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STUDENT AND TEACHER OPINIONS ON CLASS SIZES AND TYPES OF ASSESSMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION LSP CLASSROOMS: A PILOT STUDY

ABSTRACT: Large classes are a reality and an ongoing issue in higher education in most countries. Theoretically, a large class is any class where teachers face challenges in teaching, assessing students' performance and managing the class due to the number of students. The paper will focus on assessment in large classes, looking at some familiar methods, as well as researching the possibilities of innovative technologies as useful assessment tools, self-evaluation using new technologies, and collaborative learning. The selection of the right methods for assessment is essential for meeting students' needs without compromising the very integrity of the entire process; hence, a questionnaire will be utilized to investigate the opinions of teachers and students on their assessment process. The results will offer some new assessment possibilities that may compensate for the lack of adequate student-teacher contact and interaction usually present in small classes, but not always in large classes.

Key words: assessment, class size, innovation technology, self-evaluation, collaborative learning.

МИШЉЕЊЕ СТУДЕНАТА И НАСТАВНИКА О ВЕЛИЧИНИ ГРУПЕ И ОБЛИЦИМА ОЦЕЊИВАЊА У УЧИОНИЦИ ЈЕЗИКА СТРУКЕ НА ВИСОКОШКОЛСКОЈ УСТАНОВИ: ПИЛОТ-СТУДИЈА

АПСТРАКТ: Велике групе студената у високом образовању реалност су присутна у већини земаља. Теоретски, велика група дефинише се као свака група студената код које се током рада наставници суочавају са изазовима приликом саме наставе,

оцењивања и контроле у учионици насталих због броја студената. Рад ће се бавити темом оцењивања у великим групама кроз посматрање неких познатих метода, као и кроз представљање могућности нових технологија као алата корисних за оцењивање, самооцењивање и учење у групама. Избор адекватне методе оцењивања од суштинског је значаја за испуњавање потреба ученика без угрожавања интегритета целокупног наставног процеса. Из тог разлога, рад ће представити и резултате упитника, који су испитивали мишљење наставника и студената о успешности процеса оцењивања. Резултати ће понудити неке нове могућности оцењивања, који можда могу надокнадити недостатак адекватне интеракције између студената и наставника присутне у малим, али не увек и у великим групама.

Кључне речи: оцењивање, велике групе, иновативне технологије, самооцењивање, учење у групама.

1. INTRODUCTION

Large classes pose a number of challenges for most LSP teachers today (Harfitt & Tsui 2015; Wright, Bergom & Bartholomew 2019). Beginning with class management and ending in the assessment process, teachers are heartedly trying to avoid a large number of students in their classrooms (e.g. Broadbent, Panadero & Boud 2018). However, globalization and student mobility, as well as the lack of teachers and faculty resources, are influencing the size of a class. Large classes present pedagogical problems, since speaking, reading and writing tasks are carried out with difficulty, communicative tasks are not easy to be set up, and individualized work is minimized (Mulryan-Kyne 2010). There are also a number of affective issues to consider, like the impossibility of learning students' names, inability to establish a good rapport with students, problems with attention, and lack of possibility to help weaker students (Todd 2006). Class management is difficult as well, as there are discipline problems, increased noise level, inability of all students to attend, and the impossibility of doing pair and group work (Adamu, Umar Tsiga & Simmons Zuilkowski 2022). Finally, assessment is problematic in all aspects, from correcting a large number of essays to oral examinations and grading in general (e.g. Iiping 2018; Kokkelenberg, Dillon & Christy 2008). The last is going to be the topic of the paper. The research will attempt to provide student and teacher opinions on assessment in large classes and help teachers do their best in the given classroom environment (following the research by Broadbent, Panadero & Boud 2018; Mulryan-Kyne 2010; Adamu, Umar Tsiga & Simmons Zuilkowski 2022).

