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## ABSTRACT

A study of large group language instruction in Nigeria draws on experiences of 33 teachers providing remedial English second language instruction in Nigerian universities. The report presents: teacher experiences and perceptions of class size (often over 100); a questionnaire used to investigate practices in and attitudes toward large classes; classroom techniques used; difficulties encountered; and perceptions of outcomes that could be achieved in more reasonably-sized classes. Many teachers felt they were teaching intolerably large classes, but some appeared to have adjusted to large class sizes to the point of considering them ideal. The most common difficulties found were in the areas of relationships with individual students, classroom control, and grading written work. A wide range of affective, interpersonal, and environmental problems was identified. The teachers said they would, in general, not use different methods with smaller classes, but felt they might be able to use them more thoroughly or more effectively. In comparison with large-group teachers studied in other areas, these teachers appeared to be: (1) teaching larger groups; (2) more tolerant of large class size; (3) more concerned with individual learner needs; and (4) less concerned about classroom control. Summaries of questionnaire responses are appended. (MSE)

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**LANCASTER - LEEDS**  
**LANGUAGE LEARNING IN LARGE CLASSES**  
**RESEARCH PROJECT**

**LARGE CLASSES IN NIGERIA**

**HYWEL COLEMAN**

**PROJECT REPORT NO. 6**

Hywel Coleman  
*Large Classes in Nigeria*

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## 1 Background

This discussion of large classes in Nigeria is based on data collected during a visit to Kano, Northern Nigeria, in 1987. From 23rd August to 5th September 1987, with John Morris, I co-directed a workshop at Bayero University in Kano. This was at the joint invitation of the University and of the British Council. There were thirty participants in the workshop, all but two of whom were teaching in tertiary level institutions (universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, etc) in different parts of Northern Nigeria. For the majority of the participants, their principal professional duty was to provide 'remedial English' courses. In the Nigerian context, 'remedial English' is the term used to refer to compulsory pre-sessional or in-sessional instruction for first year undergraduates, with a heavy emphasis on grammatical review and on discipline-specific content.

The participants' experiences and perceptions of class size are discussed in Section 2 of this Report. Section 3 introduces a questionnaire used to investigate respondents' practice in and attitudes towards large classes. In Section 4, the techniques employed by the lecturers in their large classes are discussed. Next, in Section 5, the difficulties faced when teaching large classes are analysed, and in Section 6 the respondents' perceptions of the outcomes which could be achieved if they had

classes of reasonable size are considered. The Report ends in Section 7 with a summary and a comparison with findings from groups of teachers of English in large classes in other parts of the world.

## 2 Actual And Perceived Class Size

The workshop participants were asked to complete a questionnaire, designed by the Lancaster-Leeds Language Learning in Large Classes Research Project, which investigates actual and perceived class size. The questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix 1.<sup>(1)</sup> Responses were received from 27 of the 30 participants. One of the respondents was a secondary school inspector; the remaining 26 worked in universities or polytechnics. Among the respondents 6 (22.2%) claimed that large classes constituted their major problem, 14 (51.8%) said that large classes were one of the major problems which they faced, and 7 (25.1%) saw large classes as a problem, but not a major one. None of the respondents believed that large classes were a very minor problem.

Problems of incomplete or apparently inconsistent responses to the questionnaire were experienced.<sup>(2)</sup> After the inconsistencies had been weeded out, 20 valid responses, all from among the tertiary level participants, were left. These responses are presented in detail in Appendix 2.

**Table 1**                      *Class sizes experienced by respondents*  
(Valid responses only; N = 20)

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Range</u>
largest	109.0	40 - 200
usual	53.8	30 - 150
smallest	22.0	5 - 55

The numbers of students taught by the respondents are summarised in Table 1. It appears that they were working with classes which ranged in size from 5 to 200. The average size of the *largest* class which they normally taught was 109.0, although the largest classes ranged from 40 to 200. Three people reported that the largest classes which they normally taught each had as many as 200 students, another person reported 196 students in a class, and two respondents reported 150 in a class. Altogether eight people were regularly teaching classes larger than 100.

The average size of the *usual* class was 53.8 (ranging from 30 to 150), and the average size of the *smallest* class was 22.0 (ranging from 5 to 55). Curiously, therefore, the smallest class which some of these respondents experienced (55) was larger than the largest which was experienced by other respondents (40).

Table 2 summarises the *perceptions* of the same teachers regarding class size, in contrast with their actual experience. For these lecturers, the ideal class had from 20 to 60 students (average 30.0). When numbers reached 52.0, problems began

because the class was beginning to get too large, and when they reached 95.6 the class was considered to be intolerably large. For some teachers, however, the situation became intolerable only when the class had 200 students in it.

Table 2                      *Respondents' perceptions of class size*  
(Valid responses only; N = 20)

	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Range</u>
intolerably large	95.6	40 - 200
problems begin because large	52.0	30 - 90
ideal	30.0	20 - 60
problems begin because small	6.3	0 - 15
intolerably small	2.5	0 - 10

The respondents also believed that a class might be too small. Problems began when the numbers dropped to 6.3, and the class was intolerably small when there were only 2.5 students.

If we now amalgamate Tables 1 and 2, as in Table 3, we can compare the perceptions and the experience of this group of respondents. The average largest class which these teachers were teaching (109.0) was considerably larger than the point at which teaching became intolerable (95.6). Even the usual size classes which the respondents faced (53.8) were somewhat larger than the point at which problems began because classes were too large (52.0). Only the smallest classes (22.0) fell within the range



which the respondents considered to be tolerable (6.3 - 52.0). We can conclude, therefore, that this group of tertiary level English teachers in Nigeria experienced problems because of class size even in ordinary situations, and that they were working in a situation which, by their own definition, was difficult and frequently intolerable.

Table 3                      *Experience and perception compared*  
(Valid responses only; N = 20)

<u>Experience</u>		<u>Perception</u>
largest	109.0	
	95.6	intolerably large
usual	53.8	
	52.0	problems begin because large
	30.0	ideal
smallest	22.0	
	6.3	problems begin because small
	2.5	intolerably small

It is also significant that the actual and perceived class sizes reported by this group are very much larger than those so far reported by other groups of teachers. For example, the largest class sizes identified elsewhere (by the Lancaster-Leeds Language Learning in Large Classes Research Project) are 116 in a university class in Japan (Project Report No. 4, p 42), and 140 in a university in Indonesia (Project Report No. 4, p 12),

compared to 200 in Nigeria.<sup>(3)</sup> In other words, the twenty Nigerian lecturers whose responses have been analysed appear to have been teaching classes which are both extremely large in absolute terms and also very much larger than almost anything which has been reported by anybody else associated with the Large Classes Research Project.

Clearly, the most striking fact to emerge from these responses is that the Nigerian lecturers were working with extremely large classes. However, the *relationships* between the respondents' experienced class size and their perceptions of class size are also of interest (see Figure 1). The mean 'largest class size' which the Nigerians experienced was rather larger than the mean point where classes became 'intolerably large'. Furthermore, the mean 'usual class size' did not differ greatly from the point at which problems began. Similar patterns have been identified among responses from other groups of respondents (e.g. Project Report No. 4, pp 18-20).

These results so far tend to support our previous findings, i.e. that the larger a teacher's largest class is, the more tolerant of large classes that teacher is likely to be. However, it is surprising to find that the relationship between the average 'smallest class size' and the average 'ideal class size' which pertains for the Nigerian data is rather different from that which has emerged in analyses of data from other sources. Eighty per cent of the Nigerian lecturers believed that their

**EXPERIENCE**  
Mean class size

Percentage of respondents making responses about experience  
which are larger than/equal to or smaller than/equal to  
responses about perception

**PERCEPTION**  
Mean class size

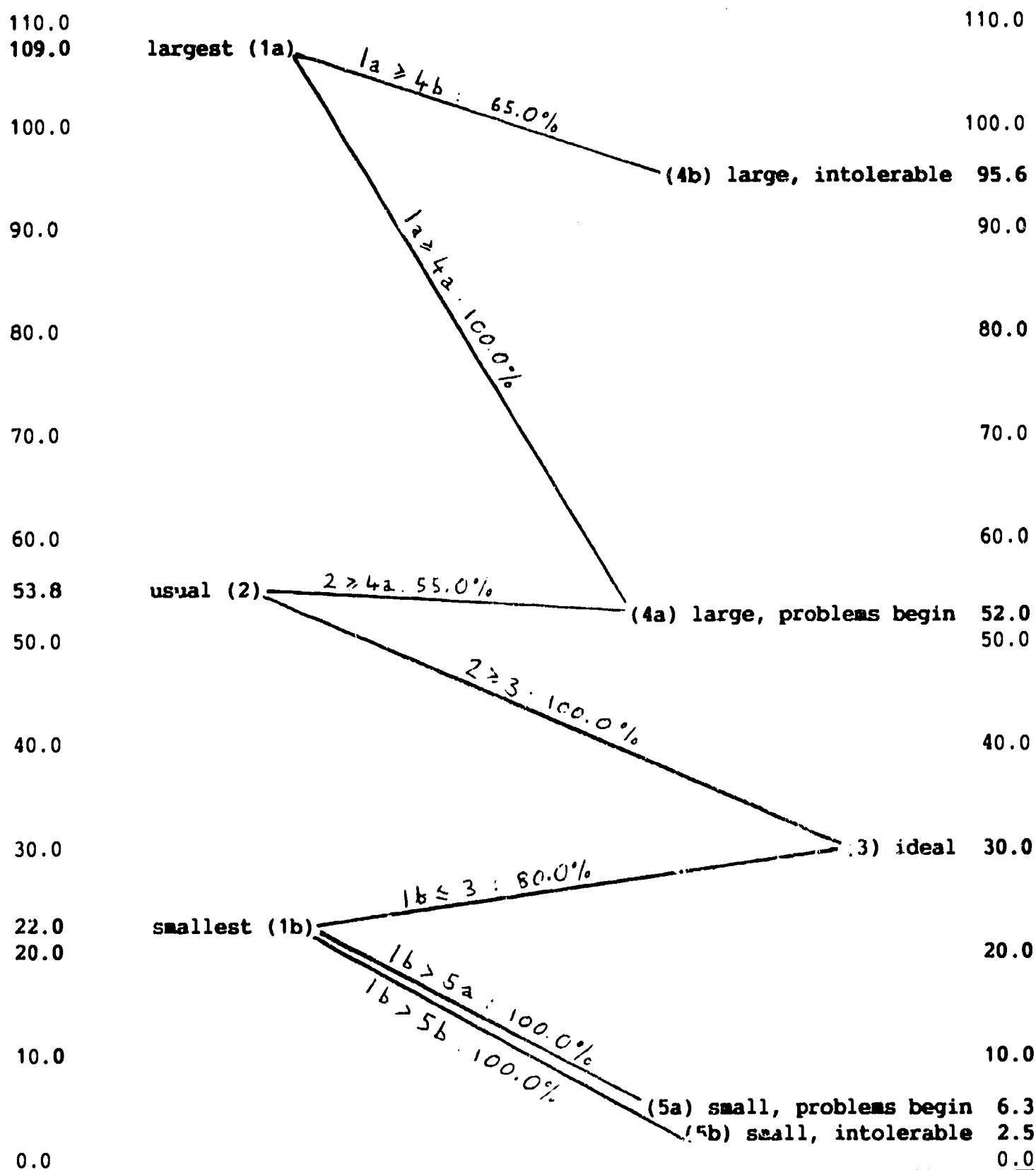


Figure 1. Relationships between experienced and perceived class size

smallest classes were actually smaller than or equal in size to the ideal. Compare this with Coleman's earlier finding (Project Report No. 4, 1989, pp 19 and 45) that 62.5% of a group of 149 teachers from several different parts of the world claimed that their smallest classes were still larger than or equal to the ideal. One possible way of interpreting this is to argue that the Nigerian respondents were *so* tolerant (because their classes were *so* large) that their ideal class size was itself relatively large, and consequently the smallest classes which they experienced were found to be relatively comfortable.

It is possible that one aspect of the relationships between actual and perceived class size which we ought to be looking at is the relationship between the *experienced range* (from smallest to largest class size actually experienced), on the one hand, and the *toleration range* (from the point where classes are perceived as being too small to the point where they are perceived as being too large), on the other hand. Further work is required to investigate this possibility.

