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

TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN

AUTOR: Guayanay Vicente, María Julia

DIRECTORA: Espinoza Celi, Verónica Soledad, Mgtr.

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*Septiembre, 2018*

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Magister

Verónica Soledad Espinoza Celi

DOCENTE DE LA TITULACIÓN

De mi consideración:

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

Loja, Octubre 2015

f).....

## DECLARACIÓN DE AUTORÍA Y CESIÓN DE DERECHOS

“Yo, María Julia Guayanay Vicente declaro ser la autora del presente trabajo de titulación: Teachers and students’ perceptions of teaching English in small classes in Ecuador, de la Titulación de Ciencias de la Educación mención Inglés, siendo la Mgtr. Verónica Soledad Espinoza Celi la 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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f).....

María Julia Guayanay Vicente

CI: 0703588020

## **DEDICATION**

Primarily I thank God for the life and dedicate this thesis to my wonderful family. Particularly to my understanding and patient husband, Manuel Bravo, who has given me his fullest support , to our precious son, Christopher, who is the joy of our lives and my brother, José David Guayanay, who had the initiative that I study and become someone in life . I must also thank to my loving mother, Concepción Vicente and my sister Juanita who have helped so much with the care of my son and have given me their fullest support. In addition also to my sister, Elsita, who always wishes the best to me. Finally, I dedicate this work to my brother, Joel, to my father, David Guayanay, who is a gift that God gave me and who I love much.

María

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is to know the perceptions of teachers and students about the teaching and learning of English in small classes in Ecuador. This study was conducted in Marcabeli, and Piñas, Ecuador. One public high school was selected in the first city and four were chosen in the second location. Five in-service English teachers and 20 students per each observed class were the participants of this research.

The quantitative and qualitative methods were applied in this research to obtain precise information of the perceptions of teachers and students in the English language teaching in small classes. In the qualitative research, the human behaviors, attitudes and motivations were analyzed; for this analysis it was used an observation form. In the quantitative research, the data was gathered using questionnaires.

The results of this research show that in small classes the students interact more with their teachers and that they are motivated during the classes. In addition, in small classes there are more and better opportunities to work in group or individually.

**KEYWORD:** English teaching, teachers' and students' perceptions in small classes.



## RESUMEN

El propósito de este estudio es conocer las percepciones de los profesores y estudiantes acerca de la enseñanza y aprendizaje del Inglés en clases pequeñas en Ecuador.

Esta investigación se realizó en Marcabelí y Piñas, Ecuador. Un Colegio público fue seleccionado en la primera ciudad y cuatro fueron elegidos en la segunda localización.

Cinco profesores de Inglés en servicio y 20 estudiantes por cada clase observada fueron los participantes de esta investigación.

Los métodos cuantitativos y cualitativos fueron aplicados en esta investigación para obtener información precisa acerca de las percepciones de los profesores y estudiantes en la enseñanza del idioma Inglés en clases pequeñas. En la investigación cualitativa, la conducta humana, actitudes and motivación fueron analizadas; para este análisis fue usado un formulario de observación. En la investigación cuantitativa los datos fueron recopilados por medio de cuestionarios.

El resultado de esta investigación enseña que en las clases pequeñas los estudiantes interactúan más con sus profesores y están motivados durante las clases. Además en las clases pequeñas hay más y mejor oportunidades para trabajar en grupos o individualmente.

**PALABRAS CLAVES:** Enseñanza del Inglés, las percepciones de los profesores y estudiantes en pequeñas clases.

## INTRODUCTION

Today the Government has built more educational establishments and has invested a great amount of money in scholarships and training to prepare teachers in order to ensure the quality of teaching and students can obtain good learning.

Most of the teachers have expressed that teaching in a small class has many benefits such as: meet the individual needs of their students, control students' behavior adequately, and students have a lot of more chances to feedback from the teachers.

Therefore, inside the classroom the good relation between teacher and student is an important factor in the teaching and learning process. For that reason, teachers who have positive interaction in the classroom allow their students to acquire good academic achievement.

The purpose of this research is to discover teacher's and student's perceptions of teaching and learning English in small classes and how it impacts in their learning process.

Therefore, it is crucial to examine the following questions: what are the benefits of teaching and learning English in small classes? what teaching strategies and resources benefit the English teaching in small classes?, how do students feel about learning English in small classes?, and the limitations that exist when English is taught in small classes. In that way, educational authorities and teachers will be able to develop an intervention plan to improve the Teaching of English Language in Ecuador.

To support this research, it is important to mention some previous studies in order to obtain more information about teacher's and student's perceptions of teaching English in small classes. For instance, Harfit (2012) developed a study about the influence of class size reduction in the psychological aspect of learning. The participants in this study were Chinese students and their teachers from a secondary high school in Hong Kong. The quantitative method was applied in this research; twenty one students were selected from small classes and 41 learners from large classrooms. As result, the reduced-size classes were made in a mature and confident way. Students expressed that smaller classes promoted a strong sense of security within their classroom community and they felt more confident about participating in class. The main limitation of this study was the focus on just four cases (eight classes and four teachers) so any conclusions drawn are tentative at best.

A second study was carried out by Finn, Gerber and Boyd-Zaharias (2005), which addressed three questions about the relationships of early school experiences with graduating from or dropping out of school. One of these questions was a basic question about students' academic achievement in the primary grades. They expressed that academic achievement and rates of successful graduation increases in students from small classes. In addition, the number of students who were rewarded with free lunches because of their behavior was better in small classes.

The third study was conducted by Blatchford (2002) explaining the relationship between class size and achievement for children in their first years of schooling. It was found that smaller classes during the first reception year benefit the students' learning process. Students work better and receive individualized attention from their teachers, especially for children who have more academic needs and require improvement in their basic academic skills as a result of low scores. The main limitation of this study was that studies such as the STAR project are limited in that they do not allow relationships between attainment and class size to be tested across the full range of class sizes.

Undoubtedly, this research provides many benefits for teachers, and Educational institutions who will be the responsible to apply the correct strategies in order to satisfy the students 'needs and have a constant search of an improvement of their English Knowledge in every stage of Education. As a result, the teachers can incorporate new teaching techniques in the classroom.

In the research study no limitation was found since the high school authorities, the teachers and students collaborated and provided useful help to researching about teachers and students' perceptions of teaching English in small classes. In addition, each question of the questionnaires was answered by teachers and students with much honesty.

## **METHODS**

### ***Settings and participants***

This study was conducted in five Ecuadorian public high schools in the locations of Marcabelli and Piñas, in the province of El Oro. The participants of this research were five in-practicing English teachers. All of them were Spanish native speakers and taught English one hour per day every week. In addition, seventy four students participated in this research. In each classroom there were around 20 students or less. They were teenagers between 12 to 17 years old.

### ***Procedures***

For this research some topics were researched through varied books contained information about main aspects involved in a teaching and learning process of English in small classes. These aspects were Managing Learning, Teacher-Student and Student-Student Interaction, Class Size, Teaching Techniques, Strategies, or Activities for Teaching English to Small Classes, and Learning Environment in small classes. Five previous studies related to the researched topic were also invested. The information was obtained from several sources as journals and books from different authors.

The general approach of this study was Quantitative and Qualitative. The quantitative method was used for gathering, processing, and analyzing numeric data of predetermined variables. Regarding the qualitative was concerned in developing explanations of social phenomena, human behaviors, and attitudes, which were analyzed, by open-ended questions.

The field research was carried out in five public high schools where teachers and students answered the questionnaire after class. The survey was conducted face-to face in Spanish, and with the questionnaires results was possible to know teachers and students' perceptions in small classes. Furthermore, each teacher was observed during the teaching process and the details were recorded in observation formats. In addition, all selected courses had twenty or less students to answer the questionnaires.

