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The Negative Impact of Large Classes on Students' Oral Performance

The case of second year LMD students at Biskra University

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master Degree
in Sciences of Languages**

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Dedication

To the most precious people in my life who gave me love, faith, and hope:

My beloved mother and my dear father

My lovely sister and brothers

My family and my close friends

To all who supported me and besought God to help me

I dedicate this work.

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Abstract

The speaking skill is one of the important skills in studying English as a foreign language in which the student shows his/her knowledge using his/her oral capacities. However, there are different factors that impede him/her from being a competent speaker; and the large classroom size is one factor. Our present study is concerned with the investigation of the negative impact of large classes on the students' oral performance. Dealing with such matter, we aimed at exploring the relationship between these two variables using the descriptive method and it was by two means of data collection which are an interview with teachers and an observation tool with second year LMD English classes that we tested our hypotheses. From the obtained findings, the set of the hypotheses we stated were confirmed in that; studying in a large classroom, the students' oral performance is poor. They have fewer chances to speak, interact, and communicate with the teacher or with each other in addition to teachers who face difficulties in their instruction.

Table of Contents

Dedication.....	I
Acknowledgements.....	II
Abstract.....	III
Table of Contents.....	IV
List of Abbreviations and Acronyms.....	V
List of Tables.....	VI
List of Figures.....	VII
General Introduction.....	1
Chapter One: The Large Classroom Management.	
Introduction.....	7
1.1 Definition of the classroom.....	7
1.2. Classroom layout.....	8
1.2.1. Rows.....	9
1.2.2 .Half- circle.....	9
1.2.3. Joined desks.....	9
1.2.4. The board.....	10
1.3. Definition of classroom management.....	11
1.4. Approaches to classroom management.....	12
1.4.1. The Assertive approach.....	12
1.4.2. The Business academic approach.....	12
1.4.3. The Behavioral approach.....	12

1.4.4. The Group managerial approach.....	13
1.4.5. The Group guidance approach.....	13
1.4.6. The Acceptance approach.....	13
1.4.7. The Success approach.....	13
1.5. Aims of classroom management.....	13
1.6. The role of the teacher.....	14
1.6.1 Teacher as information giver.....	14
1.6.1.1. Teacher as an explainer.....	14
1.6.1.2. Teacher as a demonstrator.....	14
1.6.1.3. Teacher as an organizer and instruction giver.....	15
1.6.1.4. Teacher as a controller.....	15
1.6.1.5. Teacher as a route planner.....	15
1.6.2. Teacher as a facilitator.....	15
1.6.2.1. Teacher as a guide.....	15
1.6.2.2. Teacher as a monitor.....	15
1.6.2.3. Teacher as a support system.....	16
1.6.2.4. Teacher as a feedback giver.....	16
1.6.2.5 Teacher as a counselor.....	16
1.7 .The Student’s role.....	16
1.8. Problems within EFL classes.....	16
1.8.1. Getting attention and participation.....	17

1.8.2. Managing pair and group work.....	17
1.8.3. Discipline.....	17
1.8.4. Classroom interaction.....	18
1.8.4.1. Teacher to Students (T-Ss).....	19
1.8.4.2. Teacher to Students (T-S) and Student (s) to Teacher (Ss-T).....	19
1.8.4.3. Half class to half class (Ss-Ss).....	19
1.8.4.4. Student to class (S-Ss).....	19
1.8.4.5. Student to Student (open pairs). (S-S).....	19
1.8.4.6. Student to Student (S-S).....	20
1.8.4.7. Individual Work (S).....	20
1.8.5. Large classroom size.....	20
1.8.5.1. Definition of a large classroom size.....	20
1.8.5.2. Characteristics of large classes.....	21
1.8.5.3. Problems of large classes.....	21
1.8.5.3.1. Communication.....	22
1.8.5.3.2. Number.....	22
1.8.5.3.3. Cooperation.....	22
Conclusion.....	23
 Chapter Two: The Speaking Skill: Concepts and Definitions	
Introduction.....	24
2.1. Overview about the speaking skill.....	24
2.1.1 Definition of speaking.....	24