### 3 The Experience Of Large Classes

Two days after administering the first ('Numbers') questionnaire, the course participants were asked to complete a new questionnaire. This was the 'Difficulties' questionnaire, reproduced in Appendix 3. Its purpose is to uncover those

aspects of large classes which teachers see as making teaching in such circumstances difficult, what they think they would be able to do if they had ideal size classes, and what strategies they currently employ when working with large classes. This research tool had already been extensively discussed and trialled by the Lancaster-Leeds Research Group and had reached its fifth version by the time it was used in Nigeria, but in fact this was its first full-scale administration. (4)

Thirty-three responses were received from the Nigerian participants. Details are given in Table 4.

Table 4                      Respondents to second ('Difficulties')  
questionnaire

Course participants who also completed first ('numbers') questionnaire	27
Course participants who did not complete first questionnaire	3
Local tutors (who did not complete first questionnaire)	3
Total	33

The 'Difficulties' questionnaire is an extremely simple research tool, consisting of four basic questions and two background questions (see Appendix 3). The four basic questions are open-ended and respondents are encouraged to provide extensive replies in the form of lists of points. The first question requires respondents to complete the statement, "Large classes make it difficult for me to do what I would like to do

because ...". Responses to this question are presented in full in Appendices 6 and 7 and are discussed in Section 5. The second question requires the following statement to be completed : "With an ideal number of students in my class, I could ...". Appendices 8 and 9 present responses to this question in full, and Section 6 discusses them. Question 3 asks for this statement to be completed : "When I am teaching a large class, I help my students to learn English by ...". The responses to this question are presented in Appendices 4 and 5 and are discussed in Section 4. The last of the four basic questions asks, "Do you have any other comments or questions about teaching and learning in large classes?" The responses to this question are presented in full in Appendices 10 and 11. However, as these comments covered a wide range of topics they are not discussed separately here but, rather, at appropriate points in Sections 4 and 5 below.

## 4 Practice In Large Classes

### 4.1 Introduction

We will begin by looking at the respondents' accounts of their current practice when teaching large classes. All responses to the question "When I am teaching a large class, I help my students to learn English by ..." are transcribed in Appendix 4. All 33 respondents answered the question and provided a total of 91 techniques (2.8 techniques per respondent). These 91

responses are then classified into twelve categories in Appendix 5; the categories are summarised in Table 5.

**Table 5**                      *Techniques currently used by teachers in large classes*

<u>Categories of technique</u>		<u>Respondents (N = 33)</u>	<u>Number of techniques reported</u>
1	Giving written assignments	17	20
2	Using groups	13	17
3	Lecturing	11	13
4	Other plenary techniques	6	7
5	Picking on individuals	5	6
6	Giving homework	4	4
7	Organising discussions in class	4	4
8	Helping individuals outside class	4	4
9	Preparing handouts and other materials	4	4
10	Marking and evaluating	4	4
11	Using audio-visual aids	2	2
12	Miscellaneous	5	6
Total		33	91

The lecturers who made up this group of respondents claimed that they made use of three major techniques when facing large classes - giving written assignments, using groups, and lecturing - and several less common procedures such as picking on individual students, and organising classroom discussions. These

categories are illustrated with extracts from the respondents' questionnaires. (5)

#### 4.2 Giving written assignments

Seventeen lecturers mentioned 20 procedures associated with the giving of written assignments as examples of their current practice when dealing with large classes. Some of these assignments were to be performed in the classroom, and some at home. In other cases, it is not clear where the assignment was actually performed :

I help them by giving them assignments to do either in the class-room or at home.

*Respondent 15, Comment 1*

giving them take home assignments.

*Respondent 33, Comment 3*

Given them written assignments.

*Respondent 19, Comment 2*

The nature of the assignments was not always specified, but they included essay writing, grammar practice, vocabulary and dictation :

Giving short - sometimes - one paragraph essays.

*Respondent 8, Comment 2*

by giving them graded exercises on different aspects of the language - though that largely depends on what particular aspects of the language I am handling : grammar, vocabulary, essay-writing, etc.

*Respondent 14, Comment 1*



Inextricably bound up with the setting of written assignments is the question of evaluation. This figures as the third most significant difficulty facing these respondents (see Section 5.4 below and Appendix 7), but some hints of the nature of the problem also appear here :

Giving assignments which could not be marked fast enough.

*Respondent 18, Comment 2*

One respondent overcame the problem by getting the students to mark their own work :

Giving them exercises they mark themselves.

*Respondent 7, Comment 1*

#### 4.3 Using groups

Thirteen respondents made 17 references to the use of groups in their current management of large classes :

making them work in groups

*Respondent 6, Comment 1*

Grouping them and giving them tasks that will require them to talk - I make the groups compete.

*Respondent 9, Comment 1*

One lecturer said that the use of groups made it possible to adapt the level of work to the ability level of the learners :

by making as many as groups possible according to their level of ability, and try to raise or lower the level of work for each group for their benefit.

*Respondent 12, Comments 1 & 2*

This same respondent, elsewhere in the questionnaire, returned to the question of group work, and made the following observation :

It is very good to divide the classes into groups and teach.  
This is the only alternative.

*Respondent 12, Appendices 10 & 11, Comment 2*

#### 4.4 Lecturing

The third major technique employed in dealing with large classes is simply lecturing. Eleven respondents made 13 references to this procedure :

Lecture approach

*Respondent 5, Comment 1*

The lecturing method of approach

*Respondent 21, Comment 1*

Several respondents appeared to be embarrassed that this was their principal technique and made self-critical comments on this characteristic of their teaching :

teaching, with me doing all the talking

*Respondent 23, Comment 2*

doing more of teacher talk than planning challenging activities of the "fun risking" type that could lead to cognitive thinking and problem solving on the part of the students. I do most of the talking and the students do most of the "listening".

*Respondent 30, Comment 1*

#### 4.5 Other procedures

The respondents mentioned a variety of other techniques which they employed in their large classes. These included oral

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*Respondent 30, Comment 1*

#### 4.5 Other procedures

The respondents mentioned a variety of other techniques which they employed in their large classes. These included oral

drilling in class, identifying individuals and asking them to perform a small task, homework, classroom discussions, providing assistance for individuals outside class, using handouts, and evaluating performance in the class. Each of these procedures is illustrated with one extract from the lecturers' questionnaire responses. Further details can be found in Appendix 5.

giving them the right pronunciation of knew words and asking them to repeat it after me

*Respondent 31, Comment 1*

by picking a name at random from the register and ask the students to answer a question

*Respondent 10, Comment 1*

encouraging them to read educative novels at home

*Respondent 26, Comment 1*

Discussing common problems in class orally

*Respondent 7, Comment 3*

Asking those who might not have grasped all that was said in the class to see me in my office for discussions.

*Respondent 16, Comment 2*

giving handouts in cases where the textbooks are hard to come by.

*Respondent 1, Comment 3*

allowing them to correct each others works before I have a final correction on the board

*Respondent 26, Comment 2*

Some of the most interesting suggestions for dealing with large classes were put forward by one respondent not in his answers to this question, but later in the questionnaire when responding to the question "Do you have any other comments or questions about teaching and learning in large classes?" :

It is important to get the students interested as fast as possible.

Motivation helps. So create it if it is not already built into the situation.

Ask students for their suggestions.

*Respondent 33, Appendices 10 & 11, Comments 1, 2 & 3*

#### 4.6 Summary of practice in large classes

We have seen that these lecturers in Nigerian institutions of higher education claimed to make use of a variety of procedures when teaching English in large classes. The most frequently employed measures were writing tasks to be carried out at home or in the classroom, lecturing, and group work (each used by a third or more of all respondents). The other techniques mentioned by the respondents have been classified into eight categories, but the majority of these appear to involve teacher-centred classroom management. An element of guilt at making use of a heavily teacher-dominated practice - lecturing - has been identified.

It should of course be noted that the classification of procedures employed in Appendix 5 and summarised in Table 5 above cannot claim to be a waterproof categorisation. Several of the procedures which respondents reported could probably be classified in alternative ways to those proposed here. We will encounter similar problems in our discussions both of the difficulties which the lecturers reported in their large classes (Section 5 below) and of the outcomes which they believed would

occur if they were able to teach classes with an ideal number of students (Section 6 below).

## **5 What Makes Large Classes Difficult?**

### **5.1 Introduction**

We have looked at the ways in which the members of this group of teachers described their methods of teaching large classes. Now we can move on to examine the difficulties which the same people faced. All thirty-three respondents provided responses, consisting of completions of the sentence "Large classes make it difficult for me to do what I would like to do because ..." and 143 separate difficulties were listed (4.3 difficulties per respondent). These difficulties are transcribed in Appendix 6. They are then grouped in eight categories in Appendix 7 and summarised in Table 6.

The classification system employed here is an ad hoc one which emerges from the data. It has nine categories : paying attention to individuals, control, evaluation, teacher discomfort, provision of materials, physical constraints, effectiveness of learning and teaching, interaction, and miscellaneous. Other analysts who have used the same questionnaire with different populations have found themselves

obliged to employ a similar ad hoc strategy in order to make sense of responses to this question. (6)

Of the nine categories of difficulty identified, three (paying attention to individuals, control, and evaluation) are of overwhelming importance, accounting for 56.3% of the total number of difficulties reported.

**Table 6**                      *Difficulties faced by teachers in large classes*

<u>Categories of difficulty</u>		<u>Respondents (N = 33)</u>	<u>Number of difficulties reported</u>
1	Paying attention to individuals	23	31
2	Control	22	26
3	Evaluation	22	23
4	Teacher discomfort	10	11
5	Provision of materials	10	11
6	Physical constraints	7	10
7	Effectiveness of learning and teaching	8	8
8	Interaction	7	8
9	Miscellaneous	12	15
Total		33	143



## 5.2 Paying attention to individuals

Just over two-thirds of all respondents (23 of 33) made some reference to the difficulty of paying attention to individuals in the large class. Some of these complaints were of a very general nature :

It's so difficult to speak and listen to individual students all the time within the period of an hours lesson.

*Respondent 3, Comment 1*

no opportunities for getting to know students individually (except for the few brave enough to ask questions).

*Respondent 32, Comment 5*

Some of the respondents were concerned about the difficulty of identifying the specific needs of individual learners in a large class :

I cannot know the immediate needs of individual students

*Respondent 5, Comment 1*

The understanding of individual students problems would be difficult.

*Respondent 27, Comment 3*

A considerable number of these teachers were especially worried about their weaker students :

Their number makes me unable to know the weak and or quiet students in the class as a result the inadequacies of such students can never be known to me.

*Respondent 10, Comment 4*

Weak students are difficult to locate and they may not be assisted.

*Respondent 13, Comment 6*

Weak students find a haven for their passive response to the use of English.

*Respondent 28, Comment 6*

As we shall see in Section 7 below, the Nigerians are not alone in ranking the problem of paying attention to individual learners as one of their major difficulties. Yet it is always rather surprising - and moving - to discover that teachers who are working with enormous classes, in situations which, by their own definition, are intolerable, nevertheless rate the needs of their individual learners as being of primary importance rather than - say - their own discomfort.

### 5.3 Control

Exactly two-thirds of all respondents complained that 'control' was a problem which they experienced in their large classes; a total of 26 such difficulties were reported. For some of the lecturers, the precise nature of the problem was not specified :

Difficult to manage and control.

*Respondent 9, Comment 2*

Class control is difficult.

*Respondent 25, Comment 1*

For other respondents, the problem of control was manifested in terms of the difficulty of ensuring full and prompt attendance :

Unless what one is teaching is really interesting one will continue to face problems of absconding among students and this frustrates me.

*Respondent 11, Comment 5*

It encourages truancy among junior school children.

*Respondent 13, Comment 5*

latecomers/early-goers may also be a problem  
*Respondent 32, Comment 10*

However, the problem of control was identified as being predominantly one of uncontrolled or unsolicited noise :

The class is too difficult to control as some will be talking when the lecture is going on.

*Respondent 1, Comment 1*

Sometimes the classes becomes uncontrollable especially when the students begin to make noise.

*Respondent 10, Comment 1*

They tend to be noisy and difficult to control even if the activity is useful.

*Respondent 22, Comment 2*

#### 5.4 Evaluation

The third major category of difficulty identified by respondents was that of evaluation. Again, exactly two-thirds of the workshop participants commented on the problem, with a total of 23 difficulties recorded.

For a couple of respondents, the problem of evaluating students' work during lessons was most severe :

I find it difficult supervising and having a look at the exercise of each student in the classroom, thereby correcting the mistakes.

*Respondent 2, Comment 1*

Difficulty in checking on each group during group activity (space).