2. DEFINING A LARGE CLASS

It is not easy to define a large class. Baker and Westrup (2000: 2) indicate that “a large class can be any number of students, if the teacher feels there are too many students for them all to make progress”. There are no rigid interpretations of how many students make a class large. One has to consider what is being taught, as well as what resources, accommodation and facilities are available (Gibbs & Jenkins 1992). It is not the same to teach subjects that involve factual knowledge, where the class size may not cause so many issues in teaching, and teaching LSP, where large classes may cause numerous problems (Todd 2006). Kennedy and Kennedy (1996) indicate that it is difficult to control the class when the number of students passes a certain number. A large class is considered to be large when perceived by teachers or by students as such (Shamim & Coleman 2018). Hence, a large class phenomenon is difficult to define, being subjective and context-based. Most teachers consider smaller classes ideal for teaching; nevertheless, there are not many studies to prove that large classes have adverse effects on students’ learning (as summarized in a paper by Toth & Montagna 2002).

The studies on the influence of class size on student achievement were very prolific in the period between the late 1970s and early 2000s (e.g., Ames 1992; Glass & Smith 1979; Hayes 1997; Locasto 2001; Toth & Montagna 2002). One of the conclusions that these authors have is that, even if they do not directly influence students’ achievement, large classes cause numerous problems for teachers. Locasto (2001: 494-495) classifies those problems into three categories: pedagogical problems, such as monitoring students’ work or providing feedback, management-related problems, like organizing pair and group work, and affective problems, such as memorizing students’ names and assessing students’ needs. Hayes (1997) classifies the same problems into five categories, listing them as discomfort (teaching is demanding), discipline (controlling the class is challenging), individual attention (it is easy to neglect students in large groups), assessment (it is difficult to assess students individually), and learning effectiveness (whether students achieve learning goals). Each of these problems affects teachers working in a group of more than 15 students (Locasto 2001: 495), which can probably be regarded as a number of students where it is difficult to provide all learners with equal chances to practice the target language.

However, some researchers (Ur 2000; Hess 2001) suggest that teaching in large classes has some benefits as well, such as the following: (i) the students are more active and more relaxed in large classes; (ii) the atmosphere is more competitive and more creative; and (iii) the more students, the more ideas during the class. Therefore, large classes bring not only problems, but also some possibilities to the teachers (Hornsby & Osman 2014). After all, as Lewis and Woodward (1988) indicated long ago, the teaching

methodology contributes more to teaching efficacy than the number of students in the class.

On the other hand, in the last two decades, researchers did not dwell on the problems in the classroom, and rather focused their attention to possible solutions in managing the classes (e.g., Broadbent, Panadero & Boud 2018) and assessing the students (e.g., Kokkelenberg, Dillon & Christy 2008).

3. ASSESSMENT IN LARGE CLASSES

A number of studies have shown that student achievement declines as the class size increases (Cuseo, 2007; Kokkelenberg, Dillon & Christy 2008; Desta 2019). Blatchford (2003) points out that there is a great tendency for students to be off the task due to different types of distractions in large classes. The list of potential problems seems daunting for most LSP teachers, especially inexperienced ones. Hence, it is not surprising that successful teaching depends on adequate planning and finding the right assessment methods to meet the students' needs without compromising the very integrity of the entire process. Assessment is an integral part of the learning process and therefore should play a crucial role in instructional design (Biggs & Tang 2007). Identifying the right assessment-related activities used in a large class could influence students' achievement goals (Hornsby & Osman 2014). Large classes may affect the quality of teaching and the learners' concentration and motivation, which will then affect their achievement (Mulryan-Kyne 2010). In addition, real obstacles in the design, management, and standardization of assessment processes might arise when teaching a large class (Broadbent, Panadero & Boud 2018). The authors suggest that using several assessment techniques is advised, and that the assessment criteria should be made clear in advance. Using technology in assessing a large class can significantly facilitate grading consistency (Cathcart & Neale 2012). Winestone and Millard (2012) state that introducing the continuous formative assessment in large classes can be considered beneficial to students' engagement, understanding the material and motivation. Formative assessment, considered as the assessment for learning, may be one of the most effective educational practices regarding the improvement of academic achievement (Broadbent, Panadero & Boud 2018). On the other hand, summative assessment is generally also considered as the assessment of learning since it involves the students' evaluation and summarizes their progress at a specific time (Taras 2005).