The techniques used for this study were survey, note-taking, and instruments like observation formats and questionnaires. The questionnaires consisted of 22 close-ended questions that were applied to investigate teachers and students' perceptions of teaching English in small classes. The observation formats also had 22 close- ended questions to fill

out the stated questions according to the observed English lessons and wrote down the most relevant information and details.

After gathering finished data, the quantitative method was used to analyze, interpret, and describe results, and they were carefully done to determine the conditions in which the lessons take place, and thus, identify the teachers and students' perceptions; and determine the teaching-learning process in small classes. Those results were supported by information from the observations sheets, students' questionnaires and literature review.

**CHAPTER 1**  
**LITERATURE REVIEW**

English as a global language allows people around the world to communicate for different purposes. Similarly, in Ecuador people who have good English Language skills have better opportunities for exchanging information in order to have access to the world in these days. For these reasons, this study is aimed at searching on teachers and students 'perceptions of teaching and learning English in small classes. The teaching of English is made up of different factors that involve teachers and students. Some aspects are going to be reviewed within section.

### ***Managing learning***

There are different aspects that teachers must take into account in teaching English such as feedback, timing, and instructions. Proctor (1995) expresses that giving feedback to learners during the class is very important for the teaching-learning process and teachers should actively plan to use this teaching strategy, because it helps students understand the subject being studied and gives them clear guidance on how to improve their learning. In addition, feedback can improve the student's confidence, self-awareness and enthusiasm for learning.

Regarding instructions, Proctor (1995) mentions that instructions must follow a sequence during a period of time, and it is advisable to review them into the session at a later time to ensure that students are doing the activities correctly. Furthermore, Proctor (1995) considers that with the use of questions, teachers can evaluate students' understanding and through the responses the students show their level of progress in the learning process.

Similarly, McLeod, Fisher and Hoover (2003) state that the process of giving instructions is a sequence of events such as setting up the class, distributing materials, estimating the time to assign academic work, and checking what students have learnt. Regarding time, the authors define four types of time in a school day such as allocated, instructional, engaged, and academic. The first refers the total amount of time available for teacher's instruction and students' learning. The second is focused to active teaching of different themes in class and assigning the activities in the classroom. The third refers to students time which is involved in a task. Finally, the fourth is focused on teachers who can prove that students learn the content or mastered the skills. In conclusion, McLeod, Fisher and Hoover (20003) consider time management as one of the skills necessary for acquiring good academic achievement by students.

Savage and Savage (2010) agree with McLeod, Fisher and Hoover (2003) in describing four types of time: allocated, instructional, engaged, and academic. The total amount of time assigned for giving instructions and learning is defined by the authors such as allocated, while the active teaching time is known as instructional. They coincide on naming the engaged time to the periods in which students are focused on learning tasks related to the instructional objectives. For example, 30 minutes must be assigned to explain general concepts about the subject. Nevertheless, the authors explain that engaged time is obtained by eliminating from allocated time all the activities that are not related to pure learning such as organizing students in groups or distributing materials. As a result, students should understand the content of class during the time assigned and stop doing activities that are not related to learning.

In fact, Savage and Savage (2010) mention that time is an aspect that is usually wasted at the beginning of a class. Moreover, they consider that time plays an important role in establishing class routines and controlling discipline. They argue that students who are busy enough are a sign of effective time management, and the prize for teachers is a group of learners engaged in the lesson. As a result, students enter into a learning process because they are attentive in the class.

Feedback is another important aspect in managing learning. According to Orlich (2010), there are two important reasons to give feedback the students. Firstly, a good amount of feedback encourages learners' participation and helps them to develop self-confidence. Secondly, students who receive positive feedback learn to be supportive and collaborative with their peers, especially when they need to inform their teachers about the learning progress and group goals.

Similarly, Proctor (1995, p. 93) remarks the importance of feedback in the learning process by stating that "giving feedback to pupils during lessons is fundamental for teaching well". He adds that being proactive and planning carefully makes response for learning more effective. Additionally, Proctor(1995) explains that questioning is a common technique in giving feedback; it shows students their progress during the final stage of a lesson.

### ***Teacher-student and student-student interaction***

The dynamics of the teaching-learning process is featured by the interaction among students and between teachers and their pupils. Regarding these aspects, Johnson (1995, p. 16) claims, "teachers are generally characterized as controlling most of what is said and



done in classrooms” referring to the role of teachers as the sole speakers of a language classroom. Furthermore, Johnson (1995) states that interaction between teachers and students in a lesson are structured by a sequence of initiation, response, and evaluation acts known as IRE. This means, teachers start a lesson asking a set of questions that are answered by students and then evaluated by teachers. The IRE sequence is described in three stages that start with the opening, that is, when the teacher presents students the contents and the type of participation expected from them. After that, teachers assign the instructional activities designed according to the objectives of the lesson. Finally, the closure stage seeks to review with students what they have learnt. For Johnson (1995), teachers control even the interaction among students through all the IRE sequence, but it is related to the learning goals of the lesson and the type of activities planned for the class.

With Initiation-Response-Evaluation model of questioning (IRE) the teacher asks a question, the student answers it, and then the teacher indicates if the answer is right otherwise is provided the correct answer. This is very effective if the goal is quick to check for comprehension on a single fact or issue from a particular student.

In regards to interaction among students, Johnson (1995) explains that pupils play a crucial role in determining their level of participation in small groups. It is common to observe different types of interactional competencies that design how and when each member will take part in activities. In this sense, the authors state that students’ personal and academic experiences are a dominant factor that group members take into consideration when assigning roles to work in the academic tasks. Usually, those students with solid linguistic skills or higher scores are selected by their peers to lead the group and work in the activities assigned by their teachers.

A similar point of view of interaction in the classroom is provided by Herts-Lazarowitz and Miller (1992, p. 71) who state, “The classroom can be organized as a centralized system with the teacher as the main figure and with the students forming a single large group”. According to Lazarowitz and Miller (1992, p.71), the level of complexity in classroom interaction can vary from a teacher centered model in which lectures are the means of instruction to a student centered class in which pupils take decisions with the guidance of the teacher.

Regarding interaction, the authors also describe as a communication network that involves unilateral, bilateral, or multilateral expository system that can be: teacher to a single student and teachers to small groups or the whole class. Also, teachers control the exchange

of information between students working in groups, by encouraging them to investigate, planning, and producing reports. Therefore, this point of view presents teachers as facilitators, coordinators, and integrators. This involves that teachers should guide and give opportunities to their students to discover new ideas through interaction among classmates, and they can develop a creative learning community across the school, in order to take that responsibility for their own learning as possible. As a result, students have knowledge, understanding and enthusiasm by the things that they learn and are able to achieve raise, the inspiration and motivation.

Finally, Herts- Lazarowitz and Miller (1992) state that a student centered in classroom is described in terms of four types of interaction: on-task, off – task, interactive, and non-interactive. Regarding this, the authors manifested that Collaborative activities and peer instruction are known as on-task and interactive interaction, while the disruptive behaviors that may interrupt the class such as daydreaming, chatting, or fighting are identified by the authors as off-task behaviors. In addition, withdrawal and daydreaming are defined as off-task, non-interactive behaviors.