*Respondent 22, Comment 1*

But, for the majority of respondents, it was the task of marking huge numbers of class and homework assignments which they identified as the difficulty :

It creates a great burden for the teacher to mark too many scripts of afterclass assignments - thereby making the teacher give less written assignments.

*Respondent 2, Comment 2*

Marking also is dreadful, so it limits the number of essay work I give, as I resort mainly to objective questions.

*Respondent 24, Comment 2*

I find it difficult to correct students essays and assignments.

*Respondent 29, Comment 2*

More time is spent on thinking about marking the assignment and less time is spent on planning and varying the activities.

*Respondent 30, Comment 1*

### 5.5 Other difficulties

In addition to the three problems of major importance which we have already considered - individual attention, control, and evaluation - the respondents reported experiencing difficulty in several other areas. These were 1) discomfort for the teacher in the classroom; 2) the problem of providing sufficient materials for learners; 3) a range of physical constraints (visibility, audibility, space); 4) doubts about the effectiveness of their teaching in such circumstances; and 5) the difficulty of interacting satisfactorily with the learners. (There is clearly some overlap between the first and the third of these categories. The essential difference is that one emphasises the physical

discomfort experienced by the teacher, whilst the other highlights the physical constraints as they affect the learners.)

Each of these five problems is illustrated with two extracts from the questionnaires :

#### Teacher discomfort

the size of the class alone is enough to weaken the strength and zeal which I earlier had for my teaching assignment

*Respondent 3, Comment 3*

Furthermore, sometimes I become nervous to face about a hundred students in a class situation.

*Respondent 20, Comment 3*

#### Provision of materials

I cannot have sufficient material to distribute.

*Respondent 5, Comment 3*

Of the difficulty of using scanty materials.

*Respondent 15, Comment 2*

#### Physical constraints

There may be no large classrooms to accommodate all as such they'll have no seats and I cannot go round to guide them.

*Respondent 5, Comment 4*

Some students cannot even see the b/board.

*Respondent 13, Comment 3*

#### Effectiveness of learning and teaching

Learning does not take place in large classes.

*Respondent 12, Comment 4*

There will be no productive results in the students as in most cases they will only be reproducers.

*Respondent 21, Comment 5*

#### Interaction

I would not be able to interact with them.

*Respondent 18, Comment 4*

Interactions (between teacher/learners, and among learners) are restricted.

*Respondent 28, Comment 2*

## 5.6 Summary of difficulties in large classes

We have seen that this group of English teachers in Nigeria reported a wide range of difficulties in the large classes which they were teaching at the time of this survey. The three major problems, shared by at least two-thirds of the respondents, were the difficulty of paying attention to individual learners in large classes, the difficulty of controlling large classes, and the difficulty of evaluating students' work (particularly written work). Five more difficulties of some significance have also been identified, but each of these was reported by fewer than one-third of the respondents.

Several members of this group returned to the difficulties which they faced in their classes when they answered a later question, "Do you have any other comments or questions about teaching and learning in large classes?" (see Appendices 10 and 11). The difficulty of helping individual learners with their unique problems, and the physical constraints of the classroom, for example, were re-emphasised :

... if a teacher finds it difficult to understand individual students problem, as is possible in a large class, that teacher can't help the student solve his/her problem.

*Respondent 27, Appendices 10 & 11, Comment 2*

The question in my institution in dealing with large classes is that of enough space (classroom) - Teachers are always on the move to find bigger classrooms to accommodate the number.

*Respondent 15, Appendices 10 & 11, Comment 1*

The ad hoc nature of the category systems used here and in Sections 4 and 6 has already been pointed out. Nevertheless, these systems enable us to identify broad patterns in the attitudes of this group of teachers towards their large classes. It would appear, for instance, that some of the difficulties which the teachers reported were directly related to the teaching procedures which they employed. This is particularly clear with regard to the giving of written assignments (undoubtedly the most popular teaching technique used, as observed in Section 4), for this gave rise directly to the problem of evaluating written assignments (identified as the third most burdensome difficulty). In other words, in at least one case the teachers adopted a teaching method for their large classes which appears not to be practicable for large classes. One respondent noticed this paradox :

I will really appreciate method(s) that will assist me in getting all I want done with my classes especially as regards essay writing and evaluation. I believe the essay is one singular unit that takes care of most of my students' problems and if I can deal with it as I would wish to (which is difficult for me in a large-class situation) my problem will be nearly solved.

*Respondent 4, Appendices 10 & 11, Comment 1*

Apart from the problems created by the adoption of a particular teaching procedure, it is possible to group many of

the respondents' other difficulties under a broad affective/interpersonal/environmental umbrella in which purely pedagogical issues play only an indirect role. Not being able to pay attention to individuals, having only uncertain control over the classroom situation, feeling uncomfortable in the classroom, worrying about the physical constraints imposed by the situation, and being concerned about poor interaction with learners are all aspects of a general dissatisfaction.

Underlying many of these negative perceptions is a nagging doubt about the value of what the teachers were doing in the classroom. In their general comments at the end of the questionnaire several respondents expressed these doubts more openly :

students might at the end of the day leave the class unsatisfied and the teacher might not feel pleased with himself/herself as well, because no matter how hard the tchr. might work, the result might not be all that rosy.

*Respondent 3, Appendices 10 & 11, Comments 3 & 4*

I don't like to teach in large classes because Good teaching and learning do not take place in L2 situations when large

*Respondent 12, Appendices 10 & 11, Comment 1*

It is not an ideal situation for learning/teaching. Not many students gain English language expression at the end of an academic session.

*Respondent 17, Appendices 10 & 11, Comments 1 & 2*

If a teacher has a large class and he/she does as I always do, the students would end up learning little.

*Respondent 27, Appendices 10 & 11, Comment 1*

Earlier in this discussion we noted that 65.0% of the respondents felt that they were teaching some classes which were



larger than the point at which things became intolerable (Section 2 above, and in particular Figure 1). It has now become clear exactly what it was about their teaching situations which made professional life so intolerable for these teachers.

## 6 Practice In An Ideal Class

### 6.1 Introduction

The second question in the questionnaire asked respondents to complete this statement : "With an ideal number of students in my class, I could ..." Again, all 33 respondents provided responses and a total of 131 comments were made (4.0 per respondent). The outcomes which respondents would expect from an ideal sized class are transcribed in Appendix 8, grouped into eleven categories in Appendix 9, and summarised in Table 7.

It will be observed that the categories of predicted outcome in Table 7 are very similar to the categories of experienced difficulty in Table 6. The most frequently predicted outcome from a class of ideal size, for example, was the ability to identify and respond to individual needs, whereas the most frequently experienced difficulty was that of paying attention to the requirements and problems of individual learners. Not surprisingly, therefore, the respondents felt that the advantages of a reasonably sized class would be more or less the mirror

images of the disadvantages of a large class. Similar observations have been made by Coleman (forthcoming), by Peachey (Project Report No. 8), and by Sarangi (Project Report No. 10).

Table 7                      *Outcomes expected by teachers in ideal size classes*

<u>Categories of outcome</u>		<u>Respondents (N = 33)</u>	<u>Number of outcomes expected</u>
1	Identify/respond to individual needs	21	28
2	More work/ more evaluation	21	27
3	Use groups/interaction more easily	10	11
4	Better relationships	9	11
5	Provide materials more easily	9	11
6	Teach more comfortably	10	10
7	Teach more effectively	9	10
8	Better control	9	9
9	Hold learners' attention	3	4
10	Teach oral skills	3	3
11	Miscellaneous	4	7
Total		33	131

Two expected outcomes are of major importance, as Table 7 shows. These are 1) the ability to identify and respond to individual needs, and 2) the ability to give the students more work to do and, at the same time, to evaluate the products of

that work. Almost two-thirds of the respondents made comments which fall into the first of these categories, and a similar proportion made remarks in the second category. The number of outcomes in these two categories (55) constitutes 42% of the total number of responses given to this question (131). Examples are given in Sections 6.2 and 6.3 below.

A series of six expected outcomes follows the two major groups, but each of these minor categories was each mentioned by fewer than a third of the respondents. Since there is clear evidence of parallelism between the teachers' opinions regarding the difficulties which they experienced and their perceptions of the advantages which would accrue were class size to be reduced, it is not necessary to explore each of these categories in detail.

## 6.2 Identify/respond to individual needs

The teachers made 28 comments predicting the benefits arising from a reduction in class size which fit into the category of improvements in the identification of and ability to respond to individual learners' needs. Two examples illustrate this widespread prediction.

An ideal number of students will allow me to know, when there is a problem of communication and that will be solved immediately.

*Respondent 3, Comment 4*

Sort out students needs and prepare my work to meet the need e.g. Some students may not have had proper training in how the grammar of English works, others may have the problem of organising ideas etc.

*Respondent 8, Comment 2*

It is significant that what the respondents believed they would find attractive about an ideal class was not simply the possibility that they could get to know their learners as individuals, and not simply that they would be able to diagnose learners' problems more effectively, but that they would be able to *respond appropriately* to these specific problems.

### 6.3 More work/more evaluation

The workshop participants predicted 27 outcomes from an ideal class which can be classified under this heading. Examples follow :

I would in addition be encouraged to give more written exercises since I could mark them easily.

*Respondent 2, Comment 4*

Give many essay questions, and mark them as thoroughly as possible.

*Respondent 24, Comment 2*

Comments such as these remind us both of the claim that giving written assignments was the most frequently employed teaching technique (Section 4.2 above), and of the complaint that evaluation (particularly the marking of written work) constituted one of the three most burdensome features of working in a large class (Section 5.4 above). Smaller classes would have allowed

the respondents to use this teaching procedure even more frequently than they were already doing, *and* to have evaluated all the students' written work with the care and detail which the respondents believed it was their responsibility to apply.

#### 6.4 Other outcomes

The following comments illustrate some of the other benefits which the respondents expected would arise if class size was at an ideal level :

##### Use groups/interaction more easily

be more innovative in the preparation of lessons like using group discussions and making students more involved by actively participating in learning.

*Respondent 8, Comment 3*

##### Better relationships

Interact with my students freely.

*Respondent 18, Comment 2*

##### Provide materials more easily

Use my own resources (money) to buy materials.

*Respondent 5, Comment 3*

##### Teach more comfortably

Ideal numbers are so interesting to work with, I am always more composed with them.

*Respondent 3, Comment 5*

I will not be nervous; I will be comfortable.

*Respondent 20, Comment 3*

Turn out the eighth wonder on earth - provided that other diversions are lifted off my shoulders.

*Respondent 25, Comment 1*

Teach more effectively

do my teaching in an effective way.

*Respondent 12, Comment 1*

Better control

Comfortably control them. This is to say that I could easily know every student by his name, thus enabling me to discipline any student who becomes a nuisance to my teaching.

*Respondent 20, Comment 1*

## 7 Conclusions

This group of 33 English teachers, working primarily at the tertiary level in various parts of Northern Nigeria, reported that they were working with very large classes. Eight members of the group regularly taught classes of over 100 students, and three of these people were teaching classes of 200. Many members of the group felt that they were teaching classes which, by their own standards, were intolerably large. At the same time, some of the respondents felt that their smallest classes were actually ideal in size or even smaller than ideal. It has been hypothesised that the teachers were working with such large classes that they had learnt to tolerate rather smaller classes, to such an extent that on occasions they apparently considered themselves to be working in ideal circumstances.

When given the opportunity to describe those classes which they themselves defined as large, however, the respondents had no

trouble listing the difficulties which they encountered. These were primarily associated with relationships with individual students, control of the class, and marking students' written work, but several other categories of difficulty were also identified. Some at least of these difficulties appear to be self-imposed, stemming as they do from the teachers' use of written assignments and the diligent marking of these assignments as their principal technique for dealing with large classes. On the other hand, the respondents also reported a range of difficulties which fall into a wide category of affective, interpersonal and environmental problems.

With smaller classes, the teachers would not employ any different methods. For the most part, they would continue to employ the same teaching methods, but they predicted that in such a hypothetical situation they would be able to apply these methods more thoroughly and more effectively than they could at the time of the survey.

The overall picture which one gains is of a group of professionals who were struggling valiantly to implement teaching procedures which are of questionable practicality for such difficult circumstances. Not surprisingly, the battle to reconcile a powerful sense of responsibility (to know every individual's problems in detail, and to mark every error on every piece of written work, for example) with the constraints of the

situation led to the growth of an undercurrent of frustration and self-doubt.

How does this group of large class teachers compare with others?

