

UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR  
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT



UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH:

THE IMPACT OF LARGE CLASSES ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
LEARNING OF ECONOMICS STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EL  
SALVADOR, SEMESTER II-2013

IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE DEGREE OF:

**LICENCIATURA EN IDIOMA INGLÉS OPCIÓN ENSEÑANZA**

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## INTRODUCTION

In order to have access to better jobs and to lead successful professional lives in the globalized society we now live, higher education institutions in the country have begun to require their future college graduates to show command of an advanced level of the English language. As a result of these worldwide pressures, more English classes are offered to college students. At the University of El Salvador, the only public college of the country, several English classes are offered. However, these classes are overpopulated, particularly at the School of Economics. Students in large classes do not perform as well as students in small classes (Borden and Burton) The following are some of the most common factors that also have negative impact on the learners: poor classroom management, noise, teaching methodology, didactic material, lack of technological access among others.

Teachers of English at the School of Economics have to take into consideration the elements that are related to large classes. In order to reach the outlined objectives during the semester and to improve the quality of student`s learning at the School of Economics as well as to enhance of just taking the subject without any benefit to them.

This research contains its corresponding objectives, one general and three specific ones, the definition of the most important terms that will be handled during the project, the method that was used to carry out the research, instrument and techniques that were necessary to collect the data. Also, it is explained how the data collection was codified, the sample and anterior researchers similar to this project that had been carry out in the past years. Recommendations

for the authorities and the teachers have been included in order to improve the teaching-learning process in the School of Economics.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

### **A. Description of the Problem**

According to Administracion Academica de la Universidad de El Salvador, the student population at the school of Economics registered in 2013 was 8,285. This makes it (<http://www.fce.ues.edu.sv/>) one of top two overpopulated schools in the University. Many students apply to it every year. Consequently, the number of students' increases and classrooms are crowded in many courses of the School of Economics majors. This is a growing tendency, so that it will become a difficult situation if the authorities do not pay much attention to this phenomenon.

In the reality of education at the University of El Salvador, there is definitely a large need for more teachers, but particularly of English teachers. Many classes are forced to include larger numbers of students who cannot improve the learning process in a typical classroom setting. This makes the learning process difficult when taking English courses.

This research establishes the consequences of the overpopulation in English courses. It may help UES authorities, professors and students to be properly informed on the topic and think of possible negative consequences of overcrowded classrooms in order to reduce the influence on students' learning achievements.

## **A. OBJECTIVES**

### **General Objective:**

To determine the relationship that exists between large classes and the learning of the students who study English in the School of Economics at the University of El Salvador, semester II-2013.

### **Specific Objectives:**

1. To assess the impact of large classes on students' English language performance.
2. To describe students' language learning development in large classes.
3. To identify some difficulties that students face in large classes.

## **B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

How do large classes influence the process of the English language learning of students in the School of Economics, at the University of El Salvador, during the semester II-2013?

### **Related Questions**

1. What is the impact of large classes on students learning achievements?
2. What is students' language learning development in large classes?
3. What are some difficulties that large classes present to students' English language learning?
4. Which factors are involved in students' learning of large classes?
5. Which are some possible solutions to minimize the disadvantages in large classes?
6. Which is the best methodology for large classes?



### **C. RATIONALE**

For many years, the School of Economics has been one of the Schools with overpopulation at the University of El Salvador; many students apply to study the four majors which are Economics, Public Accounting, Business Management and Merchandising.

All four academic majors require students to pass English courses, but the Public Accounting one, Business Management and Economics majors take only two English courses: English I and English II; the groups in the subject are overcrowded for some reasons like the overpopulation in the School and that the number of groups are not enough during the morning. Because of this, there are factors that intervene in the teaching-learning process like the teaching methodology in the classroom, the noise, inside and outside the classroom, the lack of participation of the students in the class and even the lack of tutoring sessions.

For these reasons, the researchers find it important to develop a research which reflects how large classes influence the process of the English language learning of students of Economics at the University of El Salvador, during the semester II-2013 and to show how their English could improve if the authorities and the teachers take into account the factors that can be changed.

### **D. DELIMITATION OF THE PROBLEM**

The research focused on students taking English I in the second semester at the Economics Schools of the following majors: Economics, Business Management and Public Accounting at The University of El Salvador.

## **I. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Large classes can be difficult to handle and this is the reason why teachers have to know what kind of tools they can provide to their students in order to stimulate their learning and achieve the objectives of each class. There are several perceptions from different authors towards defining what a large class is. There is no universally accepted number of students that constitute a large class. For instance, Hayes (1997) thinks the ideal size of an English class is 30 at most, because only under such a scale the teacher can offer enough chances for the students to communicate with each other. However, a research that took place in China at Beijing University in 2011; found that the recommended students' population in a single classroom should not exceed 30 or at most 35 student's maximum (Sheldon Shaeffé Director UNESCO, 2006, pp 14) for teaching English as a second language. According to Ur (1996) what is relevant to the class considered as a large one is how the teacher perceives the class size in the specific situation, regardless of the exact number of the students in it.

UNESCO (2006) perceives large classes as one of the barriers to quality learning. As well as Keil et al (1996) in their study about the relationship between class size and student performance, in which they reveal that large class size adversely affect both student performance and retention. Furthermore, it was discovered that students in large classes did not perform as well as students in small classes (Borden and Burton, 2000). Some educators have tried to investigate the relative effectiveness of large class instruction and the problems associated with teaching and learning in large classes. According to Edges (2000) in large classes, it is difficult the provision of opportunities for discussion or for any kind of oral input to the written work. Students need to receive chances to be engaged in communicative activities in class to improve their English

learning. For example, students need to be able to see each other and the teacher needs space to move around the classroom to be able to interact with students and hear what they say.

How large can a class be considered as a large one?; some institutions use the term “large” to refer to classes of more than thirty students, while other institutions regard a large class as one with fifty to one hundred students. It can be seen that in different context or culture, for example in China it is common to find groups of 80 students each.

Teachers and students are influenced by the class size in some aspects, students receive feedback, a major difficulty in teaching large classes is finding ways to provide feedback to, and receive it from students (Sheldon Shaeffer Director, UNESCO, 2000, FGN, 2006) When students receive feedback in class, they can see how well they are doing and whether they understand the contents. Consequently, the more feedback teachers give them, the better, because it will not only help them, but also will improve the quality of education (Embracing diversity: Toolkit for creating inclusive, learning-friendly environments Specialized Booklet 2 UNESCO 2006, pp 41).

Class size has many effects on students’ engagement, behavior, and student retention. Finn (USAID, 2003, p8). He concludes that when students are placed in smaller classes they become more engaged, both academically and socially. With strong social and academic engagement, he argues, academic achievement increases. Furthermore, it has been shown that in addition to spending more time on school work, students in smaller classes tend to participate more. Participation in all the activities carried out in English classes is considered one of the main keys to successful English learning. Zhang Jiamin, (2002) analyzes the large classes in two colleges and identifies the problems as follows: 1) Discipline problems; 2) Effective learning; 3) Weariness, which confirms to those mentioned by some foreign researchers. Yu Jianqiong (2004) identifies some similar problems of large classes. For example: Students ’individual

differences are ignored and the classroom environment is worrying; she also mentions that limited chance for students to practice English hinders the improvement of their oral English, which is particularly true in foreign language context like China, since speaking English in class might be the only chance for students to practice oral English. These problems of college large classes are also reflected in those of primary and secondary schools. (Su Tongquan 2005, Tan Long 2009, Zhang Lian 2010).

Another important aspect, when teachers have large class, is that they prefer some activities like pair or groups work, if some students feel anxious to speak for fear of looking too smart or incompetent it would be helpful to provide opportunities for pair and group work where students can improve each other's anxiety and increase their English learning (Kennedy and Kennedy, 1996) feel that it is difficult to control what happens when a group passes a certain number of students.

Regardless the different views from the authors regarding class size, the literature seems to agree on one thing: depending on the teacher's perception and resources available, a class will be considered as a large one. However, in our academic context, a class of English at the School of Economics of the University of El Salvador with more than 40 students will be considered large if students are in one classroom, making the class tight.