From Henke, Chen and Goldman (1999) standpoint, students' development is facilitated by teacher-student and student-student interaction. They express that constructivist approaches to teaching and learning assert that children learn new concepts by expressing their own ideas, being challenged by the ideas and questions of others, and then reformulating their understandings. Moreover, the authors explain that interaction's patterns between teachers and students or among students can vary even within a grouping strategy. For instance, lectures can be used in group work or whole-class instruction. On the other hand, whole class teaching may promote interaction among students though it is restricted only to a listening activity since teachers tend to control the group and the amount of speaking in class.

### ***Class size***

One of the points of controversy in teaching is the class size. In regards to the larges classes, Exley and Dennichk (2004) state that by increasing the number of students involved, there are differences which expose participants to a variety of alternative viewpoints that they may not have previously considered. For these authors, large classes reduce the possibility

of individualized teaching because students may feel reluctant or inhibited to speak in front of the class.

From a similar perspective Sarawasthi (2004) expresses that teachers may face some problems in large classes that are related to discipline, teaching, stress, and communication. Teachers may shout in order to get students' attention and they can have difficulties in remembering the names of all the students.

Moreover, Harmer (2003) states that it is difficult for teachers to provide individual attention to students who sat at the back of the classroom in large classes. In addition, the author mentions that organizing pupils in groups or pairs is another disadvantage of working with crowded classes; this situation might affect new teachers' self-confidence and they may feel frustrated.

On the other hand, Bateman (2002) argues that there is evidence that a small class can be a powerful facilitator in promoting students' membership in the classroom by making them more active and frequent participants in the learning process. Furthermore, small groups of students promote active participation and engagement in learning activities because teachers are able to provide individual attention. In addition, students enrich their academic skills due to an increased number of learning activities and instruction, while social skills also are enhanced. Therefore, students feel like being valued participants in the classroom.

Similarly, Exley and Dennick (2004) consider that small classes offer students the possibility of increasing their speaking practices because it is easy for teachers to organize the class to work in pairs. Therefore, they mention that small classes facilitate the exchange of opinions and knowledge between learners. In addition, there are more opportunities for individual oral contributions.

#### *Teaching techniques, strategies, or activities for teaching English to small classes*

Since small classes provide some benefits for the English-teaching learning process, different authors such as Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Trevisan and Brown (2010) suggest helpful activities that can be developed in small groups. In regards to this, Orlich (2010, p.252) explains, "small groups can learn from activities as diverse as making time lines, observing courts in session, or taking field trips to museums. The value is in the experience.". The authors remark that the main essence of those activities is oral interaction and it is the basis of a successful discussion process.

In order to promote an effective discussion process, Orlich (2010) states that students must be guided to develop their listening skills by responding and reacting appropriately to other points of view. Therefore, group work is another type of activity that teachers may use in small classes. According to authors, teachers must organize students correctly by assigning roles and responsibilities to each member within the groups in order to obtain more participation.

Regarding the activities for working with small classes, Wadhwa (2008) proposes that activities can be used in groups or individually. Working individually may get the best participation from students in small classes. For that reason, open-ended enquiries and role plays are proposed as activities that involve students using the target language for reporting outcomes and creating roles. According to the activities that can be used in groups, Wadhwa (2008) explains that brainstorming allows students to generate ideas about a certain topic and it is a good technique for developing learners' lateral thinking. Buzz and Cross-over groups foster discussion and exchange of information because students are organized in groups of two or three to talk about an issue for a few minutes; later they are encouraged to share the main points with other groups.

Another group activity proposed by Wadhwa (2008) promotes observation and critical thinking; they are *fishbowl* and *problem-based tutorial group*. With *fishbowl* students are encouraged to work in small groups for observing certain processes and discussing results. In a similar way, in problem-based tutorial group, pupils are involved in discussions in order to find a solution to a problem.

Chadha (2004) considers that sometimes students may not be involved in discussions as it would be desirable and it would make things to get worse. He explains that group discussions are more effective when students are prepared previously. Therefore, Chadha (2004) remarks that asking students to read and highlight important information from books is not enough. It is necessary to involve learners through working with ideas or using and refining contributions given by others in the classroom.

Chadha (2004) states that lecturing is another useful activity that helps teachers to set a context, to give examples, or put in evidence the correct form of thinking and problem solving. Nevertheless, he manifests that during the research it was verified that lectures did not function as teachers expect since not all students were able to imagine or see issues related to the topic. For that reason, the author explains that teachers have the responsibility of using lectures creatively in order to bring students opportunities for real involvement. For

instance, Chadha (2004) suggests that instructors may ask learners to make predictions, demonstrations, or describe pictures or images related to the lecture. Also, he proposes questions as a helpful technique that encourages students to make contributions and prepare them to listen actively the contents of the class.

Finally, Chadha (2004) states that no matter whether teachers use discussion in groups or lectures, students may be distracted and lose track of ideas. As a result, it is important to combine and use different types of techniques and activities such as writing-to-learn, role playing, case studies, individual and collaborative learning, debates, projects, among others; in order to add a variety of activities in small classes.

### ***Learning environment in small classes***

Despite of the important contribution that varied activities have in promoting learning in small classes, learning environment is for many authors a crucial feature in class size. Bateman (2002) explains, "In the 'learning community' classroom, all students are active participants in a rigorous learning process that continuously challenges them by requiring them to engage in deep levels of inquiry". He states that small classes develop in students the sense of community since the frequency of active participation in class is increased. Also, it is easy to organize groups and foster collaboration among members to achieve the goals of a lesson.

In addition, the author above explains that learning environment in small classes promotes learning because students are less involved in antisocial behavior; instead, they tend to be highly involved in peer evaluation. As a result, there are lots of opportunities for working collaboratively and in establishing strong emotional bonds among students.

The features of small classes mentioned previously are by Finn and Wang (2002) the basis of a productive classroom. According to them, working in such dynamic environments requires that teachers understand how the process flows in small groups in order to create a less restrictive and cherished class. This gives teachers a sense that the teaching-learning process is effective and at the same time it is possible to deal better with behavioral problems. Also, authors explain that the classroom community in small classes is featured by a cohesive relationship between teachers and students because they are able of getting to know each other.

Similarly, Bems (2010) considers that cohesion in small classes is the result of high levels of socialization. Interactions between students are stimulated by the variety of learning

activities and the need of understanding and cooperation. Besides, the author states that small classes promote leadership, responsibility, social development, and cognitive competence in students. Finally, Bems (2010) indicates that the learning environment in small classes also benefits teachers because it is possible to monitor students' tasks and behaviors during academic work; therefore, feedback is effectively and quickly provided.

In the following section, some previous research studies related to teachers and students' perceptions of teaching English in small classes will be analyzed. These studies provide ideas and experiences collected by other researchers in order to carry out the present study in the best way.

The first study was carried out by Harfit (2012) to investigate, from the students' point of view, the influence of class size reduction in the psychological aspect of learning. The participants in this study were Chinese students and their teachers from a secondary high school in Hong Kong. The quantitative method was applied in this research, twenty one students were selected from small classes and 41 learners from large classrooms. In order to measure the influence of class size in the process of learning, teachers were assigned with one small and large class from the same grade. The researchers used questionnaires to interview students and the gathering information was on aspects such as important episodes and incidents from observed lessons, and about positive and negative aspects of the classes. Finally, the interview questions were focused on students' perspective of teaching and learning process, interaction and participation in classes, and cultural factors derived from attending classes and teaching in small groups.

After gathering the information, the researchers found that small classes promote a strong sense of security within the classroom community. In addition, students demonstrate a positive opinion of peers and teachers' evaluation. Also, learners felt confident about their level of participation in class and they were more stimulated to make contributions than their peers in large classes. As a result, the researchers concluded that the psychological aspects of learning such as the sense of anxiety by the students during the class is less when the number of students is reduced.