2.1.2. Classroom speaking.....	25
2.1.3. The importance of speaking.....	25
2.1.4. The value of oral communication.....	26
2.2. Elements of speaking.....	27
2.2.1. Language features.....	28
2.2.1.1. Connected speech.....	28
2.2.1.2. Expressive device.....	28
2.2.1.3. Lexis and grammar.....	28
2.2.1.4. Negotiation language.....	28
2.2.2. Mental/social processing.....	29
2.2.2.1 Language processing.....	29
2.2.2.2. Interacting with others.....	29
2.2.2.3. (On-The Spot) Information processing.....	29
2.2.3. Accuracy and fluency.....	30
2.3. Speaking skills.....	30
2.4. The relationship between speaking and the other skills.....	31
2.4.1 Speaking and writing.....	31
2.4.2. Speaking and listening.....	31
2.5. Classroom speaking problems.....	32
2.5.1. Inhibition.....	32
2.5.2. Nothing to say.....	33
2.5.3. Low or uneven participation.....	33

2.5.4. Mother tongue interference.....	33
2.5.5. Lack of confidence.....	33
2.5.6. Other problems.....	34
2.6. Speaking activities.....	34
2.6.2. Acting from a script.....	34
2.6.2. Communication games.....	34
2.6.3. Discussion activities.....	35
2.6.4. Prepared talks.....	35
2.6.5. Questionnaires activities.....	36
2.6.6. Simulations and role play.....	36
2.7. The role of the teacher.....	37
2.7.1. Teacher as prompter.....	37
2.7.2. Teacher as participant.....	37
2.7.3. Teacher as feedback provider.....	37
2.8. Assessing speaking.....	38
2.8.1. Imitative.....	38
2.8.2. Intensive.....	39
2.8.3. Responsive.....	39
2.8.4. Interactive.....	39
2.8.5. Extensive.....	40
Conclusion.....	40

Chapter Three: Description and Analysis of the Classroom Observation and the Teachers' Interview

Introduction.....41

3.1. Description and analysis of the classroom observation.....41

 Introduction.....41

 3.1.1. Design and description of the classroom observation.....41

 3.1.2. The aim of the classroom observation.....42

 3.1.3. The analysis of the classroom observation.....43

 3.1.4. Discussion of the results of the classroom observation.....67

3.2. Description and analysis of the teachers' interview.....68

 Introduction.....68

 3.2.1. Design and description of the interview.....68

 3.2.2. The analysis of the interview.....69

 3.2.3. Discussion of the results of the interview.....80

Conclusion.....80

Pedagogical Implications.....82

General conclusion.....84

References.....85

- Appendices: - Appendix one: The classroom observation checklist
- Appendix two: The teachers' interview
- Appendix three: Résumé

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

TTT: Teacher Talking Time

FL: Foreign Language

L1: first Language or Mother Tongue

List of Tables

Table.3.1: The student's chance to speak once during the session.....	43
Table.3.2: The teacher's talk during the session.....	44
Table.3.3: The students' interaction with the teacher.....	44
Table.3.4: The students' interaction with each other.....	45
Table.3.5: The students' level of accuracy.....	45
Table.3.6: The students' level of fluency.....	46
Table.3.7: The speaking activities carried out.....	46
Table.3.8: The teacher's feedback to students.....	47
Table.3.9: The individual attention given to students by the teacher.....	47
Table.3.10: Back zone students 'interaction.....	48
Table.3.11: Front zone students interaction.....	48
Table.3.12: The students' chance to ask for clarification.....	49
Table.3.13: The teacher's knowledge of the students' names.....	49
Table.3.14: The teacher and students' sight and hearing in the classroom.....	50
Table.3.15: The teacher's role to check for comprehension and give suggestions.....	50
Table.3.16: The students' seating and movement in the classroom.....	51
Table.3.17: The teacher's role in getting all the students' attention.....	51
Table.3.18: The student's chance to speak once during the session.....	52