4. FOCUS GROUPS AND METHODOLOGY

4.1. *Participants*

In order to investigate students' and teachers' opinions about class size, a pilot study was conducted. The students participating in this research were the students from the Faculty of Technical Sciences, University of Novi Sad, who took the LSP classes during the summer semester of the academic year 2016/2017. The survey was conducted during their regular LSP classes. The total number of students who participated was 177; 76 students attended LSP classes in small groups (5-30 students¹), and 101 students attended LSP classes in large groups (50-200 students). Their majors were not significant for this research since the research was conducted to determine whether they agreed with the idea that smaller class sizes increased student achievement. 15 LSP teachers participated in the study as well. They were from five different Faculties at the University of Novi Sad. The authors wanted to determine whether LSP teachers changed their assessment methods due to the size of their classes.

The majority of students have been learning a foreign language (English or German) for 9-13 years (76.14%). Only 2.79% of students were those who learnt a foreign language for less than 9 years, and 21.07% of those who learnt a foreign language for more than 13 years. Together with the long period of learning, they have also reported to have excellent grades during their studies. Their average grade was 8.38 (passing grades at the university range from 6-10, where 6 is the lowest passing grade).

The majority of LSP teachers have been teaching LSP for 9-20 years (62.50%). 18.75% of LSP teachers were those who taught LSP for less than 9 years, and 18.75% of those who taught LSP for more than 20 years. 81.25% of LSP teachers have been teaching in groups with more than 50 students (50-200), while 18.75% of LSP teachers were those who taught LSP only in small groups of students (5-30).

4.2. *Questionnaire*

A questionnaire as a research instrument was selected for this pilot study due to its objectivity and a valid starting point for research. There were two different questionnaires, one for students (Appendix 1) and the other one for teachers (Appendix 2). The teacher questionnaire consisted of one open-ended question and eight closed-ended questions, while the student questionnaire consisted of three open-ended questions

¹ The number of students at different majors and the groups they are organized in imposed this division into classes with less than 30 students and those with more than 50 students.

and five closed-ended questions. Both questionnaires began with questions related to general information regarding participants, which was already introduced in the previous section. The second part of the questionnaire for students was concerned with their opinion on class size and student achievements, while the questionnaire for LSP teachers was concerned with their assessment methods.

Statistical information presents the crosstab information on students' opinions on positive and negative influence of class size on assessment, as well as their motivation to learn in diverse class sizes. The difference was tested using the Chi-Square test. T-test was used to analyse teachers' opinions. The quantitative data were analysed using SPSS 25 statistical software, whereas the qualitative data analysis included textual analysis, which focused on identifying recurring themes in the respondents' answers.

5. RESULTS

5.1. Students and class size

The questionnaires were intended to provide some initial insight into how students and teachers feel about the size of the LSP classes. The students who participated in this study were asked to evaluate whether the size of their groups affected their achievement.

Table 1 presents the crosstab of students' attitudes toward the positive influence of class size on their academic achievement.