To summarize this point, it is difficult for teachers to have good class management of a large class, as it is hard to satisfy all the needs of students who have different interests, personalities and capabilities, and it is complicated to organize efficient class activities due to the constraints of time and space, to provide equal chances for the students to participate and practice; and to give timely and effective feedback and evaluation. It makes that students do not receive the education they deserve.

## II. TYPE OF STUDY

A correlational study is a quantitative method of research that presents two or more quantitative variables from the same group of subjects. The objective is to determine if there is a relationship or co variation between the two variables which means a similarity between them, not a difference.<sup>1</sup>

This research is correlational since it measures the relation between two variables: large classes and English Language Learning. The research project was carried out in a correlational way because it studied and analyzed the relation between two different variables and how the independent variable influenced on the dependent one, and the connection that existed between them.

According to the nature of the problem investigated in this project, the type of research that was used by the researchers was the correlational research. Correlational studies as a means of looking for relations between variables when experiments cannot be done. Because of that, there are two variables: Large classes and English language learning, the first one has different effects on the other one; the team investigated, collected and analyzed the data to find out.

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<sup>1</sup>Mark Balnaves, Peter Caputi. (2001) **“Introduction to quantitative research methods: an investigative approach”**. Page 107

### **III. HYPOTHESES**

#### **A. Hypotheses**

##### **1. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS**

Large classes have negative effects on the language learning of students who are taking English at the School of Economics at the University of El Salvador, during semester II- 2013.

##### **2. NULL HYPOTHESIS**

Large classes do not have negative effects on language learning of students who are taking English at the School of Economics at the University of El Salvador, during the semester II- 2013.

##### **3. ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS**

Large classes have positive effects on language learning of students who are taking English at the School of Economics at the University of El Salvador, during semester II- 2013.

## **IV. RESEARCH DESIGN**

A research design refers to the plan or strategy that helps the researchers to answer the research questions. This design determined what the researchers did to achieve the research objectives, to answer the research questions and to analyze the certainty of the hypothesis.

Non-experimental research design has no manipulation of the independent variable by the researcher; the researcher studies what naturally occurs and how variables are related.<sup>2</sup>

This study was focused on non-experimental design which typically relies on data sources such as questionnaires, a pre-test and a post-test, taking into account that non-experimental research is very important in the educational field, and it was used to explore the problem and establish the relationship between the two variables.

However, it had a lot to do with quantitative research and was based on numerical term using the SPSS program.

## **V. POPULATION AND SAMPLE**

### **A. Population**

This study was carried out at the University of El Salvador with 418 students from the School of Economics in Economics, Business Management and Public Accounting majors. The instruments were passed to 209 students; those students were from 8 different groups of classes of the English I, who made the sample for the study so that final results could be generalized. This survey was conducted at random on an individual basis. Instructions were provided in the facilities of the University of El Salvador during regular class time.

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- <sup>2</sup>Cohen, Richard M. and Jules Witcover. A Heartbeat Away (2004): **“The research process”**. Page 193

For each research, it is necessary to establish the universe and the sample that was the main key to get and support the information for the development of the research. Universe was the totality of units in any field, and sample is a good representative part of the universe.

## **B. Sample**

In this study, the universe was made up of the students registered in English I of the School who are majoring Economics, Business Administration and Public Accounting at the University of El Salvador during the semester II-2013.

Also, stratified random sampling was used in order to get the results and the sample was non probabilistic with base of a criterium equal at 50% of the population. This sample was useful to generalize the results of the research.

In order to carry out this SPSS procedure, a computer program used for survey authoring and deployment (IBM SPSS Data Collection), data mining, text analytics, and statistical analysis, was used.<sup>3</sup> This program was useful during the whole analytical process.

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<sup>3</sup>Daniel Muij(2004). “Doing quantitative research in education with SPSS”. Page 23



## VI. DATA GATHERING PROCESS

### A. Elaboration of the instrument

Variables	Indicators	questions
Large Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Number of students in classroom</li> <li>* Classroom size</li> <li>* Noise</li> </ul>	<p>Are the teacher's activities correct for the number of students?</p> <p>Is the classroom size adequate to the number of students?</p> <p>Do you listen to much noise around the classroom?</p>
Students learning English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Student's participation in class</li> <li>* Teachers</li> <li>* Grades</li> <li>* activities prefer students</li> </ul>	<p>How often do you participate in larges classes?</p> <p>Are you motivated to participate when the teacher develops a variety of activities in large classes?</p> <p>Do you think that your grades reflect that large groups affect your studies?</p> <p>How often do you prefer verbal activities in the class?</p>

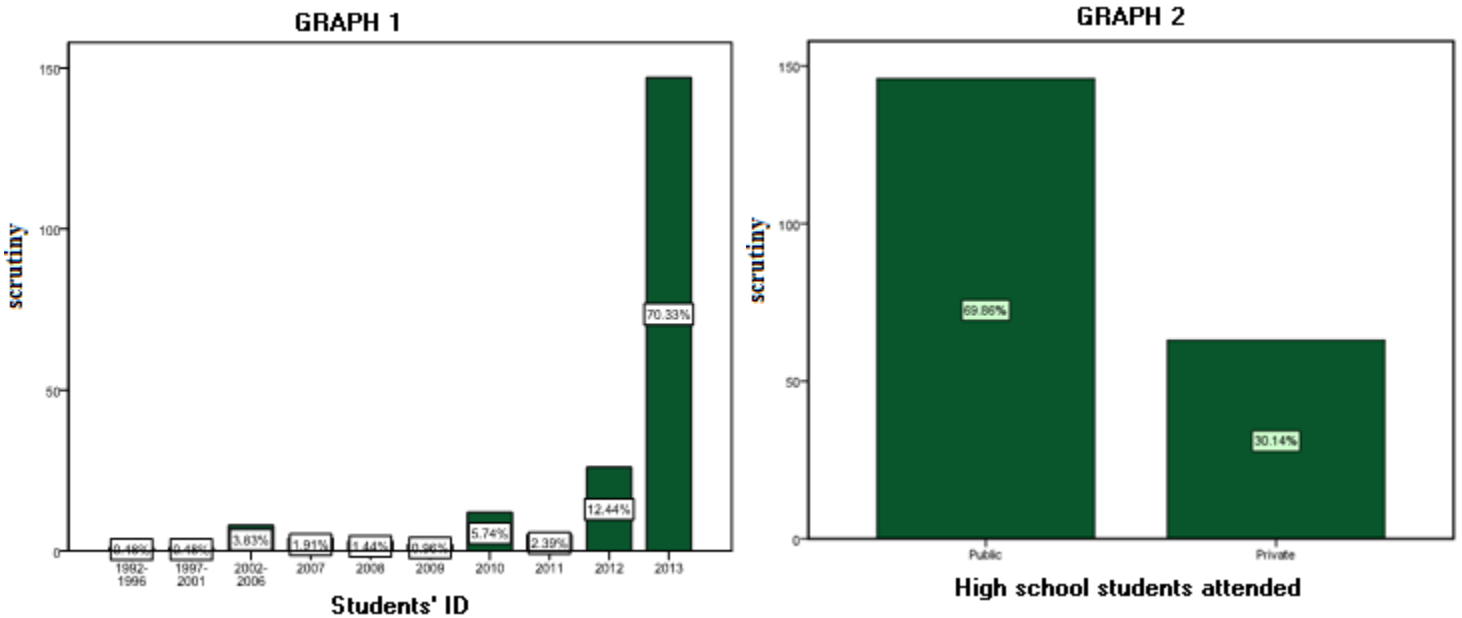
### B. Data gathering plan

The instruments used in this project were a questionnaire which contained different kinds of questions related to the participation, motivation, environment and a self-assessment that students took about how they felt in the English class. A pretest test, which contained all the topics of their syllabus, was passed at the beginning of the classes, and a post-test was passed at the end of the semester.

To carry out this research, it was necessary the use of techniques and instruments to collect the essential data. The techniques and instruments used in this research were questionnaires, a pre test and a post test, **questionnaires**; they were passed to the students of School of Economics to know how they felt in the English class.

**The pre-test** was passed at the beginning of the semester II-2013 in order to know the English students knowledge before they began to study the semester. **A post-test** was passed at the end of the semester in order to compare the grades with those of the pre-test and determine how large classes influenced the process of English learning.