- 1 Firstly, this group was teaching classes which, in absolute terms, were much larger than any others identified with the same research tools. Previous research (Coleman, Project Report No. 4) indicates that large class teachers tolerate increasing numbers the larger their classes become. There are some indications that this population of Nigerian teachers was *even more* tolerant than the average large class teacher.
- 2 Compared to groups of teachers elsewhere, the Nigerian teachers appear to be at least as or even more concerned with the difficulty of paying attention to individual learners, their needs and their problems. For a group of primary teachers in East Malaysia, for example, paying attention was the second most urgent problem, coming some way behind that of control of the classroom (Coleman, forthcoming). Peachey's study of primary teachers in South Africa, on the other hand, employs a data presentation format which does not allow direct comparison, but the findings seem to suggest that paying attention to individual



learners was more frequently mentioned than any other difficulty (Project Report No. 8).

- 3 Conversely, the Nigerian teachers appear to be, if anything, slightly less concerned about classroom control than the Malaysian and South African teachers.

Three problems prevent us from making any firmer or more revealing comparisons with the responses of other populations.

The first problem is that, as yet, we simply do not have enough case studies of the attitudes of large class teachers to their predicament.

As a consequence of the first problem, we are not yet in a position to make unambiguous horizontal comparisons between teachers working at the same educational level but in different parts of the world. Similarly, we are not yet able to make vertical comparisons between large class teachers working at different educational levels but in the same country. Clearly, a 'diagonal' comparison - between the attitudes of tertiary level teachers in one country and primary level teachers in another - is of only limited value.

The third problem is one which has already been referred to, and that is that we still lack a framework or category system which is both robust and flexible enough to accommodate open-

ended responses from teachers working in very different situations and who have in common only the fact that they consider their classes to be large.

A lot more work remains to be done, therefore.

## Notes

- 1 This research instrument - known as the 'Numbers questionnaire' - has been widely used elsewhere. See, for example, Coleman's analysis of the responses of 201 teachers from several different parts of the world in Project Report No. 4, 1989; LoCastro's discussion of the responses of 96 Japanese teachers of English in Project Report No. 5, 1989; Peachey's analysis of the perceptions of 15 South African teachers in Project Report No. 8, 1989; and Coleman's study (forthcoming) of the attitudes of 38 primary teachers of English in East Malaysia.
- 2 For a detailed discussion of this characteristic of this questionnaire, see Project Report No. 4, 1979, pp 7-9.
- 3 There are, however, reports from *students* of having studied in classes of 300-309 in language schools in Japan. See Project Report No. 5, p 11.
- 4 The questionnaire has since been used in many other parts of the world, both by the present writer and by other researchers. For examples, see Coleman, forthcoming; LoCastro, Project Report No. 5; McLeod, Project Report No. 7; Peachey, Project Report No. 8; Sabandar, Project Report No. 9; and Sarangi, Project Report No. 10.
- 5 Extracts from questionnaire responses are reproduced precisely as they were written by the workshop participants.
- 6 For example, LoCastro (Project Report No. 5) proposes three categories : pedagogical, management, and affective. McLeod (Project Report No. 7) also suggests three categories : affective factors, effort, and effective factors. In her study of large classes in primary schools in South Africa (Project Report No. 8), Peachey uses a much more elaborate system consisting of seven categories (teaching and learning, evaluation, teaching materials, classroom management, time, affective problems, and educational planning), and some of these categories are themselves subdivided. Sabandar's discussion of large classes in Indonesia (Project Report No. 9) proposes five categories : classroom management, teaching and learning, evaluation of students' progress, time allocation, and teaching aids. An analysis of the responses of primary school teachers in Malaysia (Coleman, forthcoming) uses five categories : classroom management (with five subcategories), paying attention to learners (with four subcategories), preparation of materials, time, providing feedback, and miscellaneous difficulties. The whole question of classification of responses has been dealt with by Coleman (1989) and by Sarangi (Project Report No. 10).

## References

- Coleman, Hywel. 1989. The relationship between large class research and large class teaching. *SPELT (Society of Pakistan English Language Teachers) Newsletter*, 5 (1), 2-10.
- Coleman, Hywel. Forthcoming. What primary ELT teachers in Sabah think of large classes. In Jenny Jarvis and Chris Kennedy (eds), *Ideas and Issues in Primary Level ELT*. London : Edward Arnold.

## Appendix 1 : Numbers Questionnaire

Important : please think only of *English Language* classes.

- 1 How many people are there :
  - a) in the largest class which you regularly teach?
  - b) in the smallest class which you regularly teach?
  
- 2 What is your usual class size?
  
- 3 What is your ideal class size?
  
- 4 What class size do you consider to be uncomfortably large?
  - a) At what number do the problems begin?
  - b) At what number do the problems become intolerable?
  
- 5 What class size do you consider to be uncomfortably small?
  - a) At what number do the problems begin?
  - b) At what number do the problems become intolerable?
  
- 6 Among all your problems, how important is class size? Is dealing with large classes (please ring the appropriate letter) :
 

the major problem	a
one of the major problems	b
a problem, but not a major one	c
a very minor problem	d
no problem at all	e
  
- 7 Is the institution you teach in (please ring the appropriate letter) :
 

primary/elementary?	a
secondary?	b
college/university?	c
other (please specify)?	d

**Appendix 2 : Summary of Responses to 'Numbers' Questionnaire**

**27 responses, 20 valid**

	1a	1b	2	3	4a	4b too large	5a small	5b too small
Total	2179	439	1075	600	1035	1911	126	50
Mean	109.0	22.0	53.8	30.0	52.0	95.6	6.3	2.5
Median	88	19	47	30	49	80	5	2
Range	40-200	5-35	30-150	20-60	30-90	40-200	0-15	0-10

Importance:	all responses :	6a, 14b, 7c
	valid responses only :	5a, 13b, 2c
Institutions	all responses :	1b, 26c
	valid responses only	20c

### Appendix 3 : Difficulties Questionnaire

Many teachers say that teaching English in large classes is a problem for them. But in what way are large classes a problem? How do large classes stop teachers from doing what they would like to do? Your responses to this questionnaire will help us to answer these questions.

Under each of the following, please list as many points as you can.

- 1 Large classes make it difficult for me to do what I would like to do because :
  
- 2 With an ideal number of students in my class, I could :
  
- 3 When I am teaching a large class, I help my students to learn English by :
  
- 4 Do you have any other comments or questions about teaching and learning in large classes?
  
- 5 Is the institution you teach in (please ring the appropriate letter) :
 

primary/elementary?	a
secondary?	b
college/university?	c
other (please specify)?	d
  
- 6 In principle, would you be willing to help us with future research into large classes (perhaps by responding to another questionnaire)? YES/NO

Thank you very much for your help.

**Appendix 4 : Transcribed responses to the question 'When I am teaching a large class, I help my students to learn English by ...'**

N = 33; 91 techniques; 2.8 techniques per respondent. In this Appendix responses are presented respondent by respondent; in Appendix 5 they are presented according to the category of technique concerned. Responses are transcribed precisely according to the original, including the punctuation, except that continuous passages describing several techniques are broken up and the individual techniques are numbered separately.

1.
  - 1 Giving assignments and marking them.
  - 2 Organising them in groups and giving them works to do.
  - 3 giving handouts in cases where the textbooks are hard to come by.
2.
  - 1 delivering traditional frontal lectures in grammar
  - 2 instruction in essay-writing
  - 3 and giving exercises in class and assignments for afterschool in all these aspects.
3.
  - 1 I can only help my students to learn English by reading and speaking most of the time by myself.
  - 2 Some time I use random selection to listen to some few students vocabularies and speech work.
  - 3 Most of the students are asked to read comprehension exercises while answers were given by some.
  - 4 I make use of teaching aids like tape recorders and ask them to tell me what they heard which will be written later etc.
4.
  - 1 Using the lock/step method : I initiate student/s responds/respond I evaluate.
5.
  - 1 Lecture approach.
  - 2 A few assignments
  - 3 and group work.
6.
  - 1 making them work in groups.
  - 2 Do some of the assignments (written/oral) from home.
  - 3 Do some of the markings in groups.
  - 4 Give students time to come to my office to discuss individual problems.
7.
  - 1 Giving them exercises they mark themselves.
  - 2 Drilling them in class.
  - 3 Discussing common problems in class orally.
8.
  - 1 Giving them a variety of short exercises dealing with various aspects of grammar.
  - 2 Giving short - sometimes - one paragraph essays.
  - 3 Giving dictation and thus testing spellings.



9.    1    Grouping them and giving them tasks that will require them to talk -  
I make the groups compete.  
2    Give them a lot of Exercises in Reading and writing.  
3    Oral - that is spoken language is graded and awarded marks and the  
students are aware of this.
10.   1    by picking a name at random from the register and ask the students  
to answer a question.  
2    by giving them essays  
3    and then give them topics on which a student is chosen at random can  
talk about in the class - (the speech is impromptu) to improve on  
their spoken English.
11.   1    Giving them exercises on various grammatical aspects of language to  
do either at home or in class.  
2    If it is at home work, make sure that I mark their work.
12.   1    by making as many as groups possible according to their level of  
ability.  
2    and try to raise or lower the level of work for each group for their  
benefit.
13.   1    Use of tapes or other audio-visual materials.  
2    Group Discussions/work.  
3    Group Exercises - Projects, presenting seminar papers etc.
14.   1    by giving them graded exercises on different aspects of the language  
- though that largely depends on what particular aspect of the  
language I am handling : grammar, vocabulary, essay-writing, etc.  
2    group work and co-ordinating their activities.  
3    providing a pronunciation model in me.  
4    encouraging them to use the language in real-life situations - using  
simulated contexts in the classroom.
15.   1    Doing (participation), writing and giving assignments (few  
assignments). I always try as much as possible to avoid giving them  
much or plenty.
16.   1    giving a general lecture in the class and then give them assignments  
to do at home.  
2    Asking those who might not have grasped all that was said in the  
class to see me in my office for discussions.  
3    Encouraging them to do group studies on their own.  
4    Embarking on group work in the class, so that the students  
communicate among themselves.
17.   1    Oral and written work and this is sometimes done in groups.
18.   1    Mainly lecturing.  
2    Giving assignments which could not be marked fast enough.  
3    Asking them one or two questions in the class.

19.
  - 1 Getting them to respond to questions orally.
  - 2 Given them written assignments.
  - 3 Asking them to find time to see me after class for further discussion.
  - 4 Tutorial groups.
20.
  - 1 Writing wrong sentences on the blackboard and asking them to correct them.
  - 2 I help them by asking them some questions relevant to the topic I am treating, and they answer.
  - 3 I help them by giving them assignments to do either in the classroom or at home.
  - 4 Later, I collect the assignments and mark them. I use a red biro to pinpoint their errors, and I make my comments asking them to take note.
21.
  - 1 The lecturing method of approach.
  - 2 Giving them written work to do
  - 3 followed by a class discussion of the work.
  - 4 Giving personal attention to those who may have questions.
  - 5 Organizing the students in a group discussion.
22.
  - 1 Using lots of handouts.
23.
  - 1 Simply telling them the right thing to do.
  - 2 teaching, with me doing all the talking.
  - 3 explaining with the use of chalk board.
24.
  - 1 Group work, where I get to the different groups, and explain what I am bringing across to them.
25.
 

Use of -

  - 1 lecture method
  - 2 Question and answer method
  - 3 Text
  - 4 Discussion.

It usually is a participatory affair.
26.
  - 1 encouraging them to read educative novels at home.
  - 2 allowing them to correct each others works before I have a final correction on the board.
27.
  - 1 Simply talking to them
  - 2 and giving and marking little exercises.
28.
  - 1 Demonstration.
  - 2 Exchange of views.
29.
  - 1 classroom teaching only without giving them essays and assignments.
30.
  - 1 doing more of teacher talk than planning challenging activities of the "fun risking" type that could lead to cognitive thinking and problem solving on the part of the students. I do most of the talking and the students do most of the "listening".

31. 1 giving them the right pronunciation of new words and asking them to repeat it after me.  
 2 lead them by examples and even demonstration in order for them to discover the meaning of a new word.  
 3 encouraging them to mark their own exercises by exchanging their notebooks. This gives immediate reinforcement.
32. Here I am thinking of EAP for classes of 80+ in a lecturing situation!!!  
 1 trying to make the class fun without losing control.  
 2 trying to introduce material (often adapted from existing material) which is relevant to students local situation (ideologically, ethically etc; in terms of world view & knowledge of the world I think they have).  
 3 by giving interesting & topical assignments.  
 4 getting them to prepare ahead of my teaching. (Mostly they don't & they fail to bring along the handouts causing problems.)
33. 1 Preparing handouts - multipurpose - which contain passages which can be used for problem solving in syntax & for teaching logical connections etc. in paragraph/essay writing.  
 2 giving them reading exercises.  
 3 giving them take home assignments.  
 4 dividing them into tutorial groups.

