhat satisfactory and 10% unsatisfactory

In this question, students do not agree at all, there is not a well atmosphere, it causes dissatisfaction to students.

Spatial organization: The flow of interaction and communication is greatly influenced by the spatial organization in which we operate daily. While teachers may have little choice as to the shape of the room, the available furniture and the size and location of the windows, they do usually have more options concerning the

arrangement of the desks and chairs (let us, for the moment, try and forget about all those benches bolted to the floor).

Taking advantage of these options can have potentially powerful effects. A creative teacher can use various arrangements to suite the activities that they are planning.

Although we often may have difficulty saying why, we tend to agree about what room feels ‘good’ or ‘bad’. Teachers know from experience that the space available for the group affects relationships. That, for example, a small group sitting in the back of a room while we teach in the front is uncomfortable. Experienced teachers will either ask students to come sit up front or walk toward the back to teach, taking control somewhat of the environment by bringing people closer together. And if just a few students are scattered in a large room, we ask them to sit together.

Distance between the participants determines the feeling of intimacy.

Traditional teacher-fronted seating structure

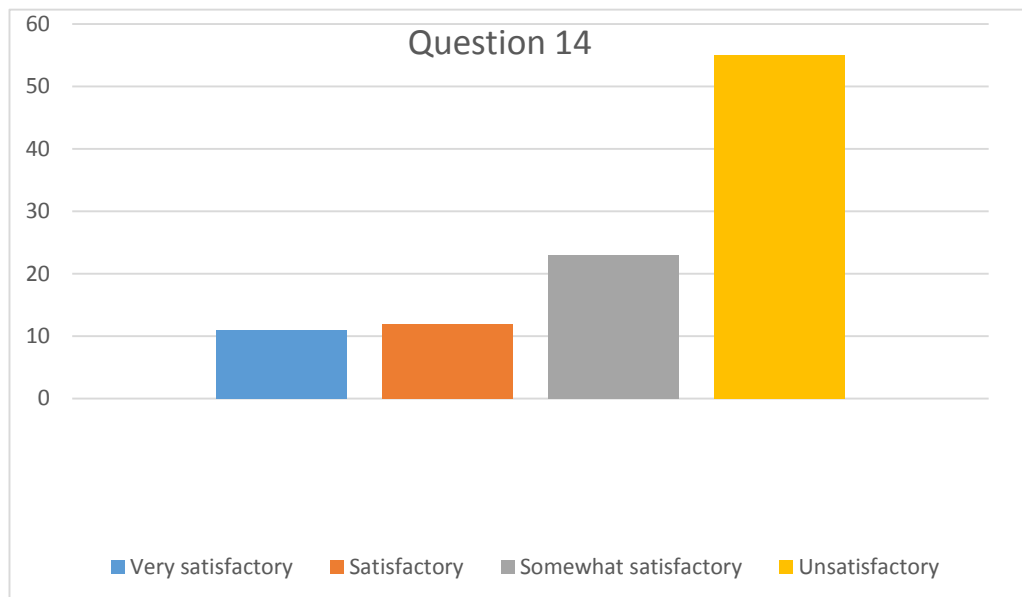
The most traditional spatial arrangement involves columns and rows of desks and chairs with the students facing the teacher. It is appropriate if communication is planned only between the leader and the group members (e.g. at formal presentations). It has been found to be very effective if the goal is to make sure that students pay attention to the presenter or perform independent seat-work without disruptions – after all, this arrangement does not offer any environmental support for peer interaction.

From the perspective of group dynamics, there are two main disadvantages of this spatial structure:

It creates inequality among students: as we have seen above, differences in classroom locations are associated with different status, and this is projected to the students occupying these positions.

The teacher-fronted arrangement is extremely controlling, emphasizing only teacher-student visual contact and this helping the teacher completely occupy the center of the communication network. This enforced teacher-dependency is an obstacle to group processes.

Question 14. It is easier for students to use their cellphone or any other mobile device without being seen by the teacher.