Crosstab					
			Size		Total
			Large	Small	
Positive_Influence	No	Count	41	20	61
		% within Size	40.6%	26.3%	34.5%
		Adjusted Residual	2.0	-2.0	
	Yes	Count	26	41	67
		% within Size	25.7%	53.9%	37.9%
		Adjusted Residual	-3.8	3.8	
	I don't know	Count	34	15	49
		% within Size	33.7%	19.7%	27.7%
		Adjusted Residual	2.0	-2.0	
Total		Count	101	76	177
		% within Size	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 1. Class size and positive influence on students' achievement

There were 177 students who answered the questionnaire; 101 about the large class they attended and 76 about their small-size classes. More than half of the students

attending their LSP classes in small groups, i.e. 53.9%, believe that the number of students in their classes positively affects their overall achievement. According to their answers, they are motivated to learn languages in small classes and they do not feel neglected and left behind by their teacher. In opposition, only a quarter, i.e., 25.7% of students who attended the classes in large groups believe that the number of students in their classes positively affects their overall achievement and that they feel relaxed in a large class. They indicate that the atmosphere is livelier in large groups, there are greater opportunities for creativity (stated by Ur (2000) and Hess (2001) as well), and they do not feel the pressure of being asked by the teacher. The students also emphasized the advantage of working in groups during the class.

Conversely, 26.3% of students from small classes and a remarkable 40% of students in large classes did not see a positive influence of the class size on their achievement. According to the questionnaire, the students indicated that the class size prevented them from engaging in classroom communication activities. Additionally, they stated that the size of the class prevented them from understanding the material in class.

The difference in the attitudes of students attending classes in large groups and in small groups towards the positive influence of class size is tested using the Chi-Square test. The results demonstrate that the relation between these variables is statistically significant, being $p < .05$ ($\chi^2 = 14.718$, $df = 2$, $p = .001$). Adjusted Residual from Table 1 presents the statistically significant difference of ± 2 . Referring to the positive influence on class size on students' achievement, Adjusted Residual is ± 3.8 , meaning that a greater percent of students in small groups believe that their class size has a positive influence on their achievement in comparison to students in large groups.

Crosstab					
			Size		Total
			Large	Small	
Negative_Influence	No	Count	65	59	124
		% within Size	64.4%	77.6%	70.1%
		Adjusted Residual	-1.9	1.9	
	Yes	Count	10	3	13
		% within Size	9.9%	3.9%	7.3%
		Adjusted Residual	1.5	-1.5	
	I don't know	Count	26	14	40
		% within Size	25.7%	18.4%	22.6%
		Adjusted Residual	1.2	-1.2	
Total		Count	101	76	177
		% within Size	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 2. Class size and negative influence on students' achievement

Students' opinions on the negative influence of the class size on their achievement is presented in Table 2. Here, the opinions among students in both types of classes do not differ much. It is also confirmed by the Chi-Square test ($\chi^2=4.213$, $df=2$, $p=.122$), as well as Adjusted Residual smaller than 2. Two thirds of students in both large and small size groups did not see negative influence of their class size. The reasons for their answers were not further elaborated. Only 10 students who attended LSP classes in large groups and 3 students who attended LSP classes in small groups answered that the number of students in their classes negatively affected their overall achievement. Some of them emphasized that they felt neglected and that they rarely had the chance to speak. They also mentioned the problem with the noise in the large groups and the lack of communication. This is in accordance with findings by Harmer (2001), who emphasizes the problem of teacher-student communication in large classes and points out that students who sit at the back of the classroom do not get individual attention.

Interestingly, in both large and small size classes, a certain number of students (33.7% in large classes and 19.7% in small classes who answered "I don't know" on positive influence, and 25.7% and 18.4% respectively, answering "I don't know" on the negative influence of class size on achievement) do not have an opinion on the impact of class size on their learning achievements. It is precisely these students who would benefit from the change of teaching, the use of innovative technologies, or improved and more student-oriented assessment methods.

When we asked students about the relationship between their motivation to learn LSP and class size, the differences were again visible between those attending LSP classes in large groups and those in small groups (Table 3). A smaller percent of students (22.7% and 10.5% in large and small groups, respectively) emphasized they were not motivated to learn in their classes. Half of the surveyed students (57.4%) were motivated to learn in large classes, while the remarkable 84.2% of students were motivated to learn LSP in small classes. The Adjusted Residual of $>+/-2.0$ in all inspected cells confirms the difference in testing students' motivation and class size between all investigated pairs, whereas the Chi-Square test ($\chi^2=14.988$, $df=2$, $p=.001$) proves the relation between these variables to be statistically significant.