## VII. DATA ANALYSIS



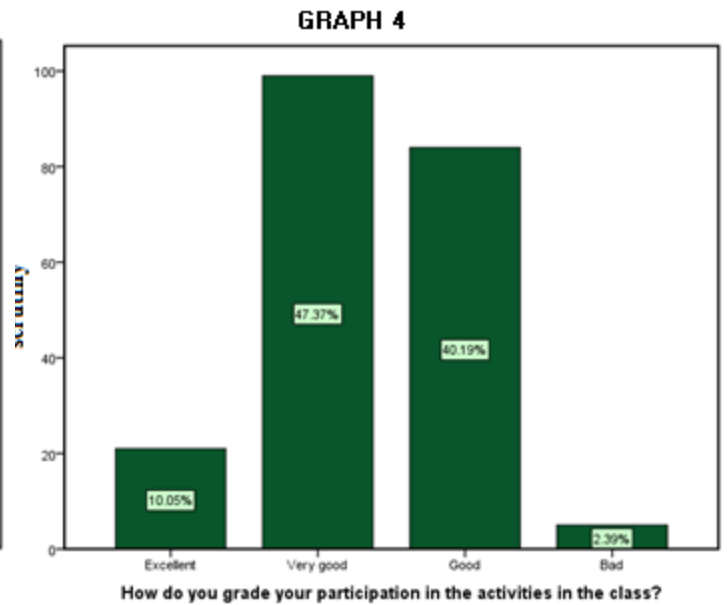
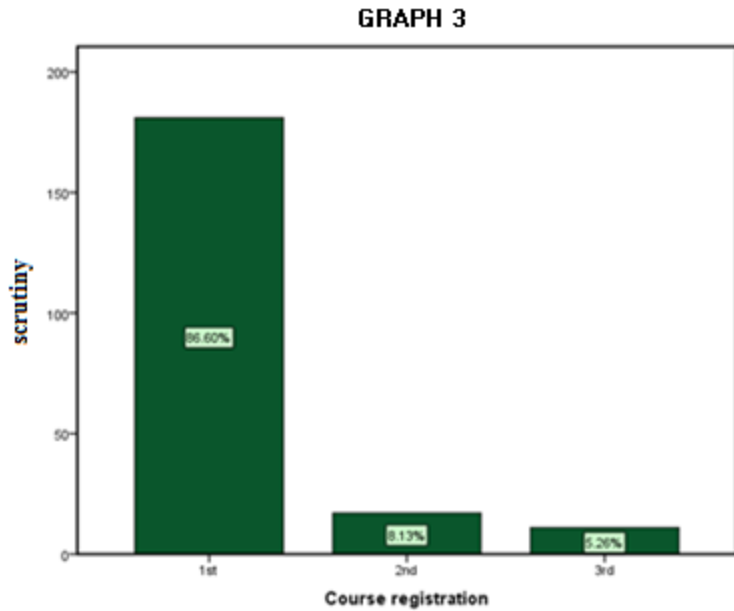
Source: Questionnaire administered to students from English I of Schools of Economics at the University of El Salvador, Semester II-2013

### Interpretation:

The graph 1 shows that 70.33% of students entered the university in 2013, 12.44% of the students are studying in the university since 2012, 2.39% of the students are in the university since 2011, 5.74% of the sample are studying in the university since 2010, only the 0.96% of the students are studying in the university since 2009, 1.44% of the sample are in the university since 2008. Most of the students that formed part of the sample were registered at the year 2013 which means that most of them were taking English for the first time in their major.

### Interpretation:

The graph 2 shows that most of students taking English I at Economics School took their high school in a public institution with a 69.86% of the sample, and 30.14 % of the students carried out their high school studies in a private school. This means that the majority of the sample taken in this research studied their high school in a public educational institution.



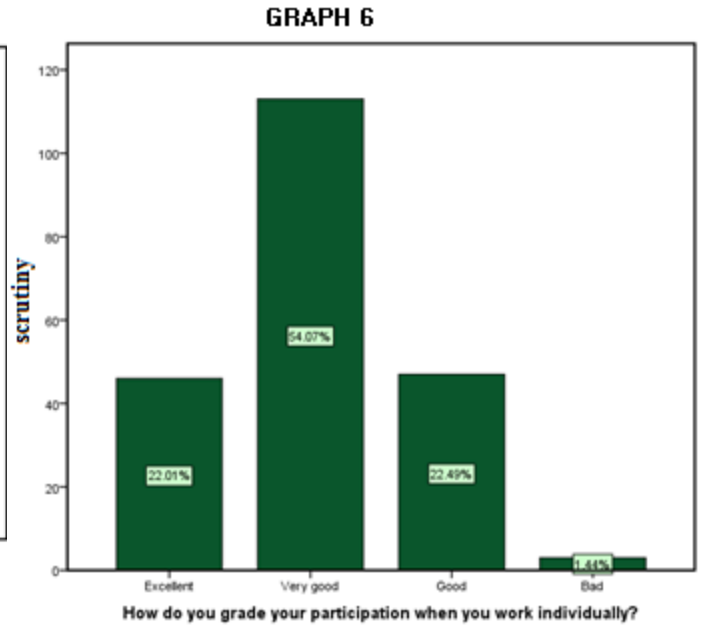
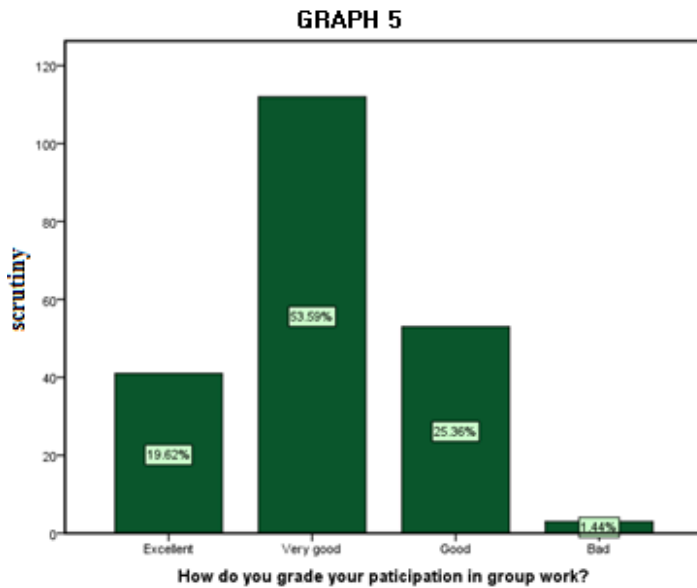
Source: Questionnaire administered to students from English I of Schools of Economics at the University of El Salvador, Semester II-2013.

Interpretation:

The graph 3 shows that 86.60% of the sample are taking the English subject for the first time, 8.13% of the students are taking English in second registration, and 5.26% of the students are taking English in third registration. Most of the students are taking English for first time in their major, some of the students are taking the subject for second time in their careers and only a few students are taking this subject for third time.

Interpretation:

The graph 4 shows that 10.05% of the students grade their participation in class activities as excellent, 47.37% grade their participation as very good, 40.19 of the students grade their participation as good and only a 2.39% grade their participation as bad. It shows that the students' participation is only good and does not reach the excellent level and that not all of the students participate with all their potential in the activities carry out by the teachers.