11% very satisfactory, 12% satisfactory, 23% somewhat satisfactory and 55% unsatisfactory

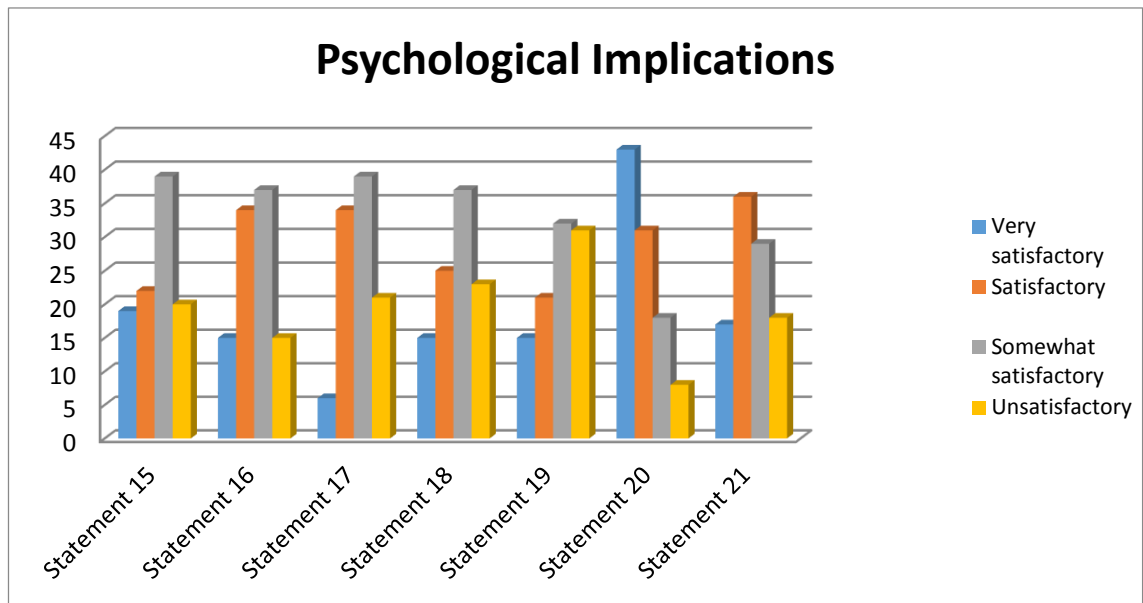
According to the results, discipline take a very important role at the moment of learning a second language.

Such as above, Well-established classroom norms and routines are a great way to prevent disruption and managing learning in the classroom. Rules govern what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, and routines are procedures

that have been established over time to control and coordinate specific sequences of behavior (Yinger 1979). Norms and routines are necessary because of the very complex and relatively unpredictable nature of classroom teaching.

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

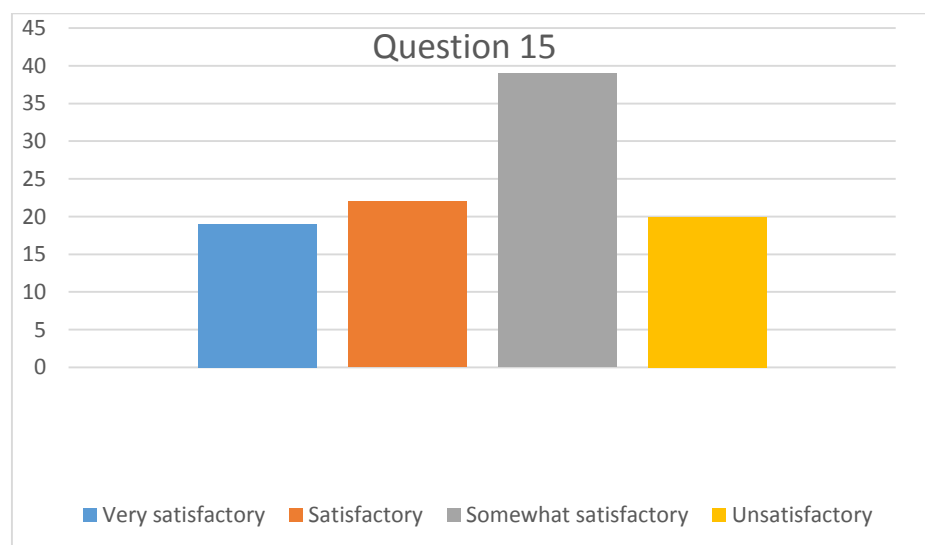
N°	In classes with a large number of students:	Very satisfactory		Satisfactory		Somewhat satisfactory		Unsatisfactory		TOTAL	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
15.	The atmosphere is stressful.	37	19	43	22	77	39	40	20	197	100
16.	Students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest.	29	15	66	34	73	37	29	15	197	100
17.	Students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions.	12	6	66	34	77	39	42	21	197	100
18.	Students do not like to participate because they feel afraid.	29	15	49	25	73	37	46	23	197	100
19.	The teacher does not pay equal attention to all his/her students.	30	15	42	21	64	32	61	31	197	100
20.	Students feel they can act competitively with other students.	84	43	62	31	35	18	16	8	197	100
21.	Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed.	34	17	70	36	58	29	35	18	197	100