Crosstab					
			Size		Total
			Large	Small	
Motivated	No	Count	23	8	31
		% within Size	22.8%	10.5%	17.5%
		Adjusted Residual	2.1	-2.1	
	Yes	Count	58	64	122
		% within Size	57.4%	84.2%	68.9%
		Adjusted Residual	-3.8	3.8	
	I don't know	Count	20	4	24
		% within Size	19.8%	5.3%	13.6%
		Adjusted Residual	2.8	-2.8	
Total		Count	101	76	177
		% within Size	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 3. Class size and students' motivation

Equally interesting, Table 3 also demonstrates students' motivation to learn in small groups by observing that only 4 students who attended small-size classes answered that they did not have an opinion on their motivation. The number of students who did not have an opinion on motivation is the lowest in the large group attendees as well.

5.2. Assessment methods and class size

In a different questionnaire, LSP teachers were asked whether their assessment methods were changed due to the size of their classes. The results of independent samples t-tests can be observed in Table 4.

	Do you change the type of assessment according to the size of your class	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean difference	t	p
Experience	No	13.10	6.35	-5.1	-1.424	0.178
	Yes	18.20	6.94			
Largest group	No	78.50	47.38	-75.5	-3.123	0.008
	Yes	154.00	35.78			
Smallest group	No	15.50	12.96	-21.9	-2.478	0.028
	Yes	37.40	21.65			
Ideal Size	No	17.50	5.89	-6.5	-1.773	0.100
	Yes	24.00	8.22			

Table 4. Teachers' opinion on assessment and class size.

The results in Table 4 demonstrate no difference between teachers who modify their assessment method and those who do not do it in relation to the variables of their years of experience and their ideal class size. The difference is visible with the largest and smallest groups. Teachers who do not modify their assessment methods work with significantly smaller groups, both when large size groups and small size groups are concerned.

Some of the teachers indicated that they were not allowed to change the organization of the exam and that the assessment methods were the same for all students due to the curriculum. On the other hand, 35.78% of LSP teachers answered that their assessment methods differed when working with large groups. Some of them emphasized that they used in-class presentations instead of oral exams. By using in-class presentations, they motivate students to perform well in front of their peers and introduce new ideas to the rest of the class. Two out of fifteen LSP teachers indicated that they used LMS in assessing students' work. E-testing allows teachers to evaluate students' progress, to offer instant feedback and to reduce excessive marking overload. Marking load was emphasized as a problem since some teachers are also forced to form more groups of students at the exam, meaning more time spent overlooking them taking the exam.

The data from the questionnaire also revealed that teachers felt class size influenced the students' achievement. Smaller size classes affected their teaching methodology by facilitating the increased use of homework, the use of communicative approach and task-based approach in the classroom. Expectedly, some LSP teachers answered that they used individual approaches less, less homework and more group work in large classes. 68.75% of LSP teachers identified class sizes of 20 or fewer students per teacher as ideal due to easier and personalized instruction, easier speaking skills assessment and easier management of students' behaviour. Survey data indicated that teachers preferred small classes because they felt small classes allowed them the opportunity to use more hands-on activities, one-on-one instruction, and small group instruction, which could eventually lead to better academic achievement.

6. POSSIBLE ASSESSMENT METHODS

The pilot study acknowledges the existence of the problem in assessing large classes. Future research would definitely welcome different assessment methods being utilized in a number of classes and presentation of the obtained results. Until that is done, the remainder of the paper presents possible evaluation methods that

student assessment can benefit from, hoping that LSP teachers can find the inspiration they need.