## Appendix 5 : Classification of techniques

The responses transcribed respondent by respondent in Appendix 4 above are classified here according to the category of technique concerned.

### 1 Giving written assignments

17 respondents, 20 responses

- 1.1 Giving assignments and marking them.
- 2.3 and giving exercises in class and assignments for afterschool in all these aspects.
- 5.2 A few assignments
- 7.1 Giving them exercises they mark themselves.
- 8.1 Giving them a variety of short exercises dealing with various aspects of grammar.
- 8.2 Giving sho. - sometimes - one paragraph essays.
- 8.3 Giving dictation and thus testing spellings.
- 9.2 Give them a lot of Exercises in Reading and writing.
- 10.2 by giving them essays
- 11.1 Giving them exercises on various grammatical aspects of language to do either at home or in class.
- 14.1 by giving them graded exercises on different aspects of the language though that largely depends on what particular aspect of the language I am handling : grammar, vocabulary, essay-writing, etc.
- 15.1 Doing (participation), writing and giving assignments (few assignments). I always to as much as possible to avoid giving them much or plenty.
- 18.2 Giving assignments which could not be marked fast enough.
- 19.2 Given them written assignments.
- 20.3 I help them by giving them assignments to do either in the class-room or at home.
- 21.2 Giving them written work to do
- 27.2 and giving and marking little exercises.
- 32.3 by giving interesting & topical assignments.
- 33.2 giving them reading exercises.
- 33.3 giving them take home assignments.

### 2 Using groups

13 responses, 17 responses

- 1.2 Organising them in groups and giving them works to do.
- 5.3 and group work.
- 6.1 making them work in groups.
- 6.3 Do some of the markings in groups.
- 9.1 Grouping them and giving them tasks that will require them to talk - I make the groups compete.
- 12.1 by making as many as groups possible according to their level of ability.
- 12.2 and try to raise or lower the level of work for each group for their benefit.
- 13.2 Group Discussions/work.
- 13.3 Group Exercises - Projects, presenting seminar papers etc.
- 14.2 group work and co-ordinating their activities.
- 16.3 Encouraging them to do group studies on their own.
- 16.4 Embarking on group work in the class, so that the students communicate

among themselves.

- 17.1 Oral and written work and this is sometimes done in groups.
- 19.4 Tutorial groups.
- 21.5 Organizing the students in a group discussion.
- 24.1 Group work, where I get to the different groups, and explain what I am bringing across to them.
- 33.4 dividing them into tutorial groups.

### 3 Lecturing

11 respondents, 13 responses

- 2.1 delivering traditional frontal lectures in grammar
- 3.1 I can only help my students to learn English by reading and speaking most of the time by myself.
- 5.1 Lecture approach.
- 16.1 giving a general lecture in the class and then give them assignments to do at home.
- 18.1 Mainly lecturing.
- 21.1 The lecturing method of approach.
- 23.1 Simply telling them the right thing to do.
- 23.2 teaching, with me doing all the talking.
- 23.3 explaining with the use of chalk board.
- 25.1 lecture method
- 27.1 Simply talking to them
- 29.1 classroom teaching only without giving them essays and assignments.
- 30.1 doing more of teacher talk than planning challenging activities of the "fun risking" type that could lead to cognitive thinking and problem solving on the part of the students. I do most of the talking and the students do most of the "listening".

### 4 Other plenary techniques

6 respondents, 7 responses

- 4.1 Using the lock/step method : I initiate student/s responds/respond I evaluate.
- 7.2 Drilling them in class.
- 14.3 providing a pronunciation model in me.
- 20.1 Writing wrong sentences on the blackboard and asking them to correct them.
- 28.1 Demonstration.
- 31.1 giving them the right pronunciation of knew words and asking them to repeat it after me.
- 31.2 lead them by examples and even demonstration in order for them to discover the meaning of a new word.

### 5 Picking on individuals

5 respondents, 6 responses

- 3.2 Some time I use random selection to listen to some few students vocabularies and speech work.
- 10.1 by picking a name at random from the register and ask the students to answer a question.
- 10.3 and then give them topics on which a student is chosen at random can talk about in the class - (the speech is impromptu) to improve on their spoken English.

- 18.3 Asking them one or two questions in the class.
- 19.1 Getting them to respond to questions orally.
- 20.2 I help them by asking them some questions relevant to the topic I am treating, and they answer.

## 6 Giving homework

4 respondents, 4 responses

- 6.2 Do some of the assignments (written/oral) from home.
- 11.2 If it is at home work, make sure that I mark their work.
- 26.1 encouraging them to read educative novels at home.
- 32.4 getting them to prepare ahead of my teaching. (Mostly they don't & they fail to bring along the handouts causing problems.)

## 7 Organising discussions in class

4 respondents, 4 responses

- 7.3 Discussing common problems in class orally.
- 21.3 [Giving them written work to do] followed by a class discussion of the work.
- 25.4 Discussion.
- 28.2 Exchange of views.

## 8 Helping individuals outside class

4 respondents, 4 responses

- 6.4 Give students time to come to my office to discuss individual problems.
- 16.2 Asking those who might not have grasped all that was said in the class to see me in my office for discussions.
- 19.3 Asking them to find time to see me after class for further discussion.
- 21.3 Giving personal attention to those who may have questions.

## 9 Preparing handouts and other materials

4 respondents, 4 responses

- 1.3 giving handouts in cases where the textbooks are hard to come by.
- 22.1 Using lots of handouts.
- 32.2 trying to introduce material (often adapted from existing material) which is relevant to students local situation (ideologically, ethically etc; in terms of world view & knowledge of the world I think they have).
- 33.1 Preparing handouts - multipurpose - which contain passages which can be used for problem solving in syntax & for teaching logical connections etc. in paragraph/essay writing.

## 10 Marking and evaluating

4 respondents, 4 responses

- 9.3 Oral - that is spoken language is graded and awarded marks and the students are aware of this.
- 20.4 Later, I collect the assignments and mark them. I use a red biro to pinpoint their errors, and I make my comments asking them to take note.
- 26.2 allowing them to correct each others works before I have a final correction on the board.

- 31.3 encouraging them to mark their own exercises by exchanging their notebooks.  
This gives immediate reinforcement.

## 11 Using audio-visual aids

2 respondents, 2 responses

- 3.4 I make use of teaching aids like tape recorders and ask them to tell me  
what they heard which will be written later etc.  
13.1 Use of tapes or other audio-visual materials.

## 12 Miscellaneous

5 respondents, 6 responses

- 2.2 instruction in essay-writing  
3.3 Most of the students are asked to read comprehension exercises while  
answers were given by some.  
14.4 encouraging them to use the language in real-life situations - using  
simulated contexts in the classroom.  
25.2 Question and answer method  
25.3 Text  
32.1 trying to make the class fun without losing control.

**Appendix 6 : Transcribed responses to the question 'Large classes make it difficult for me to do what I would like to do because ...'**

N = 33; 143 difficulties; 4.3 difficulties per respondent. In this Appendix responses are presented respondent by respondent; in Appendix 7 they are presented according to the category of difficulty concerned. Responses are transcribed precisely according to the original, including the punctuation, except that continuous passages describing several difficulties are broken up and the individual difficulties are numbered separately.

1.    1    The class is too difficult to control as some will be talking when the lecture is going on.
- 2    It is difficult to mark all their scripts within a short period of time.
- 3    It is difficult to know the students' needs and solve them.
- 4    The teacher may not be able to be as effective as he/she wants.
  
2.    1    I find it difficult supervising and having a look at the exercise of each student in the classroom, thereby correcting the mistakes.
- 2    It creates a great burden for the teacher to mark too many scripts of afterclass assignments - thereby making the teacher give less written assignments.
- 3    It makes the teacher unable to have sufficient rapport with every member of his class.
- 4    It could lead to the encouragement of noise-making at certain stages of the teaching activity.
  
3.    1    It's so difficult to speak and listen to individual students all the time within the period of an hours lesson.
- 2    Written work are too difficult to be corrected
- 3    the size of the class alone is enough to weaken the strength and zeal which I earlier had for my teaching assignment.
- 4    With large classes, group work are difficult to be organised because the whole period for the teaching might be over, since most of the time the adult students are rowdy.
  
4.    1    Certain tasks e.g. correcting essays, would take much longer to get through, than with a smaller or average size class.
- 2    Its much easier to attain and maintain discipline in smaller classes and this means much more work getting done.
  
5.    1    I cannot know the immediate needs of individual students.
- 2    I cannot give and mark exercises to students very often.
- 3    I cannot have sufficient material to distribute.
- 4    There may be no large classrooms to accommodate all as such they'll have no seats and I cannot go round to guide them.
- 5    I cannot use aids like radio due to rowdiness.
- 6    I cannot check those that rarely [particate] in class.



6.
  - 1 It becomes difficult to focus attention on all i.e. giving individual attention when needed.
  - 2 Difficult to find out whether all the students are taken along with you, whether every student gains, whether the 'needs' of every student is being satisfied or provided for.
  - 3 Assessment of the effectiveness of lectures becomes more difficult as close marking by teacher becomes tedious, almost impossible.
  - 4 It is difficult to get & produce enough teaching aids.
7.
  - 1 I run out of breath.
  - 2 There is the tendency to repeat what has been said more than once; thereby wasting time.
  - 3 The attention of the students is not always guaranteed.
8.
  - 1 They are cumbersome to organise especially where space is at a premium.
  - 2 I find it difficult to sort out or prepare and organize my teaching material to meet all the needs of all the students as these students come in at various levels of proficiency.
9.
  - 1 It is noisy.
  - 2 Difficult to manage and control.
  - 3 I may not be able to teach effectively compared with a small class.
  - 4 I may not have sufficient material to give to all students.
10.
  - 1 Sometimes the classes becomes uncontrollable especially when the students begin to make noise.
  - 2 Marking is very difficult.
  - 3 It is impossible for me to know each and every students shortcomings.
  - 4 Their number makes me unable to know the weak and or quiet students in the class as a result the inadequacies of such students can never be known to me.
  - 5 I find it difficult to keep track of attendance record, hence some weak students can continue to absent themselves.
11.
  - 1 I find it difficult to control the students - at times I don't finish what I intended to teach them.
  - 2 Marking students' scripts after examination or assignments consumes a lot of my time.
  - 3 I find it difficult to give attention to my weak students.
  - 4 It's hard for me to be able to locate weak students and give them extra help.
  - 5 Unless what one is teaching is really interesting one will continue to face problems of absconding among students and this frustrates me.
12.
  - 1 Noisy classes.
  - 2 Difficult to attend every individual.
  - 3 Difficult to make use of Communicative approach to language teaching.
  - 4 Learning does not take place in large classes.

13.   1   Students can be noisy  
       2   some of them may not be able to hear the teacher when there is no  
       3   public address system.  
       4   Some students cannot even see the b/board.  
       5   Difficult to give exercise and grade them quickly.  
       6   It encourages truancy among junior school children.  
       7   Weak students are difficult to locate and they may not be assisted.  
       8   The movement of the teacher is restricted.
  
14.   1   They are largely unmanageable.  
       2   Inadequate material to go round.  
       3   Varied and often complex linguistic b/grounds, language needs and  
       4   language problems.
  
15.   1   It is difficult to help them individually.  
       2   Of the difficulty of using scanty materials.  
       3   Diverse co-operation.  
       4   It is impossible to handle them as an entity.  
       5   It is impossible to get them into convenient groups for effective  
       6   work.
  
16.   1   The materials may not be sufficient.  
       2   Students are disorderly.  
       3   I may not be able to give the required attention to the backward  
       4   ones.  
       5   The larger the class the more different cultural backgrounds.  
       6   Sometimes the room is not conducive for learning/teaching.
  
17.   1   Much noise.  
       2   Communication is always one sided - from teacher due to insufficient  
       3   time.  
       4   There is no interest in handling it.  
       5   No time for Essay work and marking.
  
18.   1   I wouldn't have time to take care of every student's needs.  
       2   I wouldn't be able to get their responses when needed.  
       3   I wouldn't be able to control the class as much as I would like.  
       4   I would not be able to interact with them.
  