Psychological aspect

The last seven questions offer the students' point of view concerning the psychological aspects of the class, and I must say, it is the best yet. Most of the students claim that they feel very satisfied with the class, even feeling a kind of shy.

Question 15. The atmosphere is stressful.

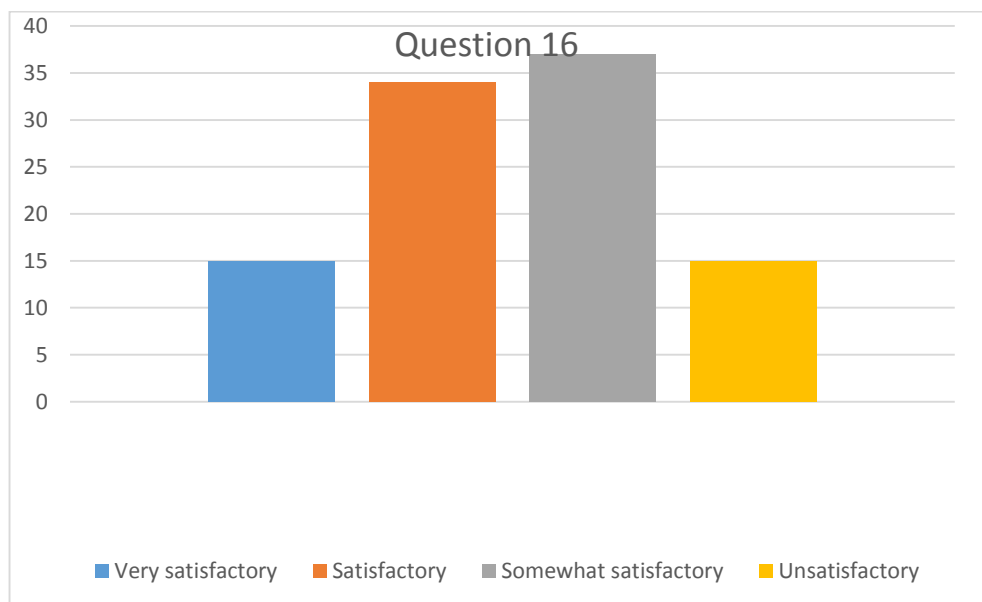


19% very satisfactory, 22% satisfactory, 39% somewhat satisfactory and 20% unsatisfactory

Here we have that most of students feels not so satisfied with the stress level in the classroom at learning English time. Students experience stress by a lot of other factors, and classes are one of them.

According to Cooperative Language Learning has been embraced as a way of promoting communicative interaction in the classroom and is seen as an extension of the principles of Communicative Language Teaching. It is viewed as a learner-centered approach to teaching held to offer advantages over teacher-fronted classroom methods. The higher oal in this case is; to enhance learner motivation and reduce learner stress and to create a positive affective classroom climate.

Question 16. Students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest.