6.1. Self-evaluation

As already mentioned in the paper, most LSP teachers associate large classes with the lack of control, lack of discipline, inability to assess students individually, inability to provide feedback, excessive marking load, and lack of teacher-student interaction. To overcome these problems, one of the possible solutions for teachers is to attempt to make their classes seem smaller than they are and plan their assessments carefully (Rust 2001). They should find ways to interact with students, divide them into smaller groups, use self-evaluation and technology in their classrooms, and share the relevant information online (Arico & Lancaster 2018; Todd 2006; Gibbs 2006; Ballantyne, Hughes & Mylonas 2002).

In large classes, it is necessary to spread assessments evenly during the semester to avoid excessive marking overload at the end of the semester. Assessment may be oral or written, and clear assessment criteria are needed if it is to be fair and transparent. Many teachers use rubrics to share their assessment criteria with students (Broadbent, Panadero & Boud 2018). They may define each criterion needed for achieving a certain mark. If assessment criteria are clear, students can carry out assessment, as in self-evaluation (Arico & Lancaster 2018). When done well, self-assessment can help enhance students' learning. McDonald and Baud (2003) point out that self-assessment may improve students' performance in final examinations. It is important to explain the criteria used in the self-evaluation process to students. Students may also evaluate and provide feedback on each other's work (peer-assessment) (Ballantyne, Hughes & Mylonas 2002). Self-assessment can be used for assessing in-class presentations or written assignments. When examining the written tasks, students should be provided with the checklist for evaluating the basic grammar or punctuation mistakes. Self-evaluation helps teachers save time and also engages students in more active learning (Arico & Lancaster 2018; Seifert & Feliks 2019). In addition, this type of assessment encourages students to critically analyse what they have learnt and it gives them the chance to examine how other students interpret the theories and ideas, which broadens their understanding (Bates 2022).

6.2. Innovative technology

Large classes do not provide many opportunities to interact with students. In order to overcome this problem, LSP teachers may use a number of new technologies that would help students engage with the course material online (Urazova 2020; Yunus 2018). These include websites, wiki pages, Twitter, learning management systems (LMS) such as Moodle or Blackboard, and many others (Bulatović 2022). All of these technologies have the same goal, i.e., their task is to create a place for sharing information, submitting assignments, or providing feedback to students.

Choosing the right technology for a class can be overwhelming for a teacher. The choice of media is usually controlled more by practical than by pedagogic factors. Mackenzie (2002: 6) observes the following: “Teachers have always made the best of whatever they’ve got at hand (...), but it’s what we have to work with that teachers make due”.

There are not many models for selecting the right technology for a class. In the latest edition of his book, Bates (2022) proposes the SECTIONS model for deciding on the right technology. The acronym SECTIONS stands for students, ease of use and reliability, costs, teaching and media selection, interaction, organizational issues, networking, and security and privacy. All these issues have to be considered prior to selecting the technology for the classroom.

LMS such as Moodle (<https://moodle.org/>) allows students to communicate directly with teachers, to discuss course material, to participate in online discussions on discussion forums, to submit homework assignments and to take tests and quizzes online. Since this platform is open source, it is free for institutions, enabling teachers to monitor individual student progress with the content accessed during the course. LMS offers numerous benefits, such as personalized learning, students’ collaboration, flexibility, and monitoring students’ progress (Bradley 2021). Communication tools, such as discussion forums and wikis, allow a teacher to engage students in online discussions and assess their participation. They promote collaboration and discussion, foster participation, and provide teachers with valuable feedback about student progress during the course (Bulatović 2022).

In the last few years, teachers have been able to use platforms such as Microsoft Teams, which allow students to communicate directly with teachers, help teachers set up virtual classrooms and collaborate in a secure digital environment. They also include video conferencing, personalized tools, and supervised messaging for students (Rojabi 2020; Prošić Santovac, Bulatović & Kaurin 2021). The reliability of the chosen educational technology is crucial; for example, the software

may not be thoroughly tested and reliable, or the company supporting the new technology can stop working (Bates 2022).