19.   1   There may not be enough materials to go round.  
       2   I may not be able to reach the weak students.  
       3   Physically exacting, voice and stress.  
       4   I may not be able to evaluate well and correct assignments.  
       5   Completion of given task may be difficult.
  
20.   1   The students are too many, thus becoming very difficult to control  
       2   during lessons.  
       3   I also find it difficult to mark their assignments & examination,  
       4   especially composition.  
       5   Furthermore, sometimes I become nervous to face about a hundred  
       6   students in a class situation.

21. 1 I cannot properly assess the students.  
 2 " " have good interaction with the students.  
 3 " " give personal attention to individual students.  
 4 " " have a firm control of the situation.  
 5 There will be no productive results in the students as in most cases  
 they will only be reproducers.  
 6 many other problems.
22. 1 Difficulty in checking on each group during group activity (space).  
 2 They tend to be noisy and difficult to control even if the activity  
 is useful.  
 3 Teaching of writing skills (essays) is taxing.  
 4 Identifying individual needs becomes difficult.  
 5 Large classes tend to be heterogeneous (e.g. Textile, ceramics, fine  
 art, painting) hence difficulty in meeting their language needs.
23. 1 I can't give my students enough exercises.  
 2 I can't thoroughly mark their papers.  
 3 I can't give individual help to the students.
24. 1 I like giving attention to individual students in every period of  
 English lesson, explain what I am bringing across, to the students'  
 level of understanding.  
 2 Marking also is dreadful, so it limits the number of essay work I  
 give, as I resort mainly to objective questions.
25. 1 Class control is difficult.  
 2 Lack of materials.  
 3 Academic engagements are many.  
 4 The environment is not all that conducive.  
 5 The syllabus is too demanding.  
 6 The time very limited.  
 7 Poor background (students).  
 8 Schedule of duty taxing - teaching - meeting - shuttling from one  
 campus to the other (around 10 km).
26. 1 It does not look inviting.  
 2 There is less interaction between the students and the teacher.  
 3 You cannot have group discussions because they might make too much  
 noise and disturb the other classes.
27. 1 Not all students will concentrate to what I am teaching.  
 2 The students understanding rate will differ, thereby slowing the  
 teacher's pace or rate of movement.  
 3 The understanding of individual students problems would be  
 difficult.  
 4 The effective control of the class would be difficult.

28. 1 Much time is required to assess the learners.  
 2 Interactions (between teacher/learners, and among learners) are restricted.  
 3 Time is wasted as students continue to rush into the c. room.  
 4 The use of fixed seats makes the adoption of group work impossible, and the result is that E.l.t. is reduced to textual analysis.  
 5 Distractions are commoner in large classes than in small ones.  
 6 Weak students find a haven for their passive response to the use of English.
29. 1 I find it difficult to solve students individual problems.  
 2 I find it difficult to correct students essays and assignments.  
 3 I find it difficult to teach pronunciation in oral English classes.
30. 1 More time is spent on thinking about marking the assignment and less time is spent on planning and varying the activities.
31. 1 I am not sure if everybody hears me clearly.  
 2 I cannot give individual attention.  
 3 Marking their written work takes longer and therefore no immediate reinforcement.  
 4 I cannot record all the individual problems and talk about them.  
 5 Sometimes I am not even sure if everybody is present.
32. This section refers to University lecturing situations.  
 1 mainly because without any p.a. system I find it difficult to ensure that all students can hear me.  
 2 writing large enough on the board is a problem (no OHP available; if available electricity supply is unreliable).  
 3 insufficient funds available for the duplicating of material; hence "chalk & talk" (as above).  
 4 large amount of marking time.  
 5 no opportunities for getting to know students individually (except for the few brave enough to ask questions).  
 6 preparation appears different than for smaller class. Why? greater range of ability perhaps;  
 7 you have to go more slowly because more loudly.  
 8 hard to give interactive teaching.  
 9 discipline may be a problem.  
 10 latecomers/early-goers may also be a problem, etc. etc.
33. 1 the physical structure of the classroom makes it difficult to move around checking work & also makes group work difficult (pair work is possible).  
 2 it is difficult to "teach" as opposed to "lecture".  
 3 immediate feedback from looking at written exercises is difficult.  
 4 the students feel inhibited about responding verbally, etc.

## Appendix 7 : Classification of difficulties

The responses transcribed respondent by respondent in Appendix 6 above are classified here according to the category of difficulty concerned.

- |          |  |                              |
|----------|--|------------------------------|
| <u>1</u> | <u>Paying attention to individuals</u> | 23 respondents, 31 responses |
|----------|--|------------------------------|
- 
- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1.3  | It is difficult to know the students' needs and solve them.  |
| 2.3  | It makes the teacher unable to have sufficient rapport with every member of his class.   |
| 3.1  | It's so difficult to speak and listen to individual students all the time within the period of an hours lesson.  |
| 5.1  | I cannot know the immediate needs of individual students.  |
| 5.6  | I cannot check those that rarely [particpate] in class.  |
| 6.1  | It becomes difficult to focus attention on all i.e. giving individual attention when needed.   |
| 6.2  | Difficult to find out whether all the students are taken along with you, whether every student gains, whether the 'needs' of every student is being satisfied or provided for. |
| 10.3 | It is impossible for me to know each and every students shortcomings.  |
| 10.4 | Their number makes me unable to know the weak and or quiet students in the class as a result the inadequacies of such students can never be known to me.                       |
| 11.3 | I find it difficult to give attention to my weak students.   |
| 11.4 | It's hard for me to be able to locate weak students and give them extra help.  |
| 12.2 | Difficult to attend every individual.  |
| 13.6 | Weak students are difficult to locate and they may not be assisted.  |
| 14.3 | Varied and often complex linguistic b/grounds, language needs and language problems.   |
| 15.1 | It is difficult to help them individually.   |
| 15.4 | It is impossible to handle them as an entity.  |
| 16.3 | I may not be able to give the required attention to the backward ones.   |
| 16.4 | The larger the class the more different cultural backgrounds.  |
| 18.1 | I wouldn't have time to take care of every student's needs.  |
| 19.2 | I may not be able to reach the weak students.  |
| 21.3 | [I cannot] give personal attention to individual students.   |
| 22.4 | Identifying individual needs becomes difficult.  |
| 22.5 | Large classes tend to be heterogeneous (e.g. Textile, ceramics, fine art, painting) hence difficulty in meeting their language needs.  |
| 23.3 | I can't give individual help to the students.  |
| 24.1 | I like giving attention to individual students in every period of English lesson, explain what I am bringing across, to the students' level of understanding.                  |
| 27.3 | The understanding of individual students problems would be difficult.  |
| 28.6 | Weak students find a haven for their passive response to the use of English.   |
| 29.1 | I find it difficult to solve students individual problems.   |
| 31.2 | I cannot give individual attention.  |
| 31.4 | I cannot record all the individual problems and talk about them.   |
| 32.5 | no opportunities for getting to know students individually (except for the few brave enough to ask questions).   |

## 2 Control

22 respondents, 26 responses

- 1.1 The class is too difficult to control as some will be talking when the lecture is going on.
- 2.4 It could lead to the encouragement of noise-making at certain stages of the teaching activity.
- 3.4 With large classes, group work are difficult to be organised because the whole period for the teaching might be over, since most of the time the adult students are rowdy.
- 4.2 Its much easier to attain and maintain discipline in smaller classes and this means much more work getting done.
- 5.5 I cannot use aids like radio due to rowiness.
- 7.2 The attention of the students is not always guaranteed.
- 9.1 It is noisy.
- 9.2 Difficult to manage and control.
- 10.1 Sometimes the classes becomes uncontrollable especially when the students begin to make noise.
- 11.1 I find it difficult to control the students - at times I don't finish what I intended to teach them.
- 11.5 Unless what one is teaching is really interesting one will continue to face problems of absconding among students and this frustrates me.
- 12.1 Noisy classes.
- 13.1 Students can be noisy
- 13.5 It encourages truancy among junior school children.
- 14.1 They are largely unmanageable.
- 16.2 Students are disorderly.
- 17.1 Much noisy.
- 18.3 I wouldn't be able to control the class as much as I would like.
- 20.1 The students are too many, thus becoming very difficult to control during lessons.
- 21.4 [I cannot] have a firm control of the situation.
- 23.1 They tend to be noisy and difficult to control even if the activity is useful.
- 25.1 Class control is difficult.
- 26.1 You cannot have group discussions because they might make too much noise and disturb the other classes.
- 27.4 The effective control of the class would be difficult.
- 32.9 discipline may be a problem.
- 35.9 Latecomers/early leavers may also be a problem, etc. etc.

## 3 Evaluation

22 respondents, 23 responses

- 1.1 It is difficult to mark all their scripts within a short period of time.
- 2.1 I find it difficult supervising and having a look at the exercise of each student in the classroom, thereby correcting the mistakes.
- 2.2 It creates a great burden for the teacher to mark too many scripts of after class assignments, thereby making the teacher give less written and verbal.
- 3.2 Written work are not properly corrected.
- 4.1 Certain tasks (e.g. marking essays) would take much longer to get through, than with a smaller or average size class.
- 5.2 I cannot give as many exercises to students very often.
- 6.3 Assessment of the effectiveness of lectures becomes more difficult as more

- marking by teacher becomes tedious, almost impossible.
- 10.2 Marking is very difficult.
  - 11.2 Marking students' scripts after examination or assignments consumes a lot of my time.
  - 13.4 Difficult to give exercise and grade them quickly.
  - 17.4 No time for Essay work and marking.
  - 19.4 I may not be able to evaluate well and correct assignments.
  - 20.2 I also find it difficult to mark their assignments & examination, especially composition.
  - 21.1 I cannot properly assess the students.
  - 22.1 Difficulty in checking on each group during group activity (space).
  - 23.2 I can't thoroughly mark their papers.
  - 24.2 Marking also is dreadful, so it limits the number of essay work I give, as I resort mainly to objective questions.
  - 28.1 Much time is required to assess the learners.
  - 29.2 I find it difficult to correct students essays and assignments.
  - 30.1 More time is spent on thinking about marking the assignment and less time is spent on planning and varying the activities.
  - 31.3 Marking their written work takes longer and therefore no immediate reinforcement.
  - 32.4 large amount of marking time.
  - 33.3 immediate feedback from looking at written exercises is difficult.

#### 4 Teacher discomfort

10 respondents, 11 responses

- 3.3 the size of the class alone is enough to weaken the strength and zeal which I earlier had for my teaching assignment.
- 7.1 I run out of breath.
- 8.1 They are cumbersome to organise especially where space is at a premium.
- 13.7 The movement of the teacher is restricted.
- 16.5 Sometimes the room is not conducive for learning/teaching.
- 17.3 There is no interest in handling it.
- 19.3 Physically exacting, voice and stress.
- 20.3 Furthermore, sometimes I become nervous to face about a hundred students in a class situation.
- 25.4 The environment is not all that conducive.
- 25.8 Schedule of duty taxing - teaching - meeting - shuttling from one campus to the other (around 10 klm).
- 26.1 It does not look inviting.

#### 5 Provision of materials

10 respondents, 11 responses

- 5.3 I cannot have sufficient material to distribute.
- 6.4 It is difficult to get & produce enough teaching aids.
- 8.2 I find it difficult to sort out or prepare and organize my teaching material to meet all the needs of all the students as these students come in at various levels of proficiency.
- 9.4 I may not have sufficient material to give to all students.
- 14.2 Inadequate material to go round.
- 15.2 Of the difficulty of using scanty materials.
- 16.1 The materials may not be sufficient.
- 19.1 There may not be enough materials to go round.

- 25.2 Lack of materials.
- 32.3 insufficient funds available for the duplicating of material; hence "chalk & talk" (as above)
- 32.6 preparation appears different than for smaller class. Why? greater range of ability perhaps

## 6 Physical constraints

7 respondents, 10 responses

- 5.4 There may be no large classrooms to accommodate all as such they'll have no seats and I cannot go round to guide them.
- 13.2 some of them may not be able to hear the teacher when there is no public address system.
- 13.3 Some students cannot even see the b/board.
- 15.5 It is impossible to get them into convenient groups for effective work.
- 28.4 The use of fixed seats makes the adoption of group work impossible, and the result is that E.l.t. is reduced to textual analysis.
- 31.1 I am not sure if everybody hears me clearly.
- 32.1 mainly because without any p.a. system I find it difficult to ensure that all students can hear me.
- 32.2 writing large enough on the board is a problem (no OHP available; if available electricity supply is unreliable).
- 32.7 you have to go more slowly because more loudly.
- 33.1 the physical structure of the classroom makes it difficult to move around checking work & also makes group work difficult (pair work is possible).