Table.3.19: The teacher’s talk during the session.....	52
Table.3.20: The students’ interaction with the teacher.....	53
Table.3.21: The students’ interaction with each other.....	53
Table.3.22: The students’ level of accuracy.....	53
Table.3.23: The students’ level of fluency.....	54
Table.3.24: The speaking activities carried out.....	54
Table.3.25: The teacher’s feedback to students.....	55
Table.3.26: The individual attention given to students by the teacher.....	55
Table.3.27: Back zone students ‘interaction.....	56
Table.3.28: Front zone students interaction.....	56
Table.3.29: The students’ chance to ask for clarification.....	57
Table.3.30: The teacher’s knowledge of the students’ names.....	57
Table.3.31: The teacher and students’ sight and hearing in the classroom.....	57
Table.3.32: The teacher’s role to check for comprehension and give suggestions.....	58
Table.3.33: The students’ seating and movement in the classroom.....	58
Table.3.34: The teacher’s role in getting all the students’ attention.....	59
Table.3.35: The student’s chance to speak once during the session.....	59
Table.3.36: The teacher’s talk during the session.....	60
Table.3.37: The students’ interaction with the teacher.....	60

Table.3.38: The students' interaction with each other.....	61
Table.3.39: The students' level of accuracy.....	61
Table.3.40: The students' level of fluency.....	62
Table.3.41: The speaking activities carried out.....	62
Table.3.42: The teacher's feedback to students.....	63
Table.3.43: The individual attention given to students by the teacher.....	63
Table.3.44: Back zone students 'interaction.....	64
Table.3.45: Front zone students' interaction.....	64
Table.3.46: The students' chance to ask for clarification.....	65
Table.3.47: The teacher's knowledge of the students' names.....	65
Table.3.48: The teacher and students' sight and hearing in the classroom.....	65
Table.3.49: The teacher's role to check for comprehension and give suggestions.....	66
Table.3.50: The students' seating and movement in the classroom.....	66
Table.3.51: The teacher's role in getting all the students' attention.....	67

List of Figures

Diagram 1.1: Options of desk arrangement.....	8
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General Introduction

Teaching and learning English as a foreign language is a process that faces many problems. An effective teaching and learning process is based on the teacher, the students themselves, and the classroom, which is the physical environment where the teaching and learning process takes place and the place where should both teachers and students feel comfortable in order for teachers to teach successfully and for learners to learn easily and effectively.

The latter which is the classroom or the physical environment plays a critical role in learning English as a foreign language, but it may become a source of hindrance for the learning process. Nowadays, one of the biggest problems faced in teaching and learning English as a foreign language is the huge number of students found within one class. In fact, the classroom size has an important role in the learning process, and a large classroom size may have negative effects on learning.

Large classes may affect the learning process negatively in terms of being a hurdle for the student to be competent in the four skills: the receptive ones, reading and listening, and the productive ones, writing and speaking. Our concern, here, is with the effect of large classes on the speaking skill or the students' oral performance that is supposed to be an important skill in which students display their oral capacities and use their oral skills to improve their ability to speak the foreign language they are studying and to be fluent speakers.

Statement of the problem

Broadly speaking, (EFL) students' overall English performance is rated in their ability to speak English accurately and fluently. Studying at Biskra University, EFL students (second year LMD), need to communicate and interact in the classroom using

English, and they do so through the speaking skill, which is considered to be the primary medium of communication.

Talking about the development of the speaking skill within EFL classes, it is necessary to consider a number of factors that influence it negatively. Large classroom size is one factor that has a negative impact on the students' oral performance, mainly, the speaking skill. In other words, classroom communication and interaction in large classes are negatively associated with classroom size and the students lack opportunities to speak in those classes. Consequently, this hinders the development of their speaking skill.

Significance of the study

This study will shed light on a spread phenomenon within EFL classes which is the large classroom size in which we try to show its negative impact on the learning process, mainly, the students' oral performance or the speaking skill. We will do so through our study of the teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards the matter of large classes and at the same time observing students studying in large classes in order to know how teachers deal with the big number of students while teaching, and how it affects the students' oral performance on one hand. On the other hand, to know how large classes hinder the students learning process in terms of chances to speak, interact, and communicate in the classroom. This study will help teachers to know the negative impact of large classes on the students' oral proficiency, thus, trying to find solutions for that matter.