Feedback helps the teacher monitor students' performance and achievement, simultaneously allowing students to check and evaluate their own progress. Good feedback encourages the development of self-assessment and teacher-student dialogue, delivering high-quality information regarding students' progress (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick 2006). Sometimes, teachers are unable to provide students with regular feedback, especially in large classes. Traditional tests and quizzes are too time-consuming to be used regularly in large classes. One of the solutions is to use online tests incorporated in LMS. They offer students instant and individualized feedback. E-testing allows teachers to evaluate students' progress and work quickly, it eliminates human error, offers instant feedback, and it overall saves time and reduces excessive marking overload (Pischukhina & Allen 2021). However, there are some disadvantages as well; for example, question banks need time to be completed, and teachers need some technical expertise to create e-quizzes. Above all, e-testing is not suitable for essay writing and descriptive answers.

Many teachers would rather avoid assessing lengthy written assignments at the end of the semester. Unfortunately, the reality of most LSP teachers nowadays is excessive marking overload. Teachers may provide a series of short writing assignments during the semester to avoid it. Such graded and ungraded written assignments also provide students and teachers with regular feedback without marking the overload at the end of the semester. These written assignments can also be written in small groups or pairs (Bulatović 2022).

6.3. Collaborative learning

Providing more chances for all students to engage in classroom activities and promoting students' autonomy is obviously easier in small groups of students and rather challenging in large classes. In such cases, a teacher may use collaborative learning, i.e., learning in small groups. Collaborative learning offers many benefits for students (Laal & Ghodsi 2012). Some of them include the following: becoming a more active learner rather than being an inactive student; developing critical thinking, communication, and teamwork; promoting students' interaction and preparing them for real-life situations; establishing a positive atmosphere; personalizing the large class; and, utilizing the variety of assessment techniques (Laal & Ghodsi 2012). Hence, group work should be used regardless of the number of students in the class, though it is of crucial importance to explain what students' task is and what the assessment criteria are (Davies 2009; Gibbs 2009). However, it

is not necessary to assess all the work that is carried out in groups. The teacher should retain the role of a facilitator, i.e., monitor students' work, provide some hints, and direct group work if necessary (Gibbs 2009).

Assessing speaking skills in large groups can be daunting for teachers as well. To solve this problem, students can deliver in-class oral presentations instead of a classic oral exam at the end of the course. These presentations not only motivate students to perform well in front of their peers, but they also introduce new ideas to the rest of the class. However, teachers should establish the assessment criteria in advance, as thoroughly stated in Ličen and Bogdanović (2017).

7. CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

According to the survey results, teaching LSP in large classes may have negative implications on effective teaching of LSP in higher education. The study reveals that large classes may lead to a lack of communication, poor classroom management, and teachers' overload. On the other hand, the LSP teachers feel that small classes offer more personalized interaction and have fewer management issues.

Despite the fact that LSP teachers who participated in this survey consider the large classes to have an impact on the students' achievement, 62.5% of them do not change their assessment methods due to the size of their classes.

The results presented here have some relevant implications for LSP teacher practices, types of assessment, and further research. Firstly, from the practical point of view, LSP teachers should apply teaching methods that encourage student interaction and participation. Teachers should try to make their classes seem smaller than they are. For example, they should find ways to interact with the students by dividing them into smaller groups. It is of great importance to help inactive students become more active learners, to encourage them to develop critical thinking, to engage all students in class communication and to establish positive atmosphere. Secondly, LSP teachers should plan assessments carefully and spread them evenly during the semester in order to reduce the workload and, at the same time help students monitor their progress. The assessment criteria need to be fair and transparent. If assessment criteria are clear and known in advance, some assessment can be carried out by students, as in self-evaluation. It would also be helpful to work with students on correcting their errors and provide them with feedback. Finally, the opportunities offered by new technologies nowadays should also be considered to enhance student engagement and create a place for sharing information and

providing feedback to students. Hence, LMS, wiki pages, clickers, and blogs are all viable tools to diversify and simplify assessment.