## 7 Effectiveness of learning and teaching 8 respondents, 8 responses

- 1.4 The teacher may not be able to be as effective as he/she wants.
- 7.2 There is the tendency to repeat what has been said more than once; thereby wasting time.
- 9.3 I may not be able to teach effectively compared with a small class.
- 12.4 Learning does not take place in large classes.
- 21.5 There will be no productive results in the students as in most cases they will only be reproducers.
- 27.2 The students understanding rate will differ, thereby slowing the teacher's pace or rate of movement.
- 28.3 Time is wasted as students continue to rush into the c. room.
- 33.2 it is difficult to "teach" as opposed to "lecture".

## 8 Interaction

7 respondents, 8 responses

- 17.2 Communication is always one sided - from teacher due to insufficient time.
- 18.2 I wouldn't be able to get their responses when needed.
- 18.4 I would not be able to interact with them.
- 21.2 [I cannot] have good interaction with the students.
- 26.2 There is less interaction between the students and the teacher.
- 28.2 Interactions (between teacher/learners, and among learners) are restricted.
- 32.8 hard to give interactive teaching.
- 33.4 the students feel inhibited about responding verbally, etc.



**9      Miscellaneous**

12 respondents, 15 responses

- 10.5 I find it difficult to keep track of attendance record, hence some weak students can continue to absent themselves.
- 12.3 Difficult to make use of Communicative approach to language teaching.
- 15.3 Diverse co-operation.
- 19.5 Completion of given task may be difficult.
- 21.6 many other problems.
- 22.3 Teaching of writing skills (essays) is taxing.
- 23.1 I can't give my students enough exercises.
- 25.3 Academic engagements are many.
- 25.5 The syllabus is too demanding.
- 25.6 The time very limited.
- 25.7 Poor background (students).
- 27.1 Not all students will concentrate to what I am teaching.
- 28.5 Distractions are commoner in large classes than in small ones.
- 29.3 I find it difficult to teach pronunciation in oral English clases.
- 31.5 Sometimes I am not even sure if everybody is present.

**Appendix 8 : Transcribed responses to the question 'With an ideal number of students in my class, I could ...'**

N = 33; 131 outcomes; 4.0 outcomes per respondent. In this Appendix responses are presented respondent by respondent; in Appendix 9 they are presented according to the category of outcome concerned. Responses are transcribed precisely according to the original, including the punctuation, except that continuous passages describing several outcomes are broken up and the individual outcomes are numbered separately.

1.
  - 1 Control the class.
  - 2 Know their problems and try to solve them.
  - 3 It will be easy to mark their scripts and do the corrections effectively.
2.
  - 1 Move at a fairly fast speed by not having the problem of having to control noise-making in the class-room.
  - 2 [Move at a fairly fast speed by] Easily supervising group formations for class activities.
  - 3 I would have sufficient rapport with each member of the class to encourage them.
  - 4 I would in addition be encouraged to give more written exercises since I could mark them easily.
3.
  - 1 With an ideal number of students in my class, we could organize things like group work competition.
  - 2 I can listen to each students reading
  - 3 and will also be able to make/improvised some visual aids to complement or give more light to my teaching.
  - 4 An ideal number of students will allow me to know, when there is a problem of communication and that will be solved immediately.
  - 5 Ideal numbers are so interesting to work with, I am always more composed with them.
4.
  - 1 Give and correct more essays.
  - 2 Pay more individual attention to students' problems.
  - 3 Get more work done generally.
5.
  - 1 Know their (students') immediate needs and know how to tackle that.
  - 2 Give regular exercises and mark them.
  - 3 Use my own resources (money) to buy materials.
  - 4 Easily go round the class supervising their work.
  - 5 Use radio to teach since the noise would be less.
6.
  - 1 Get and hold the attention of every student for a greater part of the class hours.
  - 2 Get class participation at every level and point of teaching.
  - 3 A lot more can be done as distraction is limited.
  - 4 The available material goes round.
  - 5 Close marking of students written work is less tedious
  - 6 Individual attention can be given.

7.
  - 1 Cover a lot of possible topics effectively.
  - 2 Give regular exercises.
  - 3 Mark these exercises promptly.
  - 4 Use the learner-centred approach effectively and regularly.
  - 5 Improve the students' learning ability more rapidly.
8.
  - 1 Give individual attention.
  - 2 Sort out students needs and prepare my work to meet the needs e.g. Some students may not have had proper training in how the grammar of English works, others may have the problem of organising ideas etc.
  - 3 be more innovative in the preparation of lessons like using group discussions and making students more involved by actively participating in learning.
9.
  - 1 Teach effectively
  - 2 Manage and control the students
  - 3 Provide sufficient materials needed for a lesson
10.
  - 1 Know each of the students individually, hence be able to give help to him/her in the area needed.
  - 2 I can mark their work promptly and discuss their mistakes in detail in the class so that others can benefit
  - 3 Group work can be organised much more often
  - 4 I can know the very weak students and know how to help them.
11.
  - 1 Could have their attention at all times.
  - 2 could mark their scripts after exams easily
  - 3 could have plenty of time to prepare meaningful activities which will help them in achieving their goals.
  - 4 I can have time to do my private studies.
  - 5 I can fully give attention to the weak students.
12.
  - 1 do my teaching in an effective way.
  - 2 Group the students according to their ability level
  - 3 Encourage inter-action more comfortably
  - 4 Pay attention to everybody and correct the mistakes
13.
  - 1 Oversee more of the students' works in their various groups
  - 2 The weaker students are assisted
  - 3 Marking or grading of their exercises is easy
  - 4 Class management is enhanced
14.
  - 1 control them easily
  - 2 establish a closer contact between us
  - 3 be able to adopt a suitable methodology of teaching that would definitely raise the competency of the students.
15.
  - 1 Teach effectively using aids.
  - 2 Divide them into convenient groups for effective work.
  - 3 Help individual students to improve.
  - 4 Get enough participation and co-operation from students.
  - 5 Get them exchange and discuss class work more effectively.

16.    1     Give the maximum attention to all my students.  
       2     Know the names of my students and their individual problems.  
       3     supply enough materials for my students during lessons.  
       4     maintain good order in the class.  
       5     Give spare time to help the weak ones.
  
17.    1     communicate with every student  
       2     have two ways communication : Students/Teacher  
       3     have interest in teaching the class  
       4     have time for regular exercise and marking  
       5     Easily understand and solve students' problems.
  
18.    1     Take care of their needs.  
       2     Interact with my students freely.  
       3     Give them more homework and see that they are done.
  
19.    1     Devise several methods of getting the task done  
       2     Reach out to individual students and help them with their work  
       3     Get their work marked and returned in good time.  
       4     Use group work effectively and get better class participation  
       5     Cover given task more thoroughly and at a faster pace.
  
20.    1     Comfortably control them. This is to say that I could easily know  
              every student by his name, thus enabling me to discipline any  
              student who becomes a nuisance to my teaching.  
       2     I could easily mark their assignments and examination.  
       3     I will not be nervous; I will be comfortable.
  
21.    1     With an ideal number of students, I can achieve all of the aims in  
              [Question 1, i.e. Appendix 6] above and much more.
  
22.    1     give more assignments and give room for evaluation  
       2     find is easier to prepare aids and handouts  
       3     establish more personal relationship with students  
       4     cover more topics
  
23.    1     Give them enough exercises.  
       2     mark their papers  
       3     pay attention to their individual problems
  
24.    1     Do exactly that which I have already written above [Question 1,  
              Appendix 6], and leave the class with the satisfaction of having  
              achieved my aim for the day.  
       2     Give many essay questions, and mark them as thoroughly as possible.
  
25.    1     Turn out the eighth wonder on earth - provided that other diversions  
              are lifted off my shoulders.
  
26.    1     feel comfortable and teach well.  
       2     group the students  
       3     and have oral classes.  
       4     give them assignments and be able to correct them effectively.  
       5     make effective use of the library with them within the library  
              itself.

27. 1 Control them well  
2 and get to know their individual problems, which would go a long way in helping, not only me, but the Student as well.
28. 1 Presentation of one's lesson is easier  
2 Instant correction of errors  
3 Intimate response between the teacher and the learners  
4 Reasonable quantity of scarce materials is used  
5 students attention is easy to draw
29. 1 solve students individual problems  
2 correct students essays and assignments  
3 teach pronunciation
30. 1 plan better  
2 and vary the activities  
3 and make for better situationalised contextualised teaching of English
31. 1 be sure that my voice carries through.  
2 give individual attention  
3 give work and receive immediate feed-back  
4 mark their assignment in the shortest possible time  
5 discuss individual problems observed in their written work.  
6 know their names and notice the absence of anyone of them.
32. 1 be more interactive;  
2 [be more] friendly;  
3 [be more] relaxed  
4 produce more interesting material  
5 " material geared to individual needs  
6 give individual attention during (& after class perhaps)  
7 get students to participate in designing material (I am not here thinking of university lecturing situations.)
33. 1 have immediate contact with my students  
2 learn their problems (language, cultural etc) more quickly  
3 have better responses  
4 conduct group work & reduce my talking load  
5 marking of scripts becomes easier and more assignments can be given - reading / writing  
6 Spoken English can be given more attention

## Appendix 9 : Classification of outcomes

The responses transcribed respondent by respondent in Appendix 8 above are classified here according to the category of outcome concerned.

### 1 Identify/respond to individual needs 21 respondents, 28 responses

- 1.2 Know their problems and try to solve them.
- 3.2 I can listen to each students reading
- 3.4 An ideal number of students will allow me to know, when there is a problem of communication and that will be solved immediately.
- 4.2 Pay more individual attention to students' problems.
- 5.1 Know their (students') immediate needs and know how to tackle that.
- 6.6 Individual attention can be given.
- 8.1 Give individual attention.
- 8.2 Sort out students needs and prepare my work to meet the needs e.g. Some students may not have had proper training in how the grammar of English works, others may have the problem of organising ideas etc.
- 10.1 Know each of the students individually, hence be able to give help to him/her in the area needed.
- 10.4 I can know the very weak students and know how to help them.
- 11.5 I can fully give attention to the weak students.
- 12.4 Pay attention to everybody and correct the mistakes
- 13.2 The weaker students are assisted
- 15.3 Help individual students to improve.
- 16.1 Give the maximum attention to all my students.
- 16.2 Know the names of my students and their individual problems.
- 16.5 Give spare time to help the weak ones.
- 17.5 Easily understand and solve students' problems.
- 18.1 Take care of their needs.
- 19.2 Reach out to individual students and help them with their work
- 23.3 pay attention to their individual problems
- 27.2 and get to know their individual problems, which would be a long way to helping, not only me, but the Student as well.
- 29.1 solve students individual problems
- 31.2 give individual attention
- 31.5 discuss individual problems observed in their written work.
- 32.5 [produce] material geared to individual needs
- 32.6 give individual attention during (& after class perhaps)
- 33.2 learn their problems (language, cultural etc) more quickly

### 2 More work/more evaluation

21 respondents, 27 responses

- 1.3 It will be easy to mark their scripts and do the corrections effectively.
- 2.4 I would in addition be encouraged to give more written exercises since I could mark them easily.
- 4.1 Give and correct more essays.
- 4.3 Get more work done generally.
- 5.2 Give regular exercises and mark them.
- 6.5 Close marking of students written work is less tedious
- 7.1 Cover a lot of possible topics effectively.