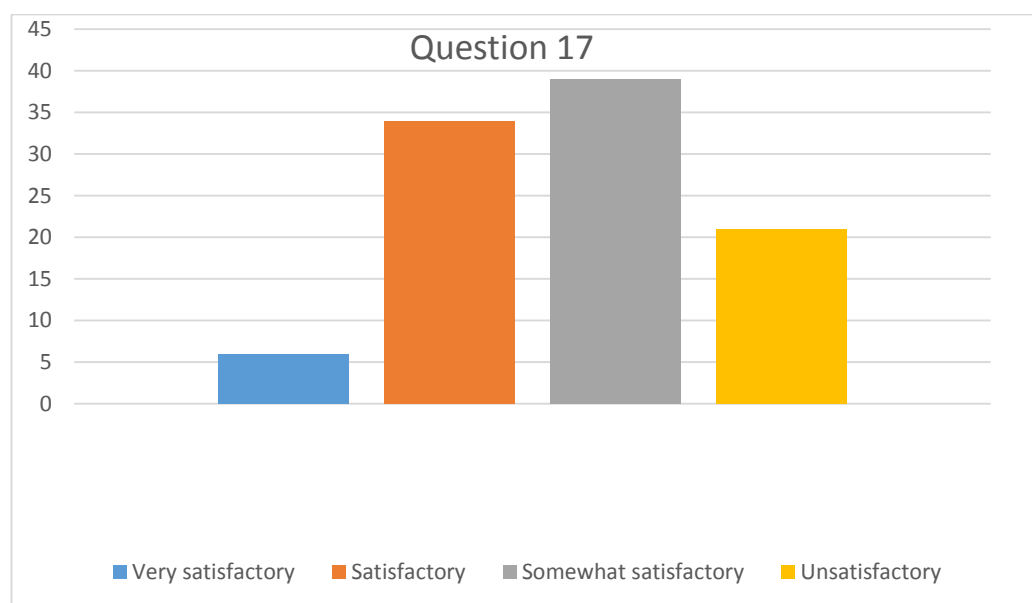
15% very satisfactory, 34% satisfactory, 37% somewhat satisfactory and 15% unsatisfactory

Students feel not so comfortable speaking in front of their partners. It is caused by a shy feeling they have, and this is why of the results of question 18.

The teacher was able to use methods which help students to interact and thereby avoid feeling shy, such as cooperative learning methods that allows to maintain student motivation and creating a positive environment by organizing working groups

Cooperation is working together to accomplish shared goals within cooperative situations, individuals seek outcomes beneficial to themselves and all other group members. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups through which students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning

Question 17. Students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions.



6% very satisfactory, 34% satisfactory, 39% somewhat satisfactory and 21% unsatisfactory

Learner characteristics and patterns of classroom behavior

What kinds of students sit in the front and the back of the classroom, and why do they choose to sit there? In the study “In or out of the action zone: location as a feature of interaction in large ESL classes in Pakistan” by Fauia Shamim, it was found that teachers and students can attribute certain character traits to students who sit in the front and the back. Further, specific patterns of behavior are associated with students who prefer different locations in the classroom.

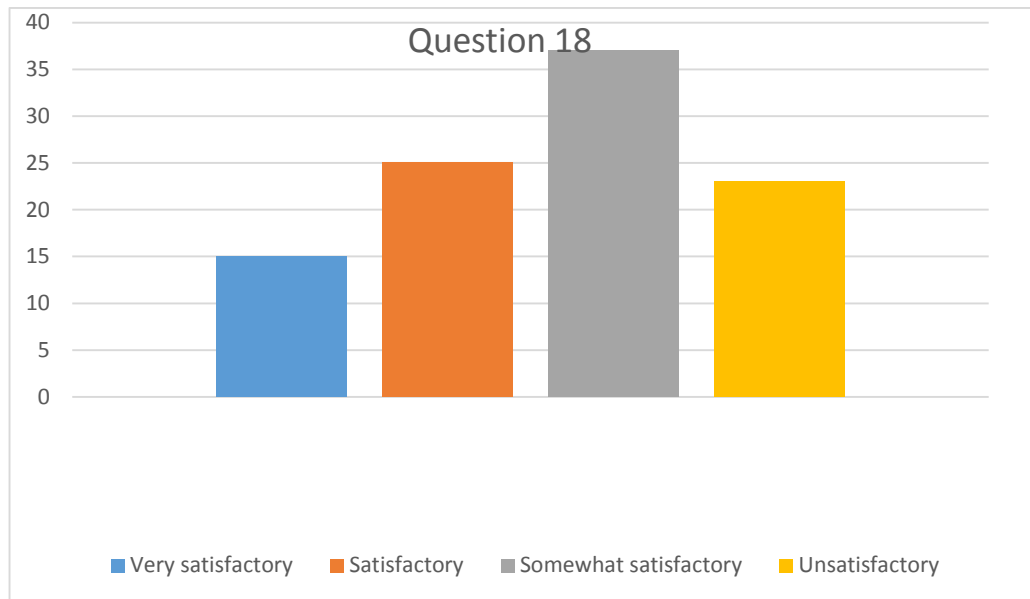
The majority of students in this study perceived a link between different types of students and their location in the classroom. For example, the students in the front were considered to be industrious and hardworking.