Another study by Finn, Gerber and Boyd-Zaharias (2005) which was addressed with three questions about relationships of early school experiences with the graduation or dropping out of school. One of the basic questions was about students' academic achievement in primary grades. Researchers expressed that academic achievement and rates of successful graduation increases in students from small classes. In addition, the

students were rewarded with free lunches because of their behavior was better in small classes.

The sample chosen by the researchers for this study consisted of a subset of students who participated in the Tennessee project STAR when they were K-3 learners; it gave a total of 4948 individuals. The researchers gathered from those students their demographic information, number of years of participation in small or full-sized classes, and their achievement records. That information was analyzed to answer the researched questions. In conclusion, the researchers explained that small classes had a strong influence in the rates of successful graduation from K-3 students in high school.

A third study by Blatchford (2002) attempted to show the positive relationship between class size and achievement in children in their first year of schooling. The researchers selected children from 220 schools in 368 classes who entered to the first grade. They were evaluated through the Avon Reception Entry Assessment measuring at the literacy and mathematics levels. In addition, the researchers collected other participants' information such as age, sex, free school meal entitlement, English language fluency, previous nursery education, attendance, and special education needs.

The researchers found a clear effect of class size difference on children's academic attainment over the reception year. There was an increasing reduction in the expected achievement of students who attended classes in large groups up to 30 individuals. In contrast, academic scores were higher in literacy than mathematics in those learners who belong to small classes. Therefore, it was concluded that smaller classes during the first reception year benefit the students' learning process; with results more noticeable in literacy rather than maths with learners that require improvement in their basic academic skills as a result of low scores. Furthermore, the authors of the study state that small classes help learners who were not eligible for free meals because they receive individualized attention from their teachers during the recess.

A fourth study by Hoxby (2000) similarly to the aforementioned studies, attempted to show the effects of class size in students' achievement. The researchers selected the sample among 649 elementary schools.

The setting of the investigation included two scenarios. The first situation relied on a variation in class size as a result of the number of students enrolled in the current school year. The second scenario was determined by the effects of increasing or decreasing the

number of classrooms in class size as a result of the enrollment process. The number of students in each classroom ranged from 15 to 25.

After the setting was clearly identified, the researchers collected the results of a standard test administered at the beginning of the school year. They used the information to establish a relationship between scores and class size. Moreover, a survey was applied in each school to gather data about class size's policies, teaching materials, and mixed-grade classes. The findings show that teachers did not change their teaching strategies when class size varied. Moreover, they used materials only for pedagogical purposes, and the type of teaching strategies used in small class classes were the same as those used in large groups. Under those conditions, the researchers found that students' achievement in small and large classes was similar.

As a result, the researcher concluded that the reduction of class size does not have a direct influence on pupils' achievement, and population variation in classroom is a useful indicator for measuring the effect of class size in academic attainment. Nevertheless, Hoxby (2000) considered that it would be significant that teachers adapt their teaching strategies in relation to the number of students that they teach.

Finally, another study done by Blatchford, Basset and Brown (2011) attempted to show the relationship between class size and classroom processes. In addition, the researchers proposed to achieve these aims: contrasting pupils' classroom engagement with teacher-pupil interaction; examine whether effects vary by pupil prior attainment; and, examine whether effects vary in primary and secondary schools; and, determining the marked effects of class size in the learning process.

After setting the goals of the study, the researchers selected 686 students in 49 schools, and observed the teaching-learning process along 88 classes. The method applied was a multilevel regression used to investigate the relationship between class size and the observation measures (pupil level of attainment, special education needs, gender, number of teachers, school subject, and support staff presence).

At the completion of the observation process, the researchers found that students from primary and secondary courses were similarly engaged in learning tasks. Nevertheless, there was not significant relationship between class size and achievement in primary section. In this sense, the researchers did not observe any variation in task behavior of students with high, medium, and low attainment. In contrast, it was observed that secondary students



benefited from small classes and there was a highly significant effect of class size in low attaining learners.

The researchers concluded that small classes benefit students' low attainment in terms of individualized attention from teachers. If those students were set in large classes, teachers would find more difficult to engage them back in learning activities.

The previously studies presented by several researchers determined how small classes benefit English teaching and English learning. Students can Interact and receive individualized attention from teachers because their behavior was better in smaller than in larges classes. In addition, they expressed that small classes had strong influence in rates of successful graduation from students in high school. In conclusion, the researchers indicate that anxiety decreases when the number of students is reduced, and when learners are motivated in the class.

**CHAPTER 2**  
**DESCRIPTION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS**

This section contains the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the answers given by the teachers and students who participated in this research. This analysis will review the percentages of responses obtained in each question by teachers and students. Furthermore it will be based on the interpretation of different perceptions that teachers and students can have about the benefits and limitations of teaching and learning English in small classes. All those values will be presented in tables and will be analyzed carefully with the help of the data recorded in observation sheets of the classes where teachers and students participated.

Finally, the analysis will be supported by answers of questionnaires and notes made during the observation process.

- **Qualitative and Quantitative analysis**

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

Table 1. Teachers' Perceptions.

N°	In classes with a small number of students :	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		disagree		Total	
			%		%		%		%		%
1.	It is easier to design activities that help the students to apply what they have learned .	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0	5	100
2.	The students are attentive and participate in class activities.	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0	0	100
3.	Classroom space allows students to properly do the activities designed.	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0	5	100
4.	Appropriate feedback can be given.	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0	5	100
5.	Activities that allow more interaction among students are performed.	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0	5	100
6.	There is more interaction between the teacher and the students.	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0	5	100
7.	It is easier to remember students' names	4	80	1	20	-	0	0	0	5	100

Autor: Maria Julia Guayanay Vicente.

Source: teacher's questionnaires

Table 2. Students' perceptions.

N°	In classes with a small number of students	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		disagree		Total	
			%		%		%		%		%
1.	The activities done in class help to apply what students learn.	54	73	17	23	2	3	1	1	74	100
2.	The students are attentive and participate in class activities.	43	58	25	34	6	8	0	0	74	100
3.	The students can better concentrate because there is less noise in the classroom.	29	39	30	41	12	16	3	4	74	100
4.	The classroom space allows students to carry out the activities assigned by the teacher.	50	68	29	28	1	1	2	3	74	100
5.	Students receive proper feedback from the teacher.	54	73	17	23	1	1	2	3	74	100
6.	There is interaction between the students.	40	54	27	36	6	8	1	1	74	100
7.	There is interaction between the teacher and students.	56	76	14	19	1	1	3	4	74	100
8.	The teacher remembers the student ' names.	57	77	15	21	1	1	1	1	74	100

Autor: María Julia Guayanay Vicente

Source: Students' questionnaires

The results observed in table 1 about teachers' perceptions in small classes show that 60% of respondents totally agree that it is easier to design activities that help the students to practice what they have learned in class, and only 40% agree on this. It is also possible to observe in table 2 in relation to the students' perceptions that 73% respondents totally agree with activities done during the classes, because there is opportunity to apply that they have learned, whilst that 23% agree with it, 3% partially agree, and only 1% disagree.

According to higher percentages obtained in this question, 60% from teachers' responses and 73% of students totally agree, it can be observed in the tables 1 and 2 that

most teachers in a small class can easily design different activities, and students are satisfied with those activities because they can practice and show what has been learned in classroom. These results have relation with the observed classes where teachers designed their activities, and how students applied their knowledge to develop them. For example, teachers made a review of previous contents and presented new topics using questioning, brainstorming, or pictures. In addition, teachers gave instructions according to the type of activity and explained students how to develop the activities. Thus, students described the pictures, worked in the book, made notes, or they said their teacher their ideas. After the teachers made questions for confirming that all learners have understood what they were teaching in classes in order to check the tasks.