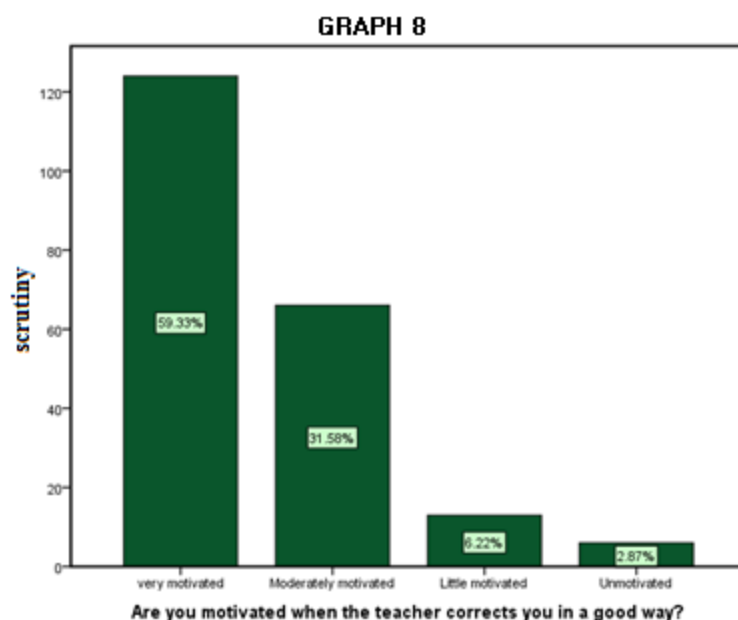
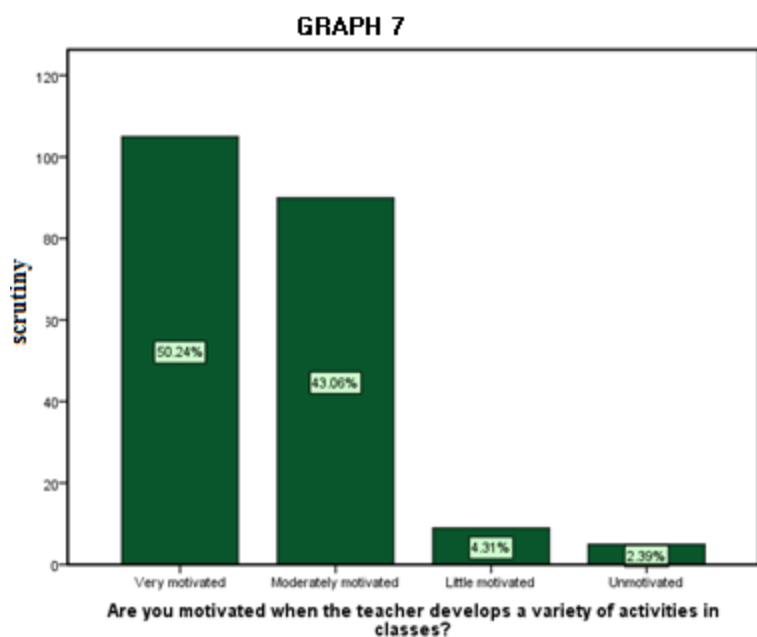
Source: Questionnaire administered to students from English I of Schools of Economics at the University of El Salvador, Semester II-2013

**Interpretation:**

The graph 5 shows that 19.62% of the students grade their participation in group as excellent, 53.59% of the students have a very good participation in group, 25.36% of the students grade their participation in group as good and only a 1.44% of the students grade their group participation as bad. According to the research, they grade their participation as very good, which means that is a good number but it should be better for the number of students that were surveyed.

**Interpretation:**

The graph 6 shows that 54.07% of the participants said that their participation alone is very good, 22.49% said their work participation alone is good, 22.01% said their work participation alone is excellent and 1.44% said their work participation alone is bad. As a result, the majority of the students likes to work individually but when the classes are overcrowded students can perfectly work in groups and the teacher need to check all the students in the group participate.



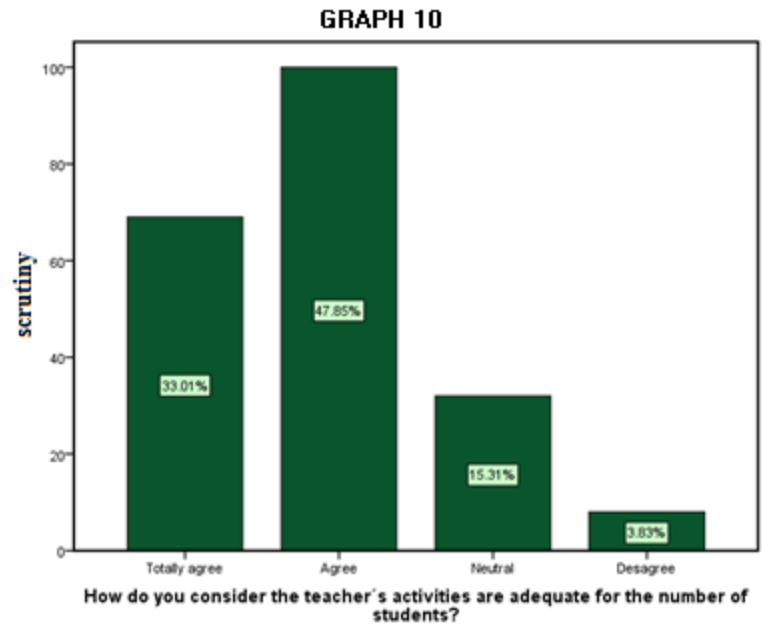
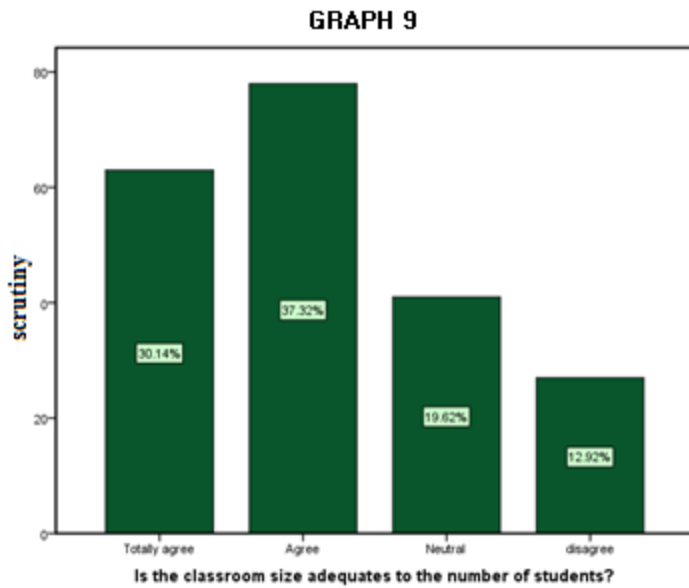
Source: Questionnaire administered to students from English I of Schools of Economics at the University of El Salvador, Semester II-2013

**Interpretation:**

The graph 7 shows that 50.24% of the participants said that they are very motivated when the teacher develops a variety of activities in classes, 43.06 said they are moderately motivated when the teacher develops a variety of activities in classes, 4.31% said they are little motivated when the teacher develops a variety of activities in classes and 2.39% said they feel unmotivated when the teacher develops a variety of activities in classes. As a result, the majority of students feel motivated when the class is more dynamic, the teachers need to be more creative, prepare different activities for develop in class. The activities can be focus in the four skills in English, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

**Interpretation:**

The graph 8 shows that 59.33% of the participants said that they are very motivate when the teacher corrects you in a good way, 31.58% said they are moderately motivated when the teacher corrects you in a good way, 6.22% said they are a little when the teacher corrects you in a good way and 2.87% said they unmotivated when the teacher corrects you in a good way. As a result, it is important that the teacher correct in a good way at his students, if they correct in a bad way students can fell shy and then they do not participate in class.



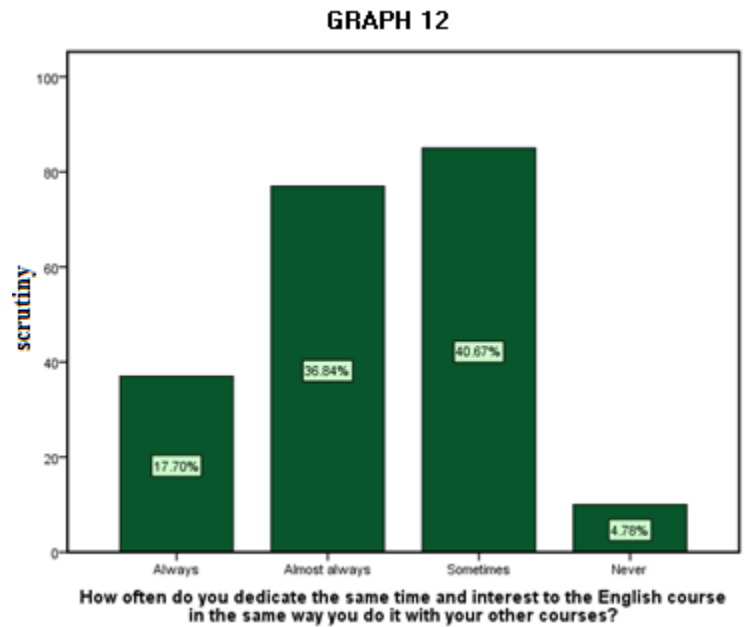
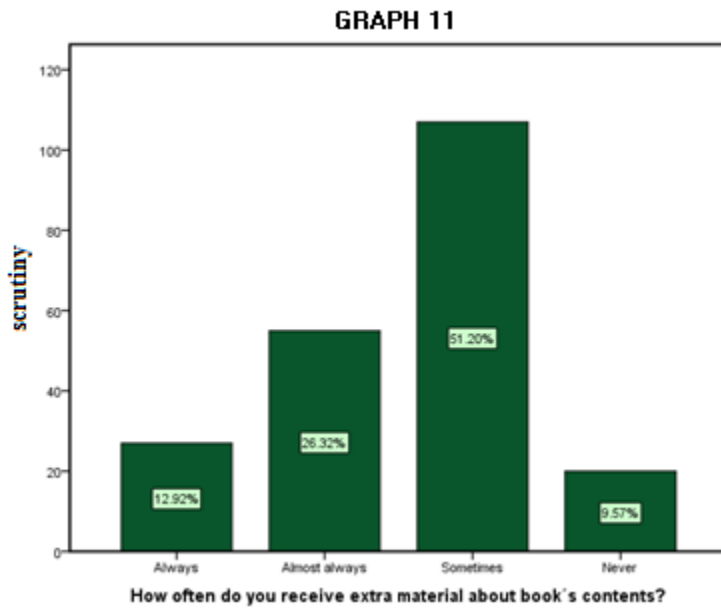
Source: Questionnaire administered to students from English I of Schools of Economics at the University of El Salvador, Semester II-2013