Students who sat in the front seemed to have more self-confidence. This could be due to their personality type, but it could also be a result of their location in the classroom.

The teachers also thought that students in the front were “usually clever”, perhaps due to the learners’ strong personality type, which may have helped them to get a seat in the front in the first place.

In contrast, the students who sat in the back had a very negative view of what they perceived as “tricks” used by the students in the front for getting the teacher’s attention

Question 18. Students do not like to participate because they feel afraid.



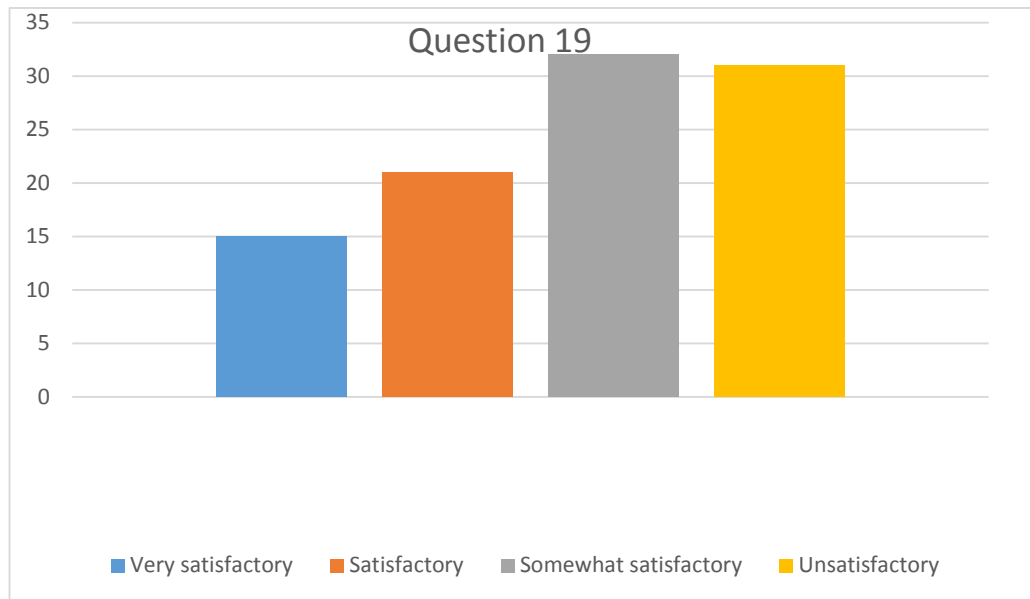
15% very satisfactory, 25% satisfactory, 37% somewhat satisfactory and 23% unsatisfactory.

The results show a higher percentage percent as somewhat satisfactory means that most students have more self-confidence.

In language learning, motivation is more specific and important than in a content-based subject. Teachers encourage language use through both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Teachers supply interesting additional reading materials, they may show a video to follow a difficult language task, or they invite guest speakers so that students can use the new language in an authentic way.

Cooperative learning is a great method to avoid fear and shy feelings in the students, they can speak and make mistakes that their classmates may correct without the teacher's pressing. And they will be more increasingly self-assurance.

Question 19. The teacher does not pay equal attention to all his/her students.