In conclusion, there was not impediment for applying what has been learned in class, because there were less of 20 students, and teachers could design different activities according the students' needs. In this way, all students have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and develop their skills. These affirmations coincide with Proctor (1995) when he says that with the use of questions, teachers can evaluate students' understanding and through the responses the students show their level of progress in the learning process.

Interpreting the results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> statement 60% of teachers totally agree that in small classes the learners are attentive and participate during class activities, and 40% agree. Similarly 58% of students responded totally agree that in small classes they are attentive and participate during the class activities, the 34% agree, and 8% partially agree. It was confirmed during the observed classes that students were attentive and participated actively during the activities, therefore classes with a small number of students made possible that teachers were able of involve all students in the tasks and participate frequently in the class. Teachers walked along the classroom while students worked in the proposed activities, teachers made questions and the students were attentive and volunteers to give their answers, in this way , the learners got an effective learning .

Students really learn more in small classes because they soon develop confidence, closeness to express their ideas and opinions during the class; as a result, the teaching and learning process take place. Related to this, Bateman (2002) argues that there is evidence that a small class can be a powerful facilitator in promoting students' membership in the classroom by making them more active and frequent participants in the learning process.

With respect to the question 3 of the table 2 shows that 39% of the students expressed totally agree that in small classes there is less noise and classes are conducted without difficulty, 41% agree, 16% partially agree, 4% disagree.

These results indicated that 80% of the students in small classes worked without difficulties and concentrated better on the lesson because the level of noise was acceptable and students were attentive, thus they could develop their activities without problems due learners were busy all the time. In this way, they did not waste their time. Furthermore there was not indiscipline in the classroom because students were always monitored by teachers that established an effective time management in the classroom. It was verified through the observed classes. According to Savage & Savage (2010) consider that time plays an important role in establishing class routines and controlling discipline. They argue that students who are busy enough are a sign of effective time management, and the prize for teachers is a group of learners engaged in the lesson. As a result, students enter into a learning process because they are attentive in the class.

About the statement 3 in table 1 shows that 80% of the respondents teachers answered totally agree that classroom space allows students to properly do the activities designed, and 20% of teachers responded agree. With regard to statement 4 in table 2 the 68% of students manifested totally agree that in small classes the classroom space allows them to carry out the activities assigned by the teacher, 28 % agree, 1% partially agree , only the 3% disagree.

The results described previously indicate that 80% of the teachers totally agree and 20% responded agree, it means that 100% of the teachers answered that they had enough space to work with a small number of students they have been assigned . Besides, 96% of students agree that the physically space of the classroom allows carry out properly the activities assigned by the teacher, and only 3% of students felt discomfort. In the observed classrooms, these percentages were basically demonstrated that there was an appropriate space; therefore the students had more opportunity to work collaboratively and it helped the teaching learning process.

The classroom space was designed to maintain a small amount of 20 or less students. Therefore, classes with less than 20 students had enough space to work and develop activities in the classroom, and this benefited the teaching- learning process positively since teachers often motivated the students. In conclusion, teachers and students considered that

classroom space was adequate with a small number of students because it was easier to control the discipline and working with the classmates. The observed evidence make possible to support these results with information provided by Bateman (2002), he explains that learning environment in small classes promotes learning because students are less involved in antisocial behavior; instead, they tend to be highly involved in peer evaluation.

As a result, there are lots of opportunities for working collaboratively and establishing strong emotional bonds among students.

Continuing, with question number 4 from table 1 shows 80% of teachers indicated totally agree that in small classes appropriate feedback can be given, and 20% of teachers responded agree. Similarly table 2 in the statement 5 indicates, 73% of students expressed totally agree that in small classes they receive proper feedback from the teachers, 23% agree, 1% responded partially agree, and only 3% disagree.

It can be observed in table 1 that 100% of teachers and 96% of students totally agree that proper feedback is given during the classes. About this, the observations made possible to notice that teachers gave their students a good explanation with the repetition of each phrase or theme when students did not understand. Thus activities took place in the best way and students understood better the classes. In addition, the activities were clearly explained and students were instructed about the necessary time to develop the task, while students were doing the activities they received help and feedback from teachers. That is just the way that proctor (1995, p.93) recommends "giving feedback to pupils during the lesson is fundamental to teaching well".

Furthermore, the observations done in classroom confirmed that teachers helped to develop learners' tasks through a clear and brief explication when they had their restlessness, thus students were motivated in the classes. These results coincide with Orlich (2010) who expressed that an amount of feedback encourages learners' participation and helps them to develop self-confidence.

Another important aspect in table 1 question number 5 reports that 80% of teachers answered totally agree that activities that allow more interaction among students are performed in small classes, and 20% responded agree. With regard the question number 6 in the table 2 of the students the 54% indicated totally agree that there is interaction between students in small classes, 36% responded agree with the statement, 8% answered partially, and only 1% responded disagree. According the results above, it is clear that many students

in small classes can more interact with other students through the activities made in classroom. In effect, direct observations done in each class showed that students interacted between students when they worked in groups or when discussed about a lesson, then students were encouraged to generate their own ideas. In regards to interaction among students, Johnson (1995) explains that pupils play a crucial role in determining their level of participation in small groups.

Following with the research in question 6 from table 1, 60% of teachers totally agree that in small classes there is more interaction between the teacher and students, while that 40% of teachers expressed agree. With reference to the answers gathered in question 7 from table 2, 76% of students indicated totally agree that in small classes there is interaction between teachers and students, 19% answered agree, 1% partially agree, and 4% responded disagree with statement. These results agree with the notes recorded during the observations done in the classrooms, teachers exposed the lessons and students had multiple opportunities to communicate with the teachers during the classes; and this was very essential for effectively construct their knowledge. During the classes students felt a strong personal connection to their teachers and spoke with their teachers frequently. In this way, teachers and students established a positive interaction that helped the learning process and promote their desire to learn.

For Henke, Chen and Goldman (1999) the students' development is facilitated by teacher-student and student-student interaction". They express that constructivist approaches to teaching and learning assert that children learn new concepts by expressing their own ideas, being challenged by the ideas and questions of others, and then reformulating their understandings.

Analyzing question seven from table 1, 80% of teachers answered totally agree that in small classes is easier to remembers the learners' names, while 20% of teachers responded agree. In regard students in table 2, 77% responded totally agree that the teacher remembers students' names, 21% responded agree, 1% reported partially agree, and only 1% disagree.

Through the observation classes it was confirmed that the names of the students were assimilated quickly by teachers, therefore all were called by their names. It was because there were few students, and the relationship between teacher and student was lived in harmony, where they felt like part of a family. This means that students and teachers had trust, therefore chance to share their feelings and know each other.



According to Finn and Wang (2002) explain that the classroom community in small classes is featured by a cohesive relationship between teachers and students because they are able of getting to know each other.

Teaching and learning English in small classes comes with many greatly benefits. The teachers can design different activities and the students have more opportunities to improve their knowledge because it is easy for teachers organize the class to work in group, pairs or individual. As a result, teachers can offer one-on-one assistance at times and meet the individual needs of their students.

Teachers when worked with a small number of students find it quite favorable since that their learners were interested and excited about learning in a small class, because smaller classes were a lot more communicative, due the students have many opportunities to interact, work and know each other and feel more comfortable. In addition, teachers in small classes manage the discipline of students, know the students better and can recognize the different problems and needs of them through their opinions. Exley and Dennick (2004) consider that small classes offer students the possibility of increasing their speaking practices because it is easy for teachers to organize the class to work in pairs. Therefore, they mention that small classes facilitate the exchange of opinions and knowledge between learners.