Interpretation:

The graph 9 shows that 37.32% of the students agreed with the size of classroom, 30.14 % said they totally agree with the size of classroom, 19.62% said they are neutral with the size of classroom and 12.92 said they disagree that is not big enough for them. As a result, it is necessary to take into account this data because the classroom and space have a great importance in order to create a good environment to develop the class.

Interpretation:

The graph 10 shows that 47.85% of the participants agree with teacher's activities are adequate for the number of students, 33.01% said they are totally agree with teacher's activities are adequate for the number of students, 15.31% said they are neutral with teacher's activities are adequate for the number of students, 3.83% said they do not agree with teacher's activities are adequate for the number of students. As a result, the teacher needs to have enough space for develop different activities in class, to teach a class not only consists on explaining a topic providing examples and exercises but in creating a pleasant, comfortable and enjoyable atmosphere where the students can achieve progress in every class.



Source: Questionnaire administered to students from English I of Schools of Economics at the University of El Salvador, Semester II-2013

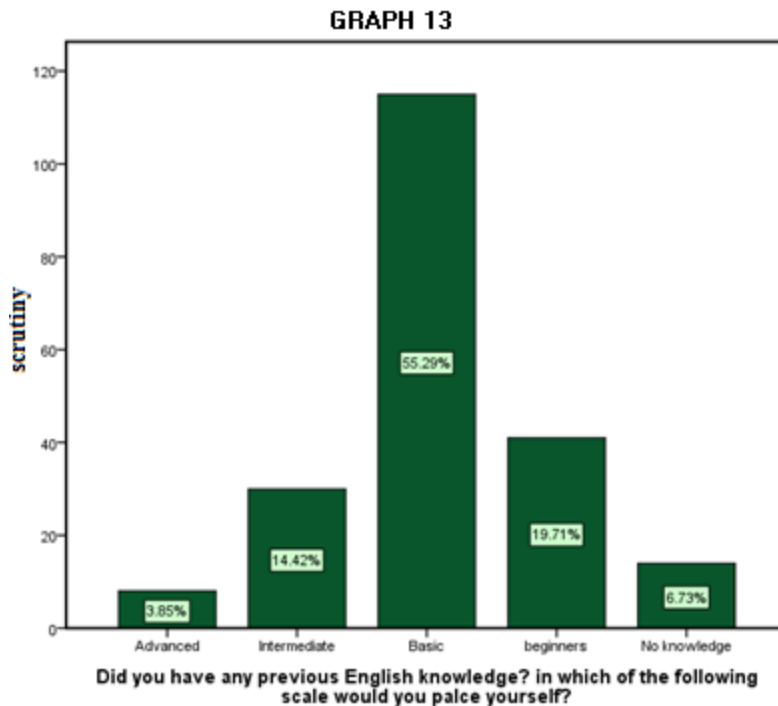
**Interpretation:**

The graph 11 reveals that over half of the students' population 51.20%, said that they sometimes receive extra material about contents seen in class. While a small number of students, the 26.32% said that always and 12.92% answered often receive extra material and the 9.57% answered never. Large class affect in this issue in a way that teacher cannot provide extra material to the all class because of the large number of students; in fact the budget to supply all student in a large class should be high.

**Interpretation:**

The graph 12 displays is that the majority of students, 40.76% said that they sometimes dedicate the same time and interest to the English course in the same way they do it with their other courses. In second place the, 36.84% said that often. In the third place with 17.70% of students answered that always dedicate the same time and interest, whereas the 4.78% of students chose the option never, being the smallest percentage of the sample. it would be better if the one hundred percent of students answer *always* dedicate the same time and interest in the same way they do it with their other courses, but it is clearly that they focus more on those subjects that are relative with their career.

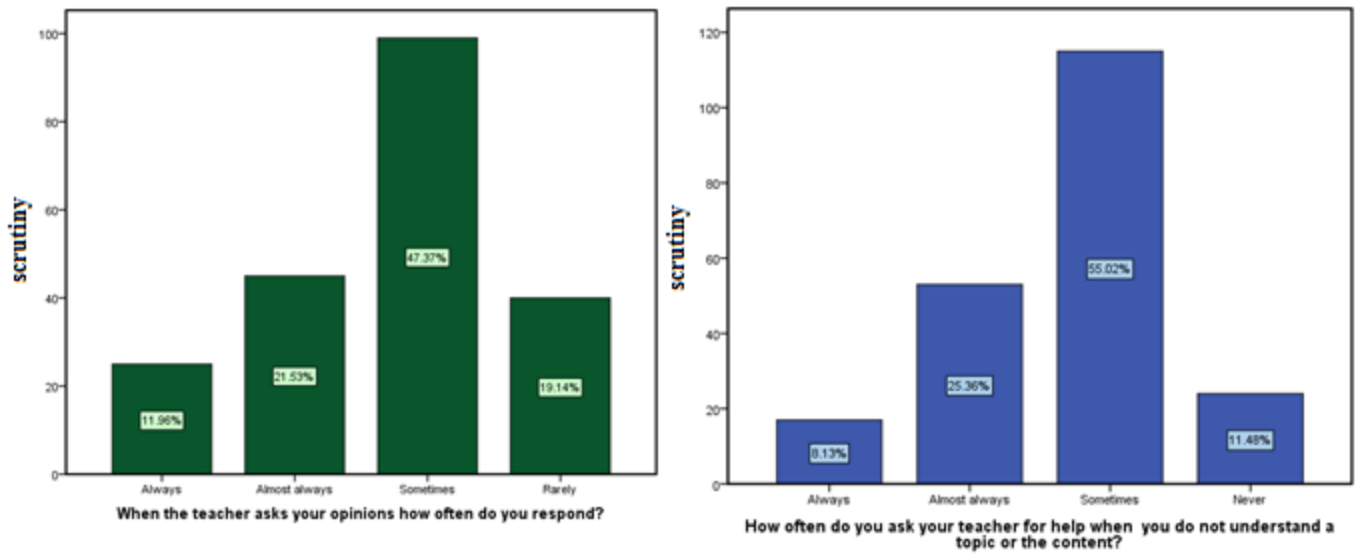




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#### Interpretation:

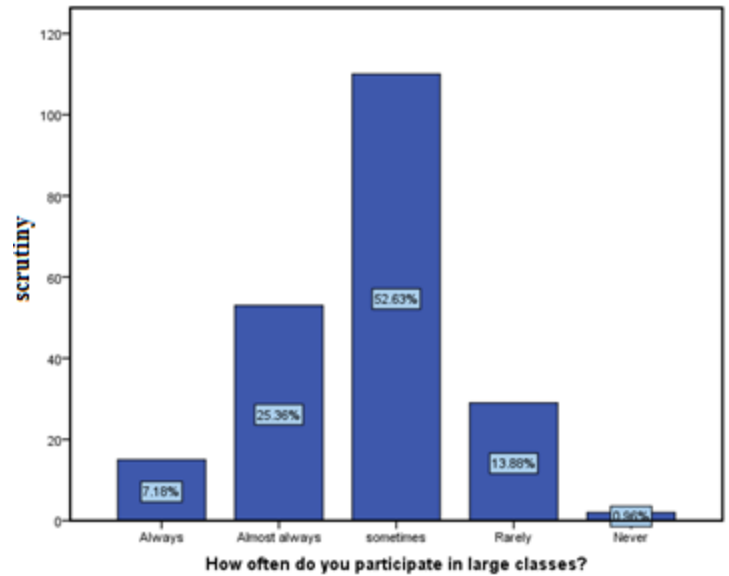
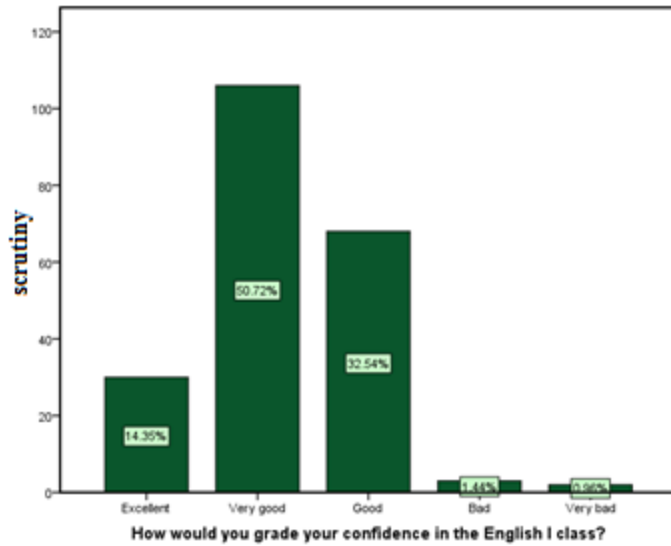
The graph 13 shows that the majority of students, 55.29% answered that they have basic previous English knowledge. Then 19.71% students place themselves in the beginner level. 14.42% claimed they have an intermediate level, while the 6.73% of students place their self in no knowledge, the rest of the students, 3.85% place their self in advanced level. This shows that most students have a basic knowledge and intermediate knowledge of English. It is clearly that majority of students showed that have *Basic* English knowledge but even though they have that basic knowledge, they face with difficulties during the English I course. On the other hand a small number of students is divided among beginner, intermediate and advanced that show the few good grades below. While the rest of the students place their self into no knowledge of English that contributes to the low performance in class.



Source: Questionnaire administered to students from English I of Schools of Economics at the University of El Salvador, Semester II-2013

**Interpretation:**

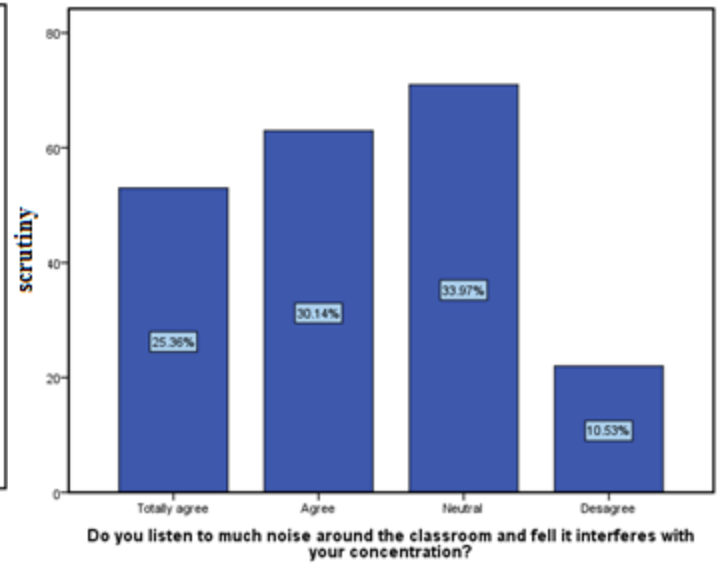
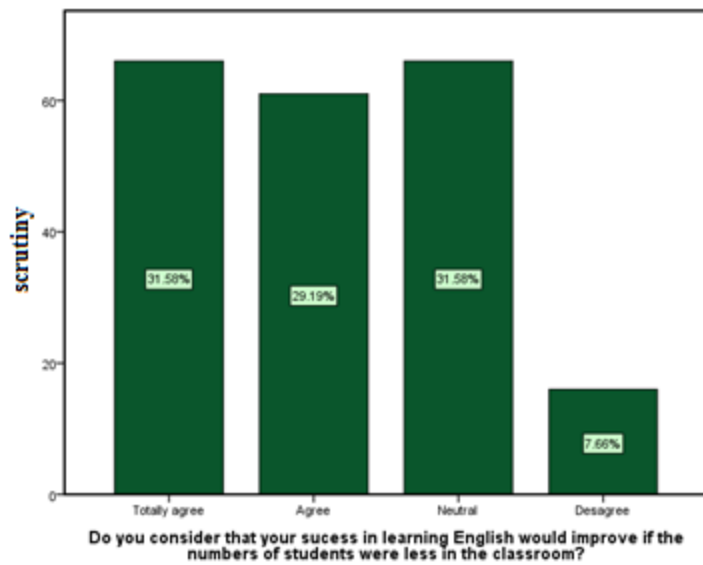
According to the graphs, half of students ask when they do not understand content; this affects them negatively because if they do not ask the teacher they cannot learn completely and in a good manner a topic. Also, when the teacher asks for opinions students cannot participate maybe because they have not understood the content and they may have more doubts than comments.



Source: Questionnaire administered to students from English I of Schools of Economics at the University of El Salvador, Semester II-2013

**Interpretation:**

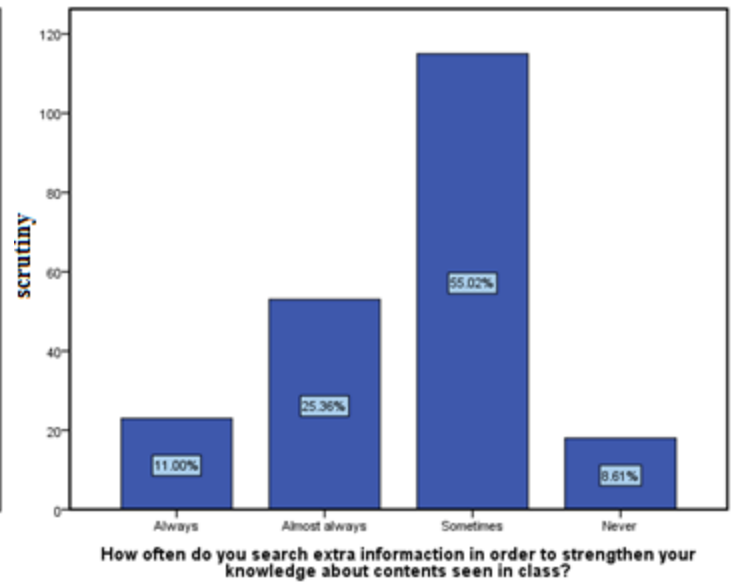
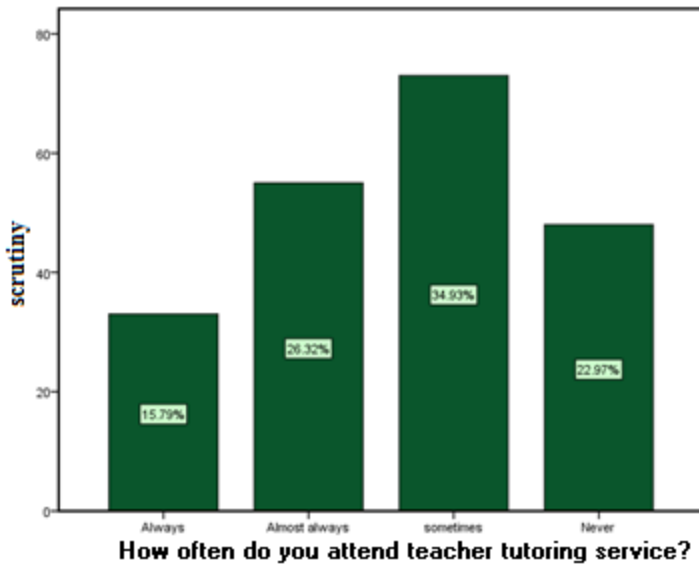
Students rate their confidence in the English subject as “very good”, and how often students that grade their participation in large classes as “sometimes”. Students tend not to feel enough confidence in themselves, this is related to their learning process because is a factor that affects them in a negative way, students may avoid their class participation in oral activities, ask questions to the teacher in classes and answer questions made by the teacher during the class.