Objectives of the study

Coming to our concern which is to investigate the matter of the impact of large classes on students' oral performance within EFL classes, we aim:

- To describe the phenomenon of EFL large classes
- To find out the difficulties students face when learning in EFL large classes, mainly, related to the speaking skill
- To ensure that large classroom size hinders the students to be orally competent.

Research questions

Observing the phenomenon of large classes and its negative effect on the students' speaking skill, some questions can be raised:

- What is the relationship between a large classroom size and the' speaking skill deficiency?
- What are the factors that hinder students to be orally competent in EFL large classes?
- In what way may large classroom size affect negatively the students' speaking skill?

Hypotheses

We hypothesize that:

- Hypothesis 01: If students study in large classes, then their oral performance will be poor.
- Hypothesis 02: If students study in large classes, then they will have fewer opportunities to speak, interact, and communicate with the teacher and even with peers.
- Hypothesis 03: If teachers teach large classes, then they will find difficulties in their instruction.

Research methodology design

Our present work deals with the negative impact of large classes on students' oral performance. Carrying out this research, we need to follow some steps: choosing a population and a sample, selecting an appropriate method, and using suitable tools.

Population

Our choice of population was randomly which is the case of second year LMD English students at Biskra University. Their whole number is of 548 students divided into 12 groups between 39 as a minimum and 54 as a maximum number of students in each group. They have studied English for 8 years at least and they come from different regions and have different backgrounds. In addition to the teachers whose number is 27.

Sampling

Our method of sampling is a non random or non-probability sampling in which we have chosen the convenience or opportunity sampling because our choice was ,on purpose, based on the groups that contain a big number of students and we think it is a criterion that is helpful to our investigation.

Choice of method

Our present research is concerned with second year EFL classes at Biskra University. Our principle aim is to describe a spread phenomenon that we observe which is the large classroom size and its negative impact on the students' oral performance. In other words, using the descriptive method, we aim to determine the nature of the problem which is about the actual situation of student's difficulty in achieving a good level in oral proficiency and to clarify the environment or the physical factor that is large classroom

size as a source of the problem. For this reason, it was ideal to adopt the descriptive method because of its fitness to the topic in hand rather than the experimental method that needs a suggested solution which is not available.

Data collection tools

Trying to collect data concerning our present work, we will have as tools an interview with teachers and an observation tool with the classes of second year LMD students.

Structure of the dissertation

This research is basically divided into three chapters. Chapters, one and two, are devoted to the review of literature and the third chapter is the field of investigation. The first chapter provides a better understanding of large classroom size and classroom management. Starting by defining classroom management including what is a classroom, classroom layout; it includes also a historical background or approaches to classroom management, its aims and the problems under it reaching the problem of large classroom size. The roles of the teacher and the students are taken into consideration.

The second chapter outlines some issues related to the nature of the speaking skill starting by an overview about the speaking skill; then mentioning the elements that constitute speaking with the needed skills. It shed light on the relationship between the speaking skill and the other skills. After that, we will explain the reasons behind the students' incompetence in speaking English and as techniques or oral tasks to improve the students' speaking skill and oral skills, several speaking activities are presented followed by discussing the issue of speaking' assessment. Teacher and students roles are also clarified.

The last chapter deals with data analysis in which a detailed analysis of the teachers' interview and the observation are done. It is an analysis that includes an investigation of the students' oral performance and the effect of large classroom on it that will lead us to conclusions that may confirm our hypotheses.

Chapter One

The Large Classroom Management

Chapter One

The Large Classroom Management

Introduction

Nowadays, the primary aim in teaching EFL classes is to make the teaching and learning process easier and more interesting for both teachers and learners. One important issue that facilitates teaching and learning is classroom management.

Generally, classroom management is considered to be only the teacher's responsibility, but it is also the student's responsibility in terms of being cooperative with the teacher in order to reach good results. When managing the classroom, teachers may face many problems and difficulties, among them the large classroom size.

In this chapter, we will deal with general issues about classroom management; starting by defining the following concepts: what is a classroom, classroom layout, classroom management, and approaches to classroom management. Then, we will try to determine the aims of classroom management, teacher's and the student's role until we reach problems within EFL classes and finishing by defining one of them that is large classes and mentioning the problems raised from them.