Regarding class space, in small classes there is enough space to move around in the classroom and do different activities, thus teachers continually review the tasks. Teachers have time to provide detailed feedback when they are assigning a task, and explaining the classes; so students feel more confident for working during the classes. In addition, students have more chances for feedback from the teacher, and this help them to develop their English skills.

In conclusion, smaller classes help students to achieve good learning because there is a greater opportunity for teacher-student and student-student interaction. Teachers and students' answers, and observations done in classroom made possible to support these results with information provided by Bems (2010), he explains that the environment in small classes also benefits teachers because it is possible to monitor students' tasks and behaviors during academic work; therefore, feedback is effectively and quickly provided. The answers given by teachers coincide with result of students' questionnaires.

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

Table 3. Teachers' Perceptions.

N°	In classes with a small number of students, it is easier to:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		disagree		Total	
			%		%		%		%		%
8.	Design and apply activities that allow student to practice listening skills.	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0	5	100
9.	Design and apply activities that allow students to practice speaking skills.	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0	5	100
10.	Design and apply activities that allow students to practice reading skills.	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0	5	100
11.	Design and apply activities that allow students to practice writing skills.	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0	5	100
12.	Design and apply group work activities.	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0	5	100
13.	Design and apply individual activities.	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0	5	100
14.	Used technological tools	1	20	2	40	2	40	0	0	5	100
15.	Used didactic material	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0	5	100

Author: María Julia Guayanay Vicente

Source: Teachers' questionnaires

Table 4. Students' perceptions.

N°	In classes with a small number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagre		Total	
			%		%		%		%		%
9.	The activites done allow students to practice listening skills.	39	53	27	36	8	11	0	0	74	100
10.	The activities done allow students to practice speaking skills.	44	59	25	34	4	5	1	1	74	100
11.	The activities done allow students to practice readind skills.	55	74	15	21	3	4	1	1	74	100
12.	The activities done allow students to practice writing skills.	51	69	19	26	4	5	0	0	74	100
13.	Group work activities are used.	49	66	22	30	3	4	0	0	74	100
14.	Individuals activities are used.	56	76	15	20	3	4	0	0	74	100
15.	Technological tools are used.	18	24	22	30	28	38	6	8	74	100
16.	Didactic material are used.	37	50	25	34	10	14	2	2	74	100

Author: María Julia Guayanay Vicente  
 Source: Students'questionnaires

As shown in this table 3, question number eight, that 60% of teachers were totally agree that in small classes, it is easier to design and apply activities that allow students to practice listening skill, while 40% of teachers responded agree. Likewise, in the table 2 of students 53% of participants indicated totally agree that in small classes the activities performed allow them practice listening, meantime 36% of students responded agree, and only 11% of students partially agree.

It was observed that there was a dialogue between students and teachers by asking and contributing their ideas. When teachers introduced new contents their students used

questions to check their comprehension such as: *Can you explain this concept in your own words? What do you think about the idea presented by your classmate? Can you describe this picture? What is the topic of the class,* at the same time listening instructions into the daily classroom, dialogues, and completing activities of the book using the CD allowed practice listening skill in the classroom. In addition, the students were guided to talk between classmates and develop their activities, it meant listen to their teacher and then repeated each word. For instance, Orlich (2010) states that students must be guided to develop their listening skill by responding and reacting appropriately to different points of view.

According to the results shown above, the majority of teachers and students indicated totally agree that in small classes, it is easier to design and apply activities that allow students practice listening skills, and only a minority of students (11%) answered partially agree with this statement, and the observations done in each class indicated the appropriate use of the activities to practice listening skills.

The results above in table 3 statement number 9 shown that 60% of teachers responded totally agree that with a small number of students it is easier design and apply activities that allow students to practice speaking skills and 20% of them indicated agree with this statement. Similarly 59% of students answered totally agree that in small classes the activities done allow students to practice speaking skills, while 34% responded agree, 5% answered partially agree, and only 1% of students indicated disagree to statement.

As can see the percentages indicated in the tables 3 and 4, a great deal of teachers and students affirm that in small classes do activities that allow develop speaking skills. It was observed in each class, that the practice of speaking was done through read a text , grammar structures, describe pictures, and conversations daily between classmates and teachers. These strategies help students to perform the speaking ability since they feel the necessity of sharing their ideas. For instance, Chadha suggests that instructors may ask learners to make predictions, demonstrations, or describe pictures or images related to the lecture. In addition, he proposes questions as a technique that encourages students to make contributions and prepare them to listen actively the content of the classes.

In conclusion, as we can see speaking and listening are always linked. For instance, the teachers explained about a topic and students were listening, and then invited learners to give their opinions and students spoke. In this way, students practiced the both skills.

As shown the question 10 of table 3, the 80% of teachers reported in the questionnaires totally agree that in small classes it is easier design activities allow students to practice reading skills while 20% of teachers indicated agree with it. According the table 4 reports that 74% of students manifested that with a small number learners activities done in class allow students to practice reading skills, 21% answered agree, 4% responded partially agree, and only 1% answered disagree.

The practice of reading skill was confirmed in the observed classes, the majority of students read texts of the book and underlined unknown vocabulary; after they exposed to their peers. In addition, teachers used their own material such printing of readings or magazines in English, and encouraged students to make connections with reading and to apply their personal experiences in the classroom. Chadha (2004) remarks that asking students to read and highlight important information of books is not enough. It is necessary to involve learners through working with ideas or using and refining contributions given by others in the classroom.

As it observed in the table 3, statement 11 above, 80% of teachers indicated that totally agree that in small classes it is easier to design and apply activities that allow students to practice writing skills, while 20% of teachers responded agree. Likewise students 69% answered totally agree with the statement, 26% responded agree, and 5% of students indicated partially agree. It means that teachers and students responded of positive manner in relation to practice writing skills. These results coincide with observed classes, students always worked with the textbook, magazines, and pictures doing activities such as completing sentences, practicing vocabulary, reading, and writing. Chadha (2004) considers that is important to combine and use different types of techniques and activities such as writing-to-learn, role playing, case studies, individual and collaborative learning, debates, projects, among others; in order to add a variety of activities in small classes.

The tables 3, in the statement 12, the 80% of teachers expressed totally agree that in small classes it is easier design and apply group work activities, while 20% manifested agree. In regards the students 66% manifested that totally agree that in small classes group activities are used, 30% expressed agree with the statement, and 4% indicated partially agree. It means that a great majority of teachers and students totally agree. About the use of group activities, all teachers and students expressed that they use this type of activity in class. It was observed that students had the opportunity to learn new ideas and teach each other. Most of teachers organized activities in group to work mainly with exercises from the

textbook or wrote on the board some ideas. Some of the activities that students worked were discussions about topics from the textbook or the natural environment. Among the activities that can be used in groups Wadha(2008) explains that brainstorming allows students to generate ideas about a certain topic and it is a good technique for developing learners' lateral thinking.

Continuing with the analysis in the table 3 about individual activities 80% of teachers expressed that it is easier design and apply individual activities in small classes, while 20%of teachers selected agree. In regard the students in the table 4, question number 14, the 76% of students manifested totally agree that in small classes the activities individual are used, 20% expressed agree with it, and 4% partially agree. It was observed that main activities were comprehension questions and fill in the blanks which were done individually by students at their textbooks, paragraph writing among others. In addition it was observed that students worked better in individual work because they were able to complete the activities. Wadhwa (2008) manifests that working individually may get the most from students in small classes.