Source: Questionnaire administered to students from English I of Schools of Economics at the University of El Salvador, Semester II-2013

#### Interpretation:

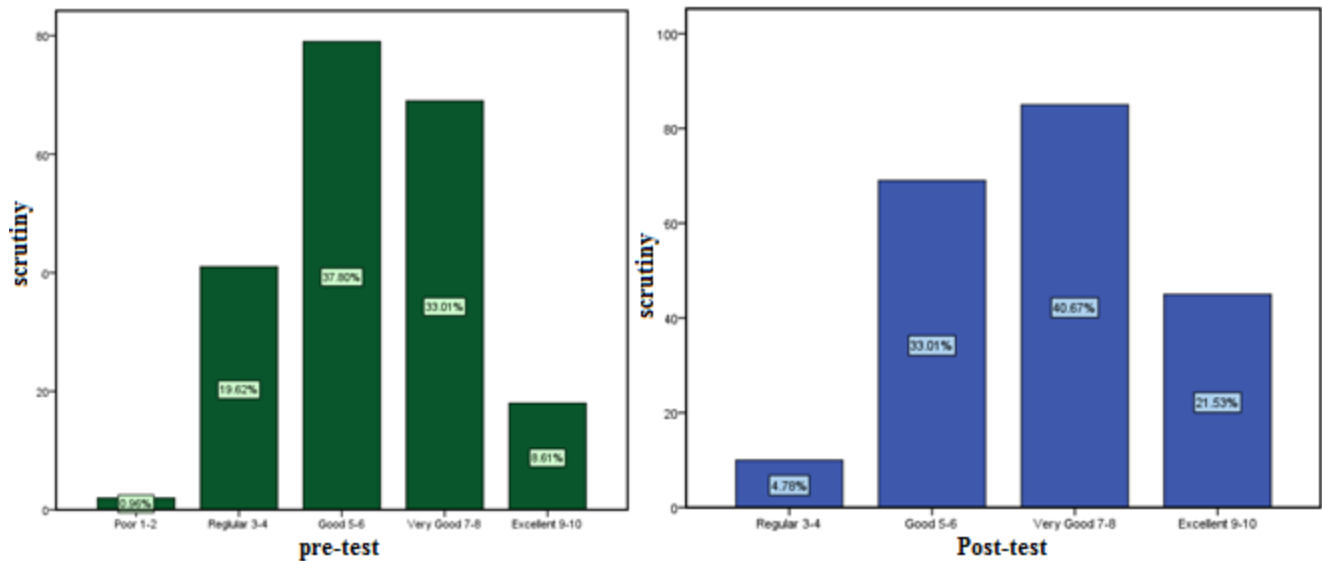
According to the graphs the noise and the number of students in the group affect the learning of the students because few students are in agreement. If the students were less, they could improve in learning English and if they do not listen to much their concentration was better, the grades that they got in the pre-test and in the post test showed their learning was not meaningful.



Source: Questionnaire administered to students from English I of Schools of Economics at the University of El Salvador, Semester II-2013

#### Interpretation:

The graphics display that the scale “sometimes” is the one that more students answered when they were asked about attending teacher tutoring and search for extra information about the contents studied in class, not all of the students have the interest in the subject and improve their English competences and develop skills in order to strengthen their knowledge.



Source: Pre-test and post test administered to students from English I of Schools of Economics at the University of El Salvador, Semester II-2013

#### Interpretation:

These graphs explain students' grades at the beginning of the semester and at the end of it, in the pre-test the 37.80% of the students obtained "good" grades and in the post-test 33.01% of the students obtained "good" grades; in the pre-test 33.01% of the students obtained "very good" grades and in the post-test 40.67% of the students obtained "very good" grades; in the pre-test 8.61% the students obtained "excellent" grades and in the post test the 21.53% of the students obtained "excellent" grades; in the pre-test 19.62% of the students obtained "regular" grades and in the post test 4.78% of the students obtained "regular". In these circumstances this consequence comes from the large amount of students in a class. Students did not learn effectively and it is reflected in their grades, because in the post test in the scale "good" 4.79 % of the students increase in their grades; in the scale "very good" 7.66% of the students increase in their grades; in the scale "excellent" 12.92% of the students increase their grades, in the scale "regular" 14.84% of the students increase their grades, the learning process will be better if the groups was smaller.

## **VIII. FINDINGS**

### **A. Hypotheses' test**

After carrying out the research and analyzing the results of the instruments administrated, it can be concluded that the hypothesis proposed is not proven right (large classes have negative effects in language learning of students of English at the School of Economics at the University of El Salvador, during semester II- 2013). It is not proven that most students faced difficulties in their learning in large classes such as: the lack of participation in class activities, lack of motivation, bad communication between students and teacher, lack of personal teacher's attention on every student, difficulties to concentrate during the class and noise. All these factors intervened in students' learning negatively, their grades did not increase in a meaningful manner; students learned, but their learning could be better if they had been exposed to English class in a smaller group class.

It is not clear that the independent variable, which is "large classes," affects directly with many negative effects the dependent variable which is "language learning English" and because of that it has to be said that the hypothesis is not accepted. Students improve a little their English language learning English even though they are in large classes.

### **B. Answers to the research questions.**

Students' learning suffered great impact when they are exposed to not adequate conditions. In this case a large class is the factor that causes a bad impact; exposing students to the negative effects of large classes does not allow them to successfully accomplish their learning process. At the end of a long and difficult process, students' grades are affected negatively because of lack of

participation and concentration. The impact caused by overcrowded classroom in students' learning will be reflected at the end of the semester, some of them can even fail it.

Through this research the researchers noticed that student's learning development was somewhat poor, noise interfered with it, and students did not like to participate in oral and written activities. This did not allow them to improve their speaking and writing skills. Students did not like to comment or express any doubt to the teacher about any topic because they did not like to speak in public, so they felt reluctant.

Students can face some difficulties to pass the semester or understand some topics. Their attitude towards the course can be negative; in the field work they can have some troubles if they do not get all the competences during the learning process. They can also be unmotivated or pass their course with a low grades.

Students are less visible than they are in small classes, and it's not uncommon for a few students to be in their own world, for example, using their cell phones, texting, browsing the Internet, or even falling asleep. Students learn more when they are engaged in the class.

Some factors having to do with students' learning in large classes are that students do not like very much group activities, pair activities or oral presentations. The lack of advisory from the teacher, the lack of interest on the students' part toward the English subject and the lack of extra material from the teacher for the subject. According to the results, students do not have self-confidence during the class. This affects their participation in large classes and they are afraid of making mistakes in front of their classmates. This creates a bad attitude toward learning English. Also this causes students not to ask the teacher to explain something to them when they have not understood it during the English class.



Some solutions that the School of Economics may implement are to start with, advisory from the teacher or the teacher assistant in a schedule appropriate in order to clear any doubt of the students, develop more pair and group activities to make the students get used to work in that way and explain to them the advantages of that kind of activities. Provide the students with extra material, encourage students to participate in oral activities in order to improve their speaking and lose the fear to confront overcrowded classrooms, encourage students to get involved in the activities developed inside and outside the classroom in order to improve their attitude toward English. Good methodologies for large classes are activities that try to involve most students. Some activities could not be developed in a good manner for the fact that there are many students and the space to do it is not big enough.

The use of visual aids is a good tool to teach a topic because they call students' attention and these learners can feel the class more dynamic.

### **C. Most outstanding findings**

During the developing of this research it has been found that most students of the School of Economics did not achieve all of the topics studied in class. According to the survey passed to the students, most of them did not make much effort in the English subject as the others subjects of their career. Also, the majority of the sample did not like to participate in key activities that work as a good manner in learning English such as pair and group work.