1.1 Definition of a classroom

According to Edge and Garton (2009, p.69) a classroom is a teaching space that should be appropriate for learning under certain conditions. First, the classroom should be the right size and should have the suitable temperature. Second, the classroom should be clean, attractive, and well lit. Third, it should have an appropriate shape in order to facilitate for both students to see the board and teachers to see all the students.

Providing a comfortable, safe, and interesting environment for the students is the initial, important step for a successful teaching process and if the classroom lacks one of these conditions, the development of an English speaking community that teachers have the desire to create will be impeded.

1.2. Classroom layout

Hadfield and Hadfield (2008, pp. 145-6) state that when teaching and doing certain activities in the classroom with students, teachers should take into consideration one important element that is furniture. In other words, there should be an organization and arrangement for desks, chairs, and other objects to ensure that students can see the teacher, the board, and each other.

When it comes to arranging desks and chairs in the classroom, there are three suggested options which are rows, half circle or horse shoe and joined desks. The diagram below illustrates the three options for desk arranging:

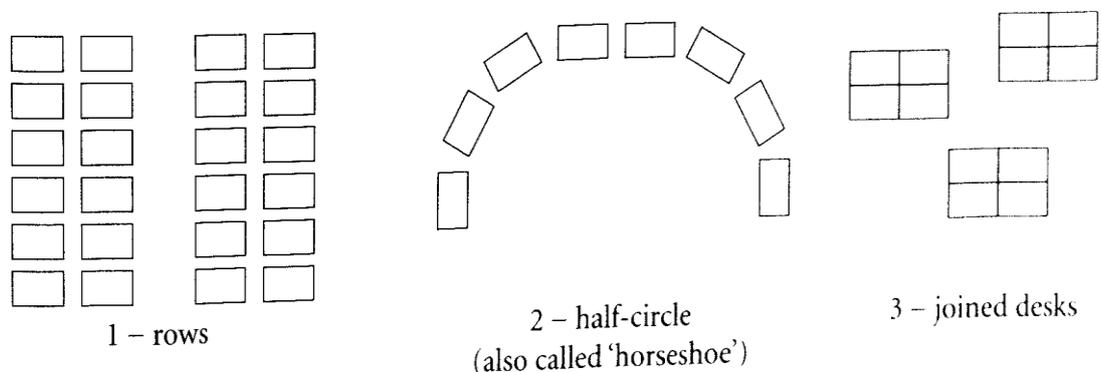


Diagram1.1: Options of desk arrangement

This diagram shows the three options of desk arrangement which are three forms of how students seat inside the classroom. The first option is the form of rows which is the

most used within EFL classes. The second form is the half-circle or the “horse show”. The last option is the form of joined desks that is used especially with group work.

1.2.1. Rows:

The classroom layout helps students to work easily in pairs or groups. Either they work in pairs with students next to them or pairs turning their chairs and working with pairs behind them. Thus, they find themselves closed to each other and working together easily and discussing different issues and solving them.

1.2.2. Half-circle:

It is called also the “horse shoe”. It is characterized by; first, the teacher is in a position that makes him or her the focus of attention with the students’ interaction through the half circle. Second, it gives an opportunity to students to perform role plays or act out drama in front of their peers. Third, this kind of arrangement helps students to see the board easily, and get access to it.

1.2.3. Joined desks:

It is a useful arrangement for group work because it gives space for four to six students to work together. It gives also the teacher the chance to deal with each group alone and for students a chance to discuss and interact with the teacher. This last layout gives more focus on students than teachers who were focused on more in the two previous patterns.

There are other options that suggest moving desks to the side of the classroom to give space to specific activities like action activities or listening and doing mingling activities in which students move among the other students and talk to them using the space left for them.

1.2.4. The Board

Edge and Garton (2009, pp.72-3) state that although classrooms ,nowadays, are equipped with technological tools such as using the Over Head Projector and other tools, the board is still approximately the most used equipment that teachers use.