Results in table 3 indicate that 20% of teachers totally agree with the use of technological resources in the classroom, while 40% manifested agree with the statement, and 40% expressed partially agree. Regarding the students in table 4, 24% indicated totally agree with the use of technological resources, 30% of students considered to be agree with the statement, 38% of students mentioned that partially agree with technological resources, and only 8% disagree.

According the percentages above, the 60% of teachers manifested to be agreeing with use of technological resources in the class while 54% of students indicated agree with this statement. However, 38% of students mentioned partially agree with it, and 8% of students disagree. About this, observations made possible to see that classrooms were not equipped with appropriate technological resources such as computer, projector, smart boards, and TV. And only technological recourse used by all teachers was the CD recorder, it was used when students worked with the book; and teachers did not give clear explanations about that. For this reason, teachers and students answered partially agree. Although there were 6 students that expressed disagree. In conclusion, those results do not match with observations in each class.

Table 3 in the statement 15 reports that 60% of teachers totally agree that in small classes it is easier to use didactic material and 40% responded agree. Regarding students it

is possible observe in table 4 question 16 that 50% totally agree that ins small classes didactic material are used, 34% of students expressed agree, 14% of students considered partially agree, and only 2% disagree. Those results are similar with observation process because teachers used didactic material such as: teacher's books, student' s book, board, posters, magazines, printed texts with images and markers to give the class, and three teachers used flashcards to present new vocabulary. Teachers always worked with the textbook assigned to each course. Those results coincide with teachers and students.

The teaching strategies and resources used in the classroom benefit the teaching of English in small classes and varied according to the learning styles of their students in order to include all students in learning process.

In classes with a small number of students allowed that teachers could employ a number of active learning methods to teach students develop and improve the four skills, and search how students can learn, how teach, and how interact with their students. For this reason, reading, writing, speaking, listening skills are important in all subject areas in the curriculum and these four skills can be done in group or individual activities in the classroom. For the application of these skills, teachers used teacher's books, student's book, board, posters, and magazines, printed texts with images, flashcards and markers to give the class. This didactic material helped them to improve the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

On the other hand, with the use of technological resources such as: computer, projector, TV, Tape/CD recorder, Smartboard in the class; the teaching and learning would be much faster and better, because students could practice the four skills more often. But the conditions in the classrooms were different due technological tools such as: projector, TV, Smartboard, and computers were not used in the class. Only the resource more used by all teachers was the CD recorder. In this way, the learning English in small classes was affected, since good teaching and learning arises from good application of resources and strategies in the classroom.

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

Table 5. Teachers' Perceptions.

N°	In classes with a small number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		Total	
			%		%		%		%		%
16.	They are relaxed when speaking in front of their classmates.	4	80	2	20	0	0	0	0	5	100
17.	They are taken into account by the teacher because they have more opportunities to participate in class.	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0	5	100
18.	They are motivated to participate because of the small number students.	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0	5	100
19.	They are at ease because they can healthy compete with their classmates.	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0	5	100

Author: María Julia Guayanay Vicente

Source: Teachers' questionnaires



Table 6. Students' perceptions

N°	In small classes:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagre		Total	
			%		%		%		%		%
17.	I am relaxed when I speak in front of my classmates.	37	50	26	35	8	11	3	4	74	100
18.	I am taken into account by the teacher because I have more opportunities to participate in class.	41	56	25	34	7	9	1	1	74	100
19.	I am motivated to participate because of the small number classmates.	38	52	24	32	9	12	3	4	74	100
20.	I am at ease because I can healthy compete with my classmates.	37	50	29	39	8	11	0	0	74	100

Author: María Julia Guayanay Vicente  
 Source: Students' questionnaires

Table 5 questions number 16 shows that 80% of teachers responded totally agree that in small classes students are relaxed when speaking in front of their classmates, while 20% agree with the statement. Regards table 6 of the students in question number 17, the 50% expressed totally agree about be relaxed when speaking in front of their classmates, whilst 35% agreed with the statement, 11% partially agree and 4% disagree.

These results gathered show us that students feel relaxed when they speak in front of the rest. During the observed classes, it was confirmed that teachers promoted an effective learning because treated students with much familiarity in the classes giving them confidence, thus students felt relaxed for interact, learn and understand the contents ; and share their ideas with classmates. In this way, students had a balanced and constructive relationship. Similarly, Bems (2010) considers that cohesion in small classes is the result of high levels of socialization.

It can be observed in the table 5 questions 17 that 80% of teachers totally agree that in small classes students are taken into account by their teacher and they have more

opportunities to participate in class, while 20% of teachers responded agree. In regarding students, 56% expressed totally agree that in small classes there is more opportunities to participate in class, 34% agree with the statement, 9% partially agree, and 1% disagree.

Those results coincide with the observations in each classroom that in small class students participated actively and followed teachers' instructions without problems because there are few students. In conclusion, it was a comfortable environment for the daily participation of students. Bateman (2002) states that small classes develop in students the sense of community since the frequency of active participation in class are increased.

Results described previously in table 6 in the statement 18, the 60% of teachers indicated totally agree that in small classes students are motivated and participate more often because there are fewer students in classes, while 40% of teachers expressed agree with the statement. In relation to students' table 52% indicated to be totally agree that in small classes they are motivated to participate in the class, while 32% agree with the statement, 12% partially agree, and 4% disagree.

Those results agree with the notes recorded during the observations done in the classrooms, teachers were able to motivate students through class material such as: flashcards, debates, posters, or games. Furthermore, teachers assigned each student a job to do and when students finished the activities they were praised with words such a "nice work" or "good job". As a result, students felt more excited to learn and participate because their work was recognized and valued.

Teachers during the class allowed that students work in group and gave them opportunity to interact among classmates, likewise, teachers gave feedback when students had difficulties on the lesson. In this way, the good relationship motivated students and benefited the English-teaching learning process in the classroom. According Lazarowitz and Mliller (1992, p.71) expressed that teachers should guide and give opportunities to their students to discover new ideas through interaction among classmates, and they can develop a creative learning community across the school, in order to take that responsibility for their own learning as possible. As result, students have knowledge, understanding and enthusiasm by the things that they learn and are able to achieve raise, the inspiration and motivation

According to results from table 5 in the statement 19 showed above, 60% of teachers manifested totally agree that in small classes students can be at ease because they can healthy compete with their classmates, while 40% of teachers expressed agree with the

statement. Table 6 in the statement 20, the 50% of students responded totally agree with the statement, 39% answered agree, and 11% indicated to be partially agree.

The answers given by teachers and students coincide with the observation of classes. The students could healthy compete in all activities and lived a communicative environment since in the classroom all students interacted always because there were few students, thus students felt comfortable and accepted by their classmates and teachers. It was clear all students could healthy compete and develop the activities without difficulties in the class where the number of students was less than 20.

In response to question how do students feel about learning English in small classes? The researcher after analyzing the tables 5 and 6, it was concluded that students felt comfortable and secure with few classmates. In addition, in small classes the students have more opportunity to participate and develop their activities without difficulties where the number of students was less than 20, and when talked to their classmates they felt always relaxed.

Furthermore, teachers can control students' behavior adequately and organize in groups according to the activities. In this way, students can healthy compete with the classmates. As a result, the participation between students takes place without problems because there is motivation and the teaching-learning process becomes positive.

In conclusion, in small classes students feel motivated and relaxed because they have more opportunities to participate among classmates.

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

Table 7. Teachers' Perceptions.