- 7.2 Give regular exercises.
- 7.3 Mark these exercises promptly.
- 10.2 I can mark their work promptly and discuss their mistakes in detail in the class so that others can benefit
- 11.2 could mark their scripts after exams easily
- 13.3 Marking or grading of their exercises is easy
- 17.4 have time for regular exercise and marking
- 18.3 Give them more homework and see that they are done.
- 19.3 Get their work marked and returned in good time.
- 20.2 I could easily mark their assignments and examination.
- 22.1 give more assignments and give room for evaluation
- 22.4 cover more topics
- 23.1 Give them enough exercises.
- 23.2 mark their papers
- 24.2 Give many essay questions, and mark them as thoroughly as possible.
- 26.3 give them assignments and be able to correct them effectively.
- 28.2 Instant correction of errors
- 29.2 correct students essays and assignments
- 31.3 give work and receive immediate feed-back
- 31.4 mark their assignment in the shortest possible time
- 33.5 marking of scripts becomes easier and more assignments can be given - reading / writing

### 3 Use groups/interaction more easily 10 respondents, 11 responses

- 2.2 [Move at a fairly fast speed by] Easily supervising group formations for class activities.
- 3.1 With an ideal number of students in my class, we could organize things like group work competition.
- 8.3 be more innovative in the preparation of lessons like using group discussions and making students more involved by actively participating in learning.
- 10.3 Group work can be organised much more often
- 12.2 Group the students according to their ability level
- 12.3 Encourage inter-action more comfortably
- 13.1 Oversee more of the students' works in their various groups
- 15.2 Divide them into convenient groups for effective work.
- 19.4 Use group work effectively and get better class participation
- 26.2 group the students
- 33.4 conduct group work & reduce my talking load

### 4 Better relationships 9 respondents, 11 responses

- 2.3 I would have sufficient rapport with each member of the class to encourage them.
- 14.2 establish a closer contact between us
- 15.4 Get enough participation and co-operation from students.
- 17.1 communicate with every student
- 17.2 have two ways communication : Students/Teacher
- 18.2 Interact with my students freely.
- 22.3 establish more personal relationship with students
- 28.3 Intimate response between the teacher and the learners

- 32.1 be more interactive;
- 32.2 [be more] friendly;
- 33.1 have immediate contact with my students

## 5 Provide materials more easily

9 respondents, 11 responses

- 3.3 and will also be able to make/improvised some visual aids to complement or give more light to my teaching.
- 5.3 Use my own resources (money) to buy materials.
- 5.5 Use radio to teach since the noise would be less.
- 6.4 The available material goes round.
- 9.3 Provide sufficient materials needed for a lesson
- 15.1 Teach effectively using aids.
- 16.3 supply enough materials for my students during lessons.
- 22.2 find it easier to prepare aids and handouts
- 28.4 Reasonable quantity of scarce materials is used
- 32.4 produce more interesting material
- 32.7 get students to participate in designing material (I am not here thinking of university lecturing situations.)

## 6 Teach more comfortably

10 respondents, 10 responses

- 3.5 Ideal numbers are so interesting to work with, I am always more composed with them.
- 5.4 Easily go round the class supervising their work.
- 17.3 have interest in teaching the class
- 20.3 I will not be nervous; I will be comfortable.
- 24.1 Do exactly that which I have already written above [Question 1, Appendix 6], and leave the class with the satisfaction of having achieved my aim for the day.
- 25.1 Turn out the eighth wonder on earth - provided that other diversions are lifted off my shoulders.
- 26.1 feel comfortable and teach well.
- 28.1 Presentation of one's lesson is easier
- 32.3 [be more] relaxed
- 33.3 have better responses

## 7 Teach more effectively

9 respondents, 10 responses

- 7.4 Use the learner-centred approach effectively and regularly.
- 7.5 Improve the students' learning ability more rapidly.
- 9.1 Teach effectively
- 12.1 do my teaching in an effective way.
- 14.3 be able to adopt a suitable methodology of teaching that would definitely raise the competency of the students.
- 15.5 Get them exchange and discuss class work more effectively.
- 19.5 Cover given task more thoroughly and at a faster pace.
- 21.1 With an ideal number of students, I can achieve all of the aims in [Question 1, i.e. Appendix 6] above and much more.
- 26.4 make effective use of the library with them within the library itself.
- 30.3 and make for better situationalised contextualised teaching of English



8 Better control

9 respondents, 9 responses

- 1.1 Control the class.
- 2.1 Move at a fairly fast speed by not having the problem of having to control noise-making in the class-room.
- 6.2 Get class participation at every level and point of teaching.
- 9.2 Manage and control the students
- 13.4 Class management is enhanced
- 14.1 control them easily
- 16.4 maintain good order in the class.
- 20.1 Comfortably control them. This is to say that I could easily know every student by his name, thus enabling me to discipline any student who becomes a nuisance to my teaching.
- 27.1 Control them well

9 Hold learners' attention

3 respondents, 4 responses

- 6.1 Get and hold the attention of every student for a greater part of the class hours.
- 6.3 A lot more can be done as distraction is limited.
- 11.1 Could have their attention at all times.
- 28.5 students attention is easy to draw

10 Teach oral skills

3 respondents, 3 responses

- 26.3 and have oral classes.
- 29.3 teach pronunciation
- 33.6 Spoken English can be given more attention

11 Miscellaneous

4 respondents, 7 responses

- 11.3 could have plenty of time to prepare meaningful activities which will help them in achieving their goals.
- 11.4 I can have time to do my private studies.
- 19.1 Devise several methods of getting the task done
- 30.1 plan better
- 30.2 and vary the activities
- 31.1 be sure that my voice carries through.
- 31.6 know their names and notice the absence of anyone of them.

**Appendix 10 : Transcribed responses to the question 'Do you have any other comments or questions about teaching and learning in large classes?'**

N = 20; 36 comments; 1.8 comments per respondent. In this Appendix responses are presented respondent by respondent; in Appendix 11 they are presented according to the category of comment concerned. Responses are transcribed precisely according to the original, including the punctuation, except that continuous passages containing several comments are broken up and the individual comments are numbered separately.

1. 1 How to make the students participate in class participation.
2. -
3. 1 My observation as regards to teaching and learning in large classes is that students could play truancy,  
2 the learning environment is not conducive,  
3 students might at the end of the day leave the class unsatisfied  
4 and the teacher might not feel pleased with himself/herself as well, because no matter how hard the tchr. might work, the result might not be all that rosy.
4. 1 I will really appreciate method(s) that will assist me in getting all I want done with my classes especially as regards essay writing and evaluation. I believe the essay is one singular unit that takes care of most of my students' problems and if I can deal with it as I would wish to (which is difficult for me in a large-class situation) my problem will be nearly solved.  
2 Any formula for ensuring discipline in a class of say 100 or more students?
5. -
6. -
7. -
8. 1 In some large classes where students love the 1st language very much, grouping can degenerate into a first language conversation sessions.
9. -
10. -
11. 1 Teaching and learning in large class is only possible where students are matured.

12. 1 I don't like to teach in large classes because Good teaching and learning do not take place in L2 situations when large  
2 It is very good to divide the classes into groups and teach. This is the only alternative.
13. 1 What can be done to make teaching in a large class more entertaining?
14. 1 How do we get in touch with materials probably dealing with suitable methods (teaching) to be adopted in large classes? We should establish a clear contact with the British Council towards that end.
15. 1 The question in my institution in dealing with large classes is that of enough space (classroom) - Teachers are always on the move to find bigger classrooms to accommodate the number.  
2 Marking students' work effectively is always impossible.
16. 1 Teaching large classes in Secondary schools is not easy because the students are very young at this stage and you find that the indolent ones always like to stay at the back of the class.  
2 It is very disadvantageous in the sense that, it is difficult to know all your students by names and know individual problems.
17. 1 It is not an ideal situation for learning/teaching.  
2 Not many students gain English language expression at the end of an academic session.
18. -
19. 1 The problem of adequate materials for such a class is crucial for successful teaching. Could the creative and innovative teacher continuously cope with large class situation without sufficient materials?
20. -
21. -
22. 1 What happens when the student lack basic knowledge of English (vocabulary, gram) and do not have books to use?
23. -
24. 1 As we cannot avoid large classes, my comment is that the sooner we adopt all the methods we have acquired in our classes the better.
25. 1 The student/lecturer contact is poor.  
2 Some may take advantage of size to misbehave.  
3 There is a possibility of making some lazy and inapt.  
4 It may be a major breakthrough in education.
26. -

27. 1 If a teacher has a large class and he/she does as I always do, the students would end up learning little.  
2 Secondly, if a teacher finds it difficult to understand individual students problem, as is possible in a large class, that teacher can't help the student solve his/her problem.
23. -
29. -
30. 1 I think I have learnt a lot within the past one week. I am willing to put into practice some of the new things I have learnt, including overcoming the fear of marking written work of large classes. I am involved in Distance Education and I supervise over 30,000 students every session.
31. 1 I think teaching and learning in large classes are necessary evils which both the teacher and the learners have to put up with. In other words, nobody can opt for [= opt out of ?] either teaching, or learning in, large classes.
32. 1 I have noted that perception of size is related to the largest classes one has to teach. This is obvious. One must survive!  
2 I would like, but don't have many (or any) opportunities to see other maybe more experienced teachers in action. Film/Video would be helpful here &/or demonstration classes.  
3 More published experiences too, of course.
33. 1 It is important to get the students interested as fast as possible.  
2 Motivation helps. So create it if it is not already built into the situation.  
3 Ask students for their suggestions.

## Appendix 11 : Classification of miscellaneous comments

The responses transcribed respondent by respondent in Appendix 10 above are classified here according to the category of comment concerned.

### 1 Complaints about large classes

8 respondents, 17 responses

- 3.1 My observation as regards to teaching and learning in large classes is that students could play truancy,
- 3.2 the learning environment is not conducive,
- 3.3 students might at the end of the day leave the class unsatisfied
- 3.4 and the teacher might not feel pleased with himself/herself as well, because no matter how hard the tchr. might work, the result might not be all that rosy.
- 8.1 In some large classes where students love the 1st language very much, grouping can degenerate into a first language conversation sessions.
- 12.1 I don't like to teach in large classes because Good teaching and learning do not take place in L2 situations when large
- 15.1 The question in my institution in dealing with large classes is that of enough space (classroom) - Teachers are always on the move to find bigger classrooms to accommodate the number.
- 15.2 Marking students' work effectively is always impossible.
- 16.1 Teaching large classes in Secondary schools is not easy because the students are very young at this stage and you find that the indolent ones always like to stay at the back of the class.
- 16.2 It is very disadvantageous in the sense that, it is difficult to know all your students by names and know individual problems.
- 17.1 It is not an ideal situation for learning/teaching.
- 17.2 Not many students gain English language expression at the end of an academic session.
- 25.1 The student/lecturer contact is poor.
- 25.2 Some may take advantage of size to misbehave.
- 25.3 There is a possibility of making some lazy and inapt.
- 27.1 If a teacher has a large class and he/she does as I always do, the students would end up learning little.
- 27.2 Secondly, if a teacher finds it difficult to understand individual students problem, as is possible in a large class, that teacher can't help the student solve his/her problem.

### 2 Requests for information

7 respondents, 9 responses

- 1.1 How to make the students participate in class participation.
- 4.1 I will really appreciate method(s) that will assist me in getting all I want done with my classes especially as regards essay writing and evaluation. I believe the essay is one singular unit that takes care of most of my students' problems and if I can deal with it as I would wish to (which is difficult for me in a large-class situation) my problem will be nearly solved.
- 4.2 Any formula for ensuring discipline in a class of say 100 or more students?
- 13.1 What can be done to make teaching in a large class more entertaining?
- 14.1 How do we get in touch with materials probably dealing with suitable methods

- (teaching) to be adopted in large classes? We should establish a clear contact with the British Council towards that end.
- 19.1 The problem of adequate materials for such a class is crucial for successful teaching. Could the creative and innovative teacher continuously cope with large class situation without sufficient materials?
- 22.1 What happens when the student lack basic knowledge of English (vocabulary, gram) and do not have books to use?
- 32.2 I would like, but don't have many (or any) opportunities to see other maybe more experienced teachers in action. Film/Video would be helpful here &/or demonstration classes.
- 32.3 More published experiences too, of course.

### 3 Techniques for large classes

2 respondents, 4 responses

- 12.2 It is very good to divide the classes into groups and teach. This is the only alternative.
- 33.1 It is important to get the students interested as fast as possible.
- 33.2 Motivation helps. So create it if it is not already built into the situation.
- 33.3 Ask students for their suggestions.

### 4 Comments on Workshop

3 respondents, 3 responses

- 24.1 As we cannot avoid large classes, my comment is that the sooner we adopt all the methods we have acquired in our classes the better.
- 30.1 I think I have learnt a lot within the past one week. I am willing to put into practice some of the new things I have learnt, including overcoming the fear of marking written work of large classes. I am involved in Distance Education and I supervise over 30,000 students every session.
- 32.1 I have noted that perception of size is related to the largest classes one has to teach. This is obvious. One must survive!

### 5 Miscellaneous

3 respondents, 3 responses

- 11.1 Teaching and learning in large class is only possible where students are matured.
- 25.4 It may be a major breakthrough in education.
- 31.1 I think teaching and learning in large classes are necessary evils which both the teacher and the learners have to put up with. In other words, nobody can opt for [= opt out of ?] either teaching, or learning in, large classes.

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