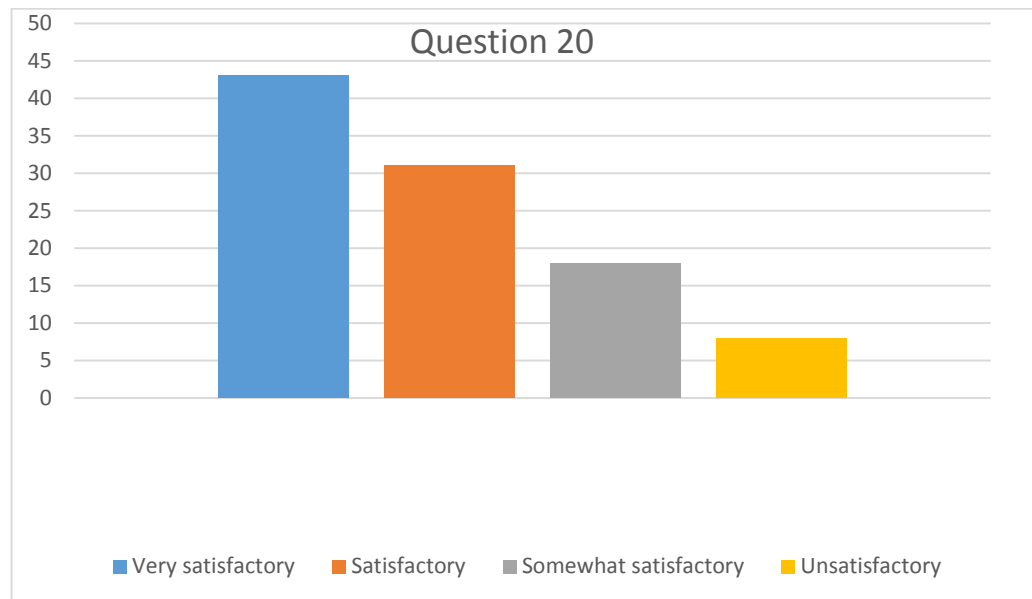


15% very satisfactory, 21% satisfactory, 32% somewhat satisfactory and 31% unsatisfactory

According to classroom space and seating arrangement, teachers usually conduct their classes from the center of the front of the room. From this position they have easy access to the blackboard, which is almost always the only resource in the classroom other than textbook. Thus, teachers, directly face the middle two rows, but they can also “keep an eye on” students sitting in the two wings on the left-and right-hand side in the front two or three rows. It is not always possible for teachers to “see the students at the back of the classroom.

Concerning psychological aspects, it is interesting to emphasize that all of results were almost even, despite the fact that they share a common ground. The survey demonstrates that there are several individuals with different personalities: For instance, in both questions number 18 and 19, forty students claimed to be socially active with their teacher, that is take part in conversations, answer questions and debate (Question 18) and to be shy and introvert in class, that is never to raise their hands or answer questions (Question 19).

Question 20. Students feel they can act competitively with other students.



43% very satisfactory, 31% satisfactory, 18% somewhat satisfactory and 8% unsatisfactory

According to the results of most students agree which means that the teacher form working groups which may be an interaction between students and has activities that allow students to navigate the topic and compete with other

Act Competitively can be explained as the following concepts such as the different levels of proficiency:

Toward an understanding of the superior level for foreign language instruction.

In teaching and supervising language programs at very advanced levels of instruction, we have noticed that a qualitative difference exists between teaching students at lower levels of proficiency and teaching Superior-level students.

At the lower levels, students need to acquire the basic linguistic system and some understanding of culture. At the higher levels, they need to acquire the uncommon, as well as the common, and the infrequent as well as the frequent, in linguistic, discourse, and sociolinguistic expression. Further, the emphasis on cultural appropriateness in the definition of higher proficiency levels presumes substantial interaction with native speakers, which is not a typical experience of basic and intermediate students. These needs and our experience lead us to suggest two characteristics that distinguish students at the Superior level of foreign language proficiency: linguistic experience and communicative focus.