It is important for the teacher to know how to use the board effectively. First of all, writing on the board should be organized using each part of the board for something. Teachers may use, for instance, the right hand half of the board for the prepared work, the left hand column for the new words or expressions that come up during the lesson, and the middle will be specified for examples or diagrams. Second, the board writing should be legible, straight, and big enough to ensure that all the students can see it. Finally and most important is the notion that the teacher should not be the only one who uses the board, students also should do so. This can be done, for example, when the teacher, in a reading class, with a text about “marriage” asks students to write on the board what comes to their minds about the topic. This will result in positive things:

- Movement round the classroom: It is useful for students who have been sitting for a long time.
- Involvement: This includes the student’s contribution to the lesson even if they do not know how.
- Engagement: This helps in getting students’ reactions towards the topic and it gives space for students to think and add ideas.
- Skills: Students will use the words in the board as they start working on the passage using scanning.

The students' use of the board ensure the students' contribution in the lesson giving the space for the teacher to evaluate them as they write words and even pronouncing them sometimes.

1.3. Definition of classroom management

Pretorius and Lemmer (1998, p.55 in Coetzee, Van Niekerk, and Wydeman, 2008)

define classroom management as:

The process of working with and through individuals, groups, and other resources, whether they be learners, educators, administrative staff, parents or stakeholders, to accomplish general educational goals and specific learning outcomes (p. 24)

Classroom management is defined here as a process that includes working with different people from individuals, groups, and different other sources from students or their parents, educators, administration or stakeholders for the purpose of obtaining particular learning outcomes and reaching general educational goals.

Van Deventer and Kruger (2003, p.18) define classroom management as “Planned, organized activities and procedures which allow for effective teaching and learning to take place” (Cited in Coetzee et al, 2008, p.24).

Landau states that“...Classroom management can exemplify the best or the worst aspects of teaching...” (Cited in Saha and Dworkin, 2009, p. 739)

Classroom management has some characteristics:

- Classroom management contains well- planned and different lessons.
- Discipline problems and disruptive behavior are minimized.
- A comfortable environment with respect and effective problem solving are found.

- It gives space for the teacher to vary the instruction and at the same time, it fulfills all the students' needs.
- Adopting certain methods to deal with specific behaviors.
- Establishing consistency.

1.4. Approaches to classroom management

When managing a classroom, each teacher has his/ her own approach to do that; this may result his or her previous experience or a beginner learning from other teachers. Onstein (1990, p .60) defines the coming different approaches to classroom management related to each teacher's personality, philosophy, and teaching style.

1.4.1. The Assertive approach:

Here, the teacher has knowledge of how to manage and guide students. S/he needs to know the main principles of managing a classroom in different aspects and how to follow these principles and use them effectively. In addition, s/he should know how to guide his/her students successfully.

1.4.2. The Business Academic approach:

This approach has the condition that if students are involved and react with the given activities, then there will be a minimal disruption. In other words, involving students and ensuring their involvement when doing certain activities is an essential thing that helps in minimizing any disruptive behavior since students are working and have no time for making noise.

1.4.3. The Behavioral modification approach:

It deals with the notion of reward and punishment in terms of that a good behavior from the student is accepted, then rewarded. Conversely, a bad behavior is refused, then the student is punished. This approach aims to control the student's behavior according to certain standards in terms of acceptance and refusal.

1.4.4. The Group managerial approach:

That is to develop the notion of supporting a group of students among others, which is called “allegiance to the group”. As a result, it minimizes the probability of the disruptive behavior to be raised. So, as far as students are supported among the other groups, the probability of students’ making noise in the classroom is less found and the teacher will be able to maintain discipline.

1.4.5. The Group guidance approach:

It means that an individual student’s misbehavior is considered to be as a result from the whole group and a solution for the problem will be by counseling the whole group. So, whenever a student makes a mistake, all the students will be responsible of that mistake and a solution is required from all of them.

1.4.6. The Acceptance approach:

This approach is based on that the student’s misbehavior is an urgent request for acceptance. This means that any disruptive behavior done by the student or any mistake is in fact a signal for his/her request of acceptance.