N°	In classes with a small number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		Total	
			%		%		%		%		%
20.	There is anxiety among students because there is more control from the part of the teacher.	0	0	0	0	4	80	1	20	5	100
21	Listening and speaking skills are more difficult to develop.	1	20	0	0	4	80	0	0	5	100

Author: María Julia Guayanay Vicente  
Source: Teachers' questionnaires

Table 8. Students' perceptions

N°	In classes with a small number of students:	Totally agree		Agree		Partially agree		Disagree		Total	
			%		%		%		%		%
21.	There is anxiety among students because there is more control from the part of the teacher.	20	27	12	16	13	18	29	39	74	100
22	Listening and speaking skills are more difficult to develop.	23	31	9	12	17	23	25	34	74	100

Author: María Julia Guayanay Vicente  
Source: Students' questionnaires

Finally, about the last aspect if there is anxiety among students because there is more control by the teachers, 80% of teachers expressed partially agree, while 20% responded disagree with the statement. In regard to the students, 27% manifested to be totally agree with the statement, while 16% answered agree, 18% expressed to be partially agree, and 39% of students responded disagree.

That information provided by the teachers (80%) is an indicator that there is anxiety among classmates because there is more control by the teachers. Similarly, 43% of students manifested that with a small number of students if there is anxiety in the classroom. About this, observations made possible to detect that sometimes students were anxiety before of give a test or writing a paragraph, since they were controlled for their teachers. For this reason, teachers answered partially agree and students expressed totally agree or partially agree.

In the statement 21 in the table 7, the 20% of teachers answered totally agree that listening and speaking skills are more difficult to develop, while 80% of teachers expressed to be partially agree. In regard the students, 31% answered totally agree that listening and speaking skills are more difficult to develop, 12% of students expressed agree, 23% partially agree, and 34% of students responded disagree.

According to the results shown above, the majority of teachers 80% answered partially agree that listening and speaking are more difficult to develop. Likewise, 43% of students answered totally agree that speaking and listening are the most complicated. During the observations the researcher confirmed that the practice of listening and speaking were done daily during the class through interact among students and teachers. It was clear that listening and speaking skills require much concentration to transmit messages daily. For this reason, students needed be concentrated when their teacher talked, and this required of attention or distraction.

Regarding the limitations when teaching English in small classes, there was not limitation for practicing to listening and speaking skills in small classes. According to the observations classes, teachers used a variety of activities as such dialogue among classmates, debates, read paragraph, vocabulary using flashcards, oral presentations, among others; all this allowed the practice of certain skills. As a result, these activities give learners opportunity to develop and improve their listening and speaking not only in the classroom, but outside the classroom. But these activities done during the classes required of much attention.

In conclusion, teachers and students expressed that in small classes listening and speaking skills are more difficult, since it is necessary higher concentration for understanding the contents of each classes.

After analyzing the tables the researcher came to the conclusion that teaching of English in small classes always is going to have its advantages and disadvantage.

## CONCLUSIONS

- In small classes, students had many opportunities to interact, work and know each other which made classes very communicate.
- In small classes, teachers could know the students better and recognize the different problem and needs in the classroom, and give feedback to each student. Consequently, students felt more confident for develop their English skills.
- Teachers worked without difficulties and managed learning appropriately due the level of noise was acceptable during the class, therefore, students could concentrate very well in their tasks and participate actively.
- The results analyzed show that in classes with a small number of students allow that teachers can develop and design reading, writing, speaking, listening skills to their learners with less difficulty through different types of strategies. As a result students can learn and improve their academic level.
- In small classes teachers could control students' behavior adequately, in this way, students healthy participate among classmates. As result, teaching- learning process becomes effective.
- In the classroom there was any technological tool such as computer, projector, TV, Smart boards, only CD recorder was used by teachers. Thus, the learning English in small classes was affected, since good teaching and learning arises from good application of resources and strategies in the classroom.
- Teaching and learning English in small classes has many benefits. The teachers can design different activities and the students have more opportunities to improve their knowledge because teachers can offer one-on assistance during the classes.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- It is recommended that teachers improve their language skills and communicative competence in order to improve the use of Communicative Language Teaching in the classroom.
- Teachers who teach in small classes should look for activities that improve their teaching strategies and resources to engage students in the learning process.
- Teachers should use teaching resources such posters, magazines, flashcards as support tool to motivate and teach their students.
- Government must find ways of equipping high schools with technological resources to help students to improve the English language teaching process.
- Finally, teachers should be always updating their knowledge, doing research, investigating and reading information about how to teach and manage small classes, which would allow them to have a wider perspective in the teaching-learning process.

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## **ANNEXES**



## UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

La Universidad Católica de Loja

**MODALIDAD ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA**

**TITULACIÓN DE INGLÉS**

Estimado estudiante:

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

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

### Datos Informativos:

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

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

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

Muy Satisfactorio
Satisfactorio
Poco satisfactorio
Nada satisfactorio

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

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

7.	Existe interacción entre el profesor y los estudiantes.				
8.	El profesor recuerda el nombre de los estudiantes.				

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

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

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

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

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

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

¡Gracias por su colaboración!

## INSTRUMENTOS



### UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA

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

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

#### Datos Informativos:

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

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

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

Muy Satisfactorio
Satisfactorio
Poco satisfactorio
Nada satisfactorio

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

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

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

Nº	En clases con pocos estudiantes se facilita:	Muy satisfactorio	Satisfactorio	Poco satisfactorio	Nada satisfactorio
23.	Diseñar y aplicar actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades de <b>escucha</b> .				
24.	Diseñar y aplicar actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades <b>habla</b> .				
25.	Diseñar y aplicar actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades de <b>lectura</b> .				
26.	Diseñar y aplicar actividades que permiten practicar las habilidades de <b>escritura</b> .				
27.	Diseñar y aplicar actividades <b>grupales</b> .				
28.	Diseñar y aplicar actividades <b>individuales</b> .				
29.	Utilizar recursos tecnológicos.				
30.	Utilizar materiales didácticos.				

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

Nº	En clases con pocos estudiantes los estudiantes se sienten:	Muy satisfactorio	Satisfactorio	Poco satisfactorio	Nada satisfactorio
31.	Relajados al momento de hablar frente a sus compañeros.				
32.	Tomados en cuenta porque tienen mayor oportunidad de participar en la clase.				
33.	Motivados a participar porque son pocos compañeros en la clase.				
34.	A gusto porque pueden competir sanamente con otros estudiantes.				

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

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

¡Gracias por su colaboración!



**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA PARTICULAR DE LOJA**

La Universidad Católica de Loja

**MODALIDA ABIERTA Y A DISTANCIA**

**TITULACIÓN DE INGLÉS**

**HOJA DE OBSERVACIÓN**

<b>INSTITUCIÓN EDUCATIVA:</b>	
<b>FECHA:</b>	
<b>CURSO/NIVEL:</b>	

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

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*

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

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*

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

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*

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

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*

5. Existe interacción entre los estudiantes.

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*

6. Existe interacción entre el profesor y los estudiantes.

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*

7. El profesor recuerda el nombre de los estudiantes.

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*

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

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

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

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

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

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

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

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

12. Se utilizan actividades **grupales**.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

13. Se utilizan actividades **individuales**.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

14. Se utilizan recursos tecnológicos.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

15. Se utilizan materiales didácticos.

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:

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

SI ( ) NO ( )

Notas:



**17.** Los estudiantes tienen mayor oportunidad de expresarse.

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*

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

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*

**19.** Los estudiantes pueden competir sanamente con sus compañeros.

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*

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

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*

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

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*

**22.** Se dificulta realizar habilidades de habla y escucha.

*SI* ( )      *NO* ( )

*Notas:*