Students at Economics School did not develop enough confidence in themselves. This affected their learning and, for example, they did not like to participate in the class activities like oral activities which are very important to improve the speaking skill and the micro skill pronunciation. Students did not have the courage to show the teacher in front of the class a doubt about a topic. According to the finding that reflect the survey the noise outside the classroom

affects the concentration of the students during the class, and students did not receive enough feedback outside the classroom such as advisory from the teacher or the teacher assistant in order for students to achieve the semester goals.

In the post test, the grades of the students as compared with those of the pre-test, show that students learn but their learning was not significant during the whole semester; students got higher grades in the post-test, but not so high to argue that learning and teaching were successful.

## **IX. CONCLUSIONS**

### **Conclusions**

The subsequent conclusions are based on the findings after having applied the instruments: the English I student test, the students' survey and the class observation check list. It is relevant to mention that some findings were gotten in more than one of the instruments before mentioned.

The major concern of this research during the complete process of investigation has been based on the phenomenon of large class and its effects on students' English learning.

With regards to the findings of this study, without a doubt students transfer what they receive during a large class in relation with questions related to participation in class. Students were encouraged to actively participate and were encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Some students do not like oral and written activities, teachers can promote group work. Group work increases students' skills as learners and facilitators, which help in building confidence through request interaction with each other in a friendly atmosphere in the class. Presentations are also helpful for increasing students' confidence.

Also, students are motivated when the teachers use audiovisual material, develop different activities in class, support their opinions and correct them in a good way. It means that students prefer their classes more communicative, interactive and dynamic, communication and interaction must be both teachers and classmates, in some cases in large classes the teacher does not remember the names of all his students, and students do not interact with the teacher neither with their classmates.

According to environment students agreed with the size classroom and activities adequate from the numbers of students but for the teachers are uncomfortable for developing some activities because the classrooms are big but there are 60 students. For example, in a class observed the students can present an announcement and students are very enthusiastic, but not all of them pass in front and cannot hear back, students consider the noise affects their concentration in class, Students consider they can improve their learning if they are in a smaller group.

Some students show little interest or bad attitude for learning English, because some of them did not search extra material for the topics, did not ask for the teacher if they did not understand a topic, they were left in confusion for long periods of time, which could have demotivated them. Students at School of Economics need to receive feedback on the topics studied in the class in order to increase their knowledge in the area they are studying. Also, teachers need to find a way to develop in the students a good attitude toward English and make them see the importance that English has in their professional life.

Teachers could be more engaged in teaching because some students say they did not receive extra material for the contents and teachers have to give students schedule for advisory, positive feedback and frequent interaction with students also built confidence in them, the most of teachers are hired in an hourly class, they would be more engaged if they were in a permanent job and they would have more time for the students.

Inside and outside the classroom the noise interferes with students' concentration, they cannot be focused on the class. According to the class observation that the researchers did, in the listening activities it was difficult for students to listen to the tape and teacher's instructions. Noise definitely affects students' learning.

Another difficulty that students face in large classes is the lack of oral participation. It is important for students to participate in oral activities in order to improve or develop a good speaking skill, for that students need to practice their oral English during the class because it can be the only opportunity they have to do it, but in large classes no all of the students can participate in the activities for the lack of time.

These findings indicate that the phenomenon of large classes is relevant in foreign language learning and specifically in learning English. As shown in the research, students learned but their learning was not that significant, as reflected in the grades of the pre-test and post-test which were compared; their English language learning and test results could have been better had they been in smaller groups.

## **X. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE TEACHERS**

- A. Teachers should assign more activities or group work to cover some material that is difficult to develop in class because of the time or the large number of students. After checking the work, they can reinforce some areas in which students may have some trouble.
- B. Teachers should schedule tutoring sessions after or before the class in order to give personal attention to the students who need it; sometimes students have doubts or problems with a specific subject and this requires personal attention that cannot be given during class. It is important to give the students all the necessary attention during tutoring to help them in the way they deserve.
- C. Teachers should be assigned a teacher assistant or students in their community service from the Foreign Language Department. The teacher assistant could replace the teacher when the teacher does not have time to give tutoring session. Giving feedback to the students who need it is pivotal.
- D. Teachers should promote the four skills (listening, writing, speaking, and reading) in the classroom, because it is one of the specific objectives of the syllabus of the subject. Also it is important for students to develop the four skills because this may help them in their English learning.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE AUTHORITIES**

1. Authorities from the School of Economics, the Coordinator of the English area, and the Dean of the School of Economics and the Rector of the university should get informed and realize about this problem to know what they are dealing with, and they ought to plan the construction of new classrooms and improve the infrastructure to offer a good environment for the learning and teaching process.
2. Authorities should be regulating the admission process in order to accept adequate numbers of students in each group; they have to determine such needed resources as personnel, classroom space, building space, along with the budgetary implications.
3. Hire more English teachers in order to open more English groups in the morning because, according to the research, students prefer the schedule of the morning. Also, this can help to avoid teacher's workload, with a smaller number of students in each group does not mean a decrease in workload. Also it can help decrease the high number of students in each group and not overcrowd them.

## **XI. LIMITATIONS**

- Students from Economics: The limitation in this case was that the research was focused only on students from Economics School.
- During the data collection process two teachers did not allow the researchers to administrate the instrument. It was necessary to return several times.
- Because of the non-availability of some teachers in charge of English I, some activities such as the data collecting and analyzing process had to be rescheduled.
- The researchers did not pass the instruments to all the groups, because in the data collecting process only large groups were needed.
- The result of this research was limited, because the researchers did not obtain official final grades, but it was a good reference for more general studies in the future. Also, there was not previous research like this one.



## XII. DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

An alphabetical list of suitable terms and their meanings are offered. In a general sense, the group of researchers deliberated appropriates the mining of these definitions so as to simplify to the readers the understanding of the unfamiliar terms. Moreover, the researchers took under consideration to make mention of these additional terms in the particular field of EFL used in this study.

- **Accuracy:** refers to the ability to adhere to the rules of phonology, lexis, morphology and syntax, and to observe the sociolinguistic and pragmatic norms of the target language.
- **Communicative competence:** refers to the implicit and explicit knowledge of the rule of the language as well as the rules of language use.
- **Discourse:** refers to a continuous stretch of language longer than a sentence.
- **Fluency:** refers to rate of delivery and coherence of the message.
- **Grammar:** refers to the structural organization of a language, e.g. its morphology and syntax.
- **Linguistic or Grammatical competence:** refers to knowledge of lexical items, rules of morphology, syntax, sentence grammar semantics and phonology.
- **Production:** refers to the process of planning and executing speech acts. The processes and methods used to transform tangible inputs (raw materials, semi-finished goods, subassemblies) and intangible inputs (ideas, information, knowledge) into goods or services. Resources are used in this process to create an output that is suitable for use or has exchange value.

- **Distraction:** is the divided attention of an individual or group from the chosen object of attention onto the source of distractio<sup>n</sup>.
- **Learning:** Measurable and relatively permanent change in behavior through experience, instruction, or study.

### XIII. TIME TABLE

No.	Activities	Months																														
		april				may				june				august				september				October				november				dec		
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3
1	Presentation with the advisor																															
2	Tutoring with the advisor																															
3	Proposal presentation																															
4	Draft II																															
5	Research proposal III																															
6	Research proposal checking																															
7	Research sample																															
8	Improvement and testing of data instrument																															
9	Handing the questionnaire for checking																															
10	Asking for permission to School of Economics																															
11	Choosing the sample																															
12	Working on the questionnaire and exam																															
13	Passing the questionnaire and pre test to the sample																															
14	Getting the result from the questionnaire																															
15	Class observations																															
16	Getting the result for the guides																															
17	Analyzing the data																															
18	Passing the post test																															
19	Analyzing the post test																															

**TIME TABLE 2014**

No.	Months Activities	january				february				march				april				june				july				August				Sept			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1	Tutoring with the advisor				■				■				■				■				■				■				■				■
2	Analyzing all the data			■	■																												
3	Working on the first draft					■	■	■	■																								
4	First draft checking									■	■																						
5	Working on the second draft											■	■	■	■																		
6	Second draft checking															■	■																
7	Working on the final report																	■	■	■	■												
8	Final report checking																			■	■												
9	Working on last corrections																					■	■	■	■	■							
10	Last corrections checking																											■	■				
11	Handing the final report																																■

## **XIV. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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