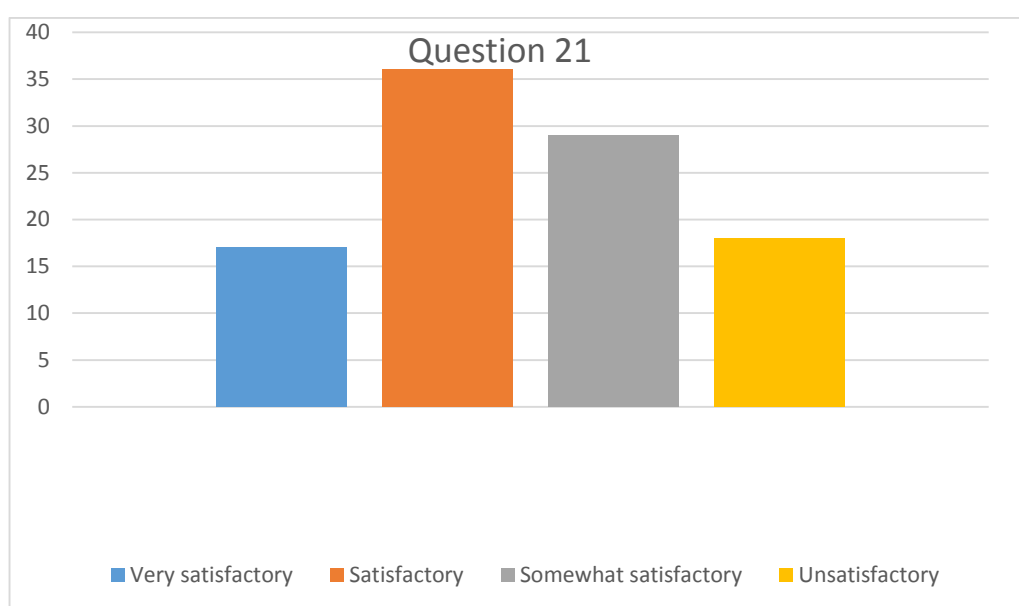
The Superior-level students already know how to say what he or she wants to communicate. Distinguished-level students have an even stronger ideational focus. At the same time, they have nearly full access to the mechanical aspects of the language, choosing to pay attention to language mechanisms when they want to sound erudite, need to make a point very precisely, are talking with someone with lesser language skills but for whom the target language serves as the *lingua franca*, are preparing an article for publication, are giving a lecture to a group of native speakers, or are serving as a high-level interpreter or translator, among many situations in which precision in words choice and structure is essential.

At the highest levels, students have at their fingertips multiple correct structures to express the same idea, as well as a sense of how to build their own unique structures in pertinent situations, and are searching for phraseology, as well as discourse type, that will best meet their communicative need on a sociolinguistic, socio cultural and emotional basis appropriate to the cultural situation and goal of

their communication –or, in the case of translators that will best express the message, intent and personality of a speaker or the innuendoes of a document.

Unfortunately, many teachers of lower-level students argue over whether they should teach grammar when they should be asking how and when to teach it. Teacher who argue for the development of strategic competence over linguistic competence intensify the naturally occurring imbalance between these two components of communicative competence at lower levels of proficiency where language use is required in real-life or simulated real-life environments. As a result, more and more students appear to be reaching the Advanced level of proficiency without the strong grammatical base that is required to reach Superior and Distinguished levels.

Question 21. Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed.



17% very satisfactory, 36% satisfactory, 29% somewhat satisfactory and 18% unsatisfactory

Traditional teacher-fronted seating structure: The most traditional spatial arrangement involves columns and rows of desks and chairs with the students facing

the teacher. It is appropriate if communication is planned only between the leader and the group members (e.g. at formal presentations). It has been found to be very effective of the goal is to make sure that students pay attention to the presenter or perform independent seat-work without disruptions – after all, this arrangement does not offer any environmental support for peer interaction.

From the perspective of group dynamics, there are two main disadvantages of this spatial structure:

It creates inequality among students: as we have seen above, differences in classroom locations are associated with different status, and this is projected to the students occupying these positions.

The teacher-fronted arrangement is extremely controlling, emphasizing only teacher-student visual contact and this helping the teacher completely occupy the centre of the communication network. This enforced teacher-dependency is an obstacle to group processes.

Teachers usually conduct their classes from the center of the front of the room. From this position they have easy access to the blackboard, which is almost always the only resource in the classroom other than textbook. Thus, teachers, directly face the middle two rows, but they can also “keep an eye on” students sitting in the two wings on the left-and right-hand side in the front two or three rows. It is not always possible, however, for teachers to “see the students at the back of the classroom.

Thus the front of the classroom lies within the surveillance zone of the teacher. The back of the classroom is outside the teacher’s attention zone. This seems to affect the behavior of the students in different locations – in the front or back – of the classroom

Conclusions

- The usage of a variety of teaching methods allowed the teacher of the observed classes to achieve his main objectives.
- The amount of students affects the process of learning-teaching due to distractions, such as noise.
- Teacher cannot get a well control of the whole class because of the excessive quantity of students.
- Creating a social relationship based on confidence is very important when teaching a language, for students require confidence to talk to a teacher.
- When size and organization of a classroom is not the best, students cannot pay attention as well as ideal.
- The level of attention given to a student is crucial to enhance or diminish his or her learning.
- The multiple personalities inside a classroom affect the psychological development of the students in the classroom. This is why students feel a kind of shy when they talk to others.
- Large classes ask for more demands and actions from language teachers in large classes compared with their counterparts teaching smaller ones.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations can be provided:

- Teachers must search and use more than just one teaching method, do not be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and adapt.
- The organization of the classroom would be better if teachers make sure their students are well located in order to avoid distractions.
- Teachers could set a list of social priorities, consider names, likes and dislikes of their students, by doing so, teachers will know more about them and they will respond positively.
- Students must be treated equally, thus teachers avoid rejection from their students.
- When teaching a large group, teachers should make sure they find something neutral to do as an activity; they do not want to bore half the group (Specially in mixed-culture or mixed-age groups).
- It is important to explore various methods and apply effective strategies that minimize the effects of large classes and elevate the teaching-learning level to its highest standard.
- Consider the different personalities and organize the class according to them (do not mix the chatters with the easily-distractive type), take into consideration the size of the students and make sure every student receives your teachings in a clear and precise way.
- It is important to get advantage of the Cooperative language method, it causes several positive responses from students as lose afraid and get increasingly self-assurance.

- Educational authorities must consider teaching English to more reduced groups of students, and evaluate and qualify teachers constantly to improve their management of English classes.

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ANNEXES

Appendix N° 2

INSTRUMENTS



UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

OPEN AND DISTANCE MODALITY

ENGLISH DEGREE

Dear student,

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

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

Informative data: Please fill in the information below

Name of institution: _____

Type of institution: Public () Private ()

Year of study: 8th year. () 9th year () 10th year. ()
1st senior high school. () 2nd senior high school. () 3rd. senior high school. ()

City: _____

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

A. Academic issues

No.	In classes with a large number of students:	Very satisfactory	Satisfactory	Somewhat satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
1.	The activities done in class help to apply what students learn in class.				
2.	The activities done allow to practice listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.				
3.	The students are attentive and participate in class activities, including those sitting at the back of the classroom.				
4.	Varied class activities are used such as group, individual, pair-work activities, etc.				
5.	Activities such as plays, competitions, debates, games, etc. are used in class.				
6.	Students can cheat during the test				
7.	Students get distracted by doing assignments from other subjects.				
8.	The seating arrangement facilitates the tasks that are carried out in class.				
9.	Students cannot receive regular feedback from the teacher due to the large number of students.				

B. Social issues

No.	In classes with a large number of students:	Very satisfactory	Satisfactory	Somewhat satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
10.	There is a proper balance of student-student and teacher-student interaction.				
11.	Students have the opportunity to build relationships with their classmates.				
12.	The teacher has problems remembering all the students' names.				
13.	The atmosphere is less stressful since the teacher does not ask several questions to the same student.				
14.	It is easier for students to use their cellphone or any other mobile device without being seen by the teacher.				

C. Psychological issues:

No.	In classes with a large number of students:	Very satisfactory	Satisfactory	Somewhat satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
15.	The atmosphere is stressful.				
16.	Students feel inhibited when speaking in front of the rest.				
17.	Students do not have the opportunity to express their opinions.				
18.	Students do not like to participate because they feel afraid.				
19.	The teacher does not pay equal attention to all his/her students.				
20.	Students feel they can act competitively with other students.				
21.	Students feel relaxed because they can go unnoticed.				

Thank you for your collaboration!

Universidad Técnica Particular de Loja

Titulación de Licenciado en Ciencias de la Educación

Mención Inglés

Autor: Johanna María Pozo García

Centro Universitario: Quito – San Rafael

2. Lista de docentes observados:

N °	Docentes observados(Nombres completos)	Correo electrónico del docente (opcional)	Institución a la que pertenece	Lugar	Número telefónico de la institución
1	Mgs. Mónica Caranqui		Colegio Juan de Salinas	Quito - Sangolquí	022333801 - 022330184
2	Lcda. Irene Morales		Colegio Juan de Salinas	Quito - Sangolquí	022333801
3	Lcda. Martha Quillunpangui		Colegio Juan de Salinas	Quito - Sangolquí	022333801
4	Lcdo. Fernando Bermeo		Colegio Juan de Salinas	Quito - Sangolquí	022333801
5	Lcda. Silvia Panchana		Colegio Juan de Salinas	Quito - Sangolquí	022330184