1.4.7. The Success approach:

Here, the important thing is the notion of success that teachers, through an effective classroom management, lead the students to feel successful and build self concept. Thus, applying an effective classroom management makes students feel successful as the teacher succeeded in managing the classroom. (Cited in Coetzee et al, 2008, pp. 26-7).

1.5. Aims of classroom management

Referring to Grage (2009, p.117) classroom management aims, first, at managing time allocated for teaching the content according to the student’s mental abilities. Then, classroom management aims at minimizing the classroom time that hinders the teaching and learning process. In other words, it minimizes the time that students waste in doing

some activities that impedes the process of teaching the lesson for the teacher and for the students to learn that lesson. Among these activities; irrelevant conversations with peers, noise-making, and moving around the classroom. Doyle (1986, p. 395) adds the notion that educators or teachers aim to achieve an instruction and to have control inside the classroom. As a result, controlled behaviors lead to a comfortable and positive environment (In Coetzee, 2008, pp. 24-5).

1.6. The Role of the teacher

Hadfield and Hadfield (2008, pp.148-9) offer the major roles that the teacher does in the classroom. First, as an information giver, and second as a facilitator. The former includes different roles of the teacher for the purpose of giving information. The latter includes several roles that the teacher does for the purpose facilitating thing for students.

1.6.1. Teacher as an information giver

1.6.1.1. Teacher as an explainer:

Here, the teacher has to explain things to his or her students from grammar tasks to vocabulary and deals with different levels especially weak students who need sometimes from the teacher to act or to mime. So, the teacher has to explain especially to explain more for the weakest students who need sometimes an extra explanation.

1.6.1.2. Teacher as a demonstrator:

Here, the teacher will be performing or miming in order to explain certain words to his or her students or showing how a specific game should be played because students sometimes can not understand a word or confuse things and ideas. Consequently, the teacher needs to make efforts to explain more using different and any possible way.

1.6.1.3. Teacher as an organizer and instruction giver:

Here, the teacher's role is to give instruction to his or her students and ask them to do certain tasks in order to complete the course successfully. S/he should give them the instruction and make clear for them how to do it and to do every task.

1.6.1.4. Teacher as a controller:

It is according to the students that the teacher plays the role of a controller. It is according to the student's behavior. S/ he will try to keep the students quiet and eliminate the dominance of some students than others.

1.6.1.5. Teacher as a route planner:

The teacher directs his/her students and guides them to what they are going to have in the course or lesson. The teacher, here, prepares students before the beginning of the course in order to guide them and make them know what they are going to do. So, the teacher contributes in their comprehension.

1.6.2. Teacher as a facilitator

1.6.2.1. Teacher as a guide:

The teacher is just a guider. S/he will neither give the students the information nor explain it, but s/he will give them the chance to explain the grammar or vocabulary by themselves. It is a kind of elicitation for the information.

1.6.2.2. Teacher as a monitor:

The teacher will be a listener. When students speak to each other in pairs or groups, the teacher monitors them and s/he tries to evaluate them and correct them later. So, s/he monitors their speech in order to give them feedback listening to them with the needed attention.

1.6.2.3. Teacher as a support system:

The teacher supports his/her students and helps them when working alone or together moving around and giving help. So, supporting them in terms of checking for comprehension and giving suggestions so as to assist in their learning and improvement.

1.6.2.4. Teacher as a feedback giver:

Here, the teacher evaluates his/her students or give them feedback. S/he may correct their errors directly or let them identify them and try to correct them. Evaluating them and giving feedback which contributes in their level amelioration.

1.6.2.5. Teacher as a counselor:

The teacher advises his/her students and shows them the ways to improve their level in some tasks. For example, the suitable way to memorize vocabulary and store as much words as possible in mind.

1.7. The Student's role

Generally, classroom management is considered to be the teacher's responsibility, but in fact the students also have roles inside the classroom in terms of being cooperative. First, the students should take the information given by the teacher and try to do the needed tasks. Then, they should participate and ask questions. Next, they should interact with their peers and try to solve problems together cooperatively. A final point is that the students have to work individually whether in class or at home and make personal efforts and be responsible of their own works (Davies and Pearse, 2000, p. 127).

1.8. Problems within EFL classes

There are several problems found within EFL classes that the teacher encounters when teaching and managing the classroom as well as when trying to keep control over his/her class.