As Lewis and Woodward (1988) posit, the selection of teaching methodology contributes more to teaching efficacy than the number of students in the class. Hence, large classes should not be an excuse for not using new technology, problem-based learning, collaborative learning, or self-evaluation. Teachers should try to think out of the box and find out what is the best both for them and for their students, taking all factors into consideration.

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APPENDIX 1 – STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Circle or write down the answer

1. How long have you been studying English/German language? _____
__years
 2. How many semesters have you been studying English/German language at the University? _____
 3. What grades did you get in English/German language at the University?
1. semester_____ 2. semester_____ 3. semester_____
4. semester_____ 5. semester_____ 6. semester_____
7. semester_____ 8. semester_____
 4. How many students are there in your class?

 5. Do you think that the size of the class has a positive influence on your achievement?
Yes No I do not know
 6. Do you think that the size of the class has a negative influence on your achievement?
Yes No I do not know
 7. Are you motivated to attend English/German language lectures?

 8. What would you change in your English /German language lectures?

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APPENDIX 2 – LSP TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Write down the answer

1. How long have you been teaching LSP?

2. How many students are there in your largest class?

3. How many students are there in your smallest class?

4. What teaching methods do you use in a small class?

5. What teaching methods do you use in a large class?

6. Do you change the type of assessment according to the size of your class? _____
If yes, what do you change?

7. Do you think that size of the class influences the students' achievement?

8. How many students would be there in your ideal class?

9. Would you change anything in your teaching?

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**МИШЉЕЊЕ СТУДЕНАТА И НАСТАВНИКА О ВЕЛИЧИНИ ГРУПЕ И
ОБЛИЦИМА ОЦЕЊИВАЊА У УЧИОНИЦИ ЈЕЗИКА СТРУКЕ НА
ВИСОКОШКОЛСКОЈ УСТАНОВИ: ПИЛОТ-СТУДИЈА**

Сажетак

Велике групе студената у високом образовању реалност су присутна у већини земаља и представљају озбиљан проблем наставницима. Теоретски, велика група се дефинише као свака група студената, код које током рада наставници верују да имају превише ученика да би адекватно напредовали. Изазови у раду са великим групама укључују нелагоду и високе захтеве током наставе, проблеме са дисциплином и индивидуалном пажњом, проблеме у процени успеха ученика и управљање одељењем за постизање одређених циљева учења. С друге стране, настава у великим групама укључује неке предности, као што су: активнији и опуштенији ученици, креативнија и конкурентнија атмосфера, те више идеја које долазе од више ученика. С обзиром на све ове предности и недостатке, рад се фокусира на оцењивање у великим групама, где је неопходно равномерно распоредити оцене током семестра како би се избегло прекомерно преоптерећење оцењивања на крају семестра. Рад ће се бавити темом оцењивања у великим групама кроз посматрање неких познатих метода, као и кроз представљање могућности нових технологија као алата корисних за оцењивање, самооцењивање и учење у групама. Избор адекватне методе оцењивања од суштинског је значаја за испуњавање потреба ученика без угрожавања интегритета целокупног наставног процеса. Из тог разлога, рад ће представити и резултате упитника, који су испитивали мишљење наставника и студената о успешности процеса оцењивања. Истраживање је обухватило 76 ученика, који су похађали часове језика струке у малим групама (5–30 ученика), и 101 ученика, који су похађали часове језика струке у великим групама (50–200 ученика). У студији је учествовало и 15 наставника језика струке, сви са Универзитета у Новом Саду. Истраживање је спроведено како би се утврдило да ли се испитаници слажу са теоријом да су мање групе студената на предавањима повећале постигнућа ученика. Резултати ће понудити неке нове могућности оцењивања који можда могу да надокнаде недостатак адекватне интеракције између студената и наставника, која је присутна у малим, али не нужно и у великим групама.

Кључне речи: оцењивање, велике групе, иновативне технологије, самооцењивање, учење у групама.

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