1.8.1. Getting attention and participation

According to Davies and Pearse (2000, p. 123) state that is impossible for the teacher to get all the students' attention throughout the lesson especially when s/he really needs it as when s/he is explaining or giving instructions. Consequently, s/he will find his/herself repeating and explaining many times and there will be a big chaos interrupting the flow of the lesson. Thus, the teacher unwillingly finds him/herself shouting louder, trying to get the students' attention as well as asking for their participation, and it is something bad for his/her voice and mood and it will affect negatively his/her performance in presenting a lesson with success.

1.8.2. Managing pair and group work

Pair and group work may have disadvantages. First of all, when working together, the level of noise will increase and students may use their native language to talk about other things. Then, students may make errors and mistakes and keep on repeating them. So, the students will not do the task as it should be done. As a result, the teacher finds him/herself unable to get his/her students' attention and indirectly, s/he will the classroom control (Davies and Pearse ,2000, p. 125).

1.8.3. Discipline

Davies and Pearse (2000, pp. 127-8) state that, when teachers teach, their ultimate aim is to teach a class that characterized by order, respect, and cooperation. The teacher may keep control over his or her classroom at the beginning, but then s/he may face problems. Despite the fact that teachers keep control inside the classroom, but there is always one student or a group of students who do not obey the classroom rules and make problems. Consequently, these students will be punished.

Mcleod (2003) sees that "The efficient use of time is an important variable in helping students achieve learning goals and making the classroom a pleasant place for

teachers and students.” (p 3) . Teachers should know how to deal with time allotted to the session, so not to waste it and try to divide it squarely for the tasks to reach the goals of every lesson and make the classroom a pleasant place for the learning-teaching process.

Fenstermacher and Soltis (2004, pp. 12-4) see effective teaching, sometimes, may not be related neither to the nature of the student nor to their grades but more with the notion of time and how the teacher deals with it. A distinction between allocated time and engaged time is made. Allocated time is how much time is given by the teacher or the school to a given subject to be studied. On the other hand, engaged time is the time that a student takes in order to work at a certain subject. For sure, any amount of time that is given to a certain subject is crucial since it gives the opportunity to the student to study it as it should. If the teacher does not give students with the required time, they will perform poorly. However, the teacher sometimes gives the students the needed time, but then s/he will find them finishing early than the time they should finish at.

There are some factors that affect time which are non instructional routines, transitions between activities or classes, and school wide interruption but what is most important is that, in order to learn something well, and that learning is related immediately to time, students should spend a fair amount of time with any task.

1.8.4. Classroom interaction

Interaction is one of the issues included within classroom management that should be organized and not only the teacher who speaks and interacts in the classroom and students remain silent and being passive students. Actually, there are various patterns of interaction that may be found within a classroom and teachers have to know which pattern of should be included in every classroom activity; and they should keep interest and involve students.

1.8.4.1. Teacher to Students (T-Ss)

This kind of interaction is found, generally, at the beginning of a lesson or a practice in which the teacher takes the role of an elicitor, explainer, and instructor. This kind of interaction is characterized by lot of time given to (T .T .T),Teacher Talking Time, and the same duration should be given to the students.

1.8.4.2. Teacher to Students (T-S) and Student (s) to Teacher (Ss-T)

Here, the students interact with the teacher and the teacher will interact with a student individually or with the whole classroom in a drill or question and answer activity. This gives the chance for the teacher to see how students can perform individually though it may be threatening for some students to be “put on the spot” in which they are asked to talk without any kind of warning.

1.8.4.3. Half class to half class (Ss-Ss)

This kind of interaction can be found when the teacher divides the class in half. The two half class groups interact in terms of dialogue practice, team, or guessing games. Thus, there will be a lot of fun and chances for everyone to interact.

1.8.4.4. Student to class (S-Ss)

After group work, one student will represent his or her group of the two groups and give a kind of “report back” to the whole class. Therefore, this will bring the class together again and ends the activity after an interesting, valuable group interaction.

1.8.4.5. Student to Student (open pairs). (S-S)

It is an interaction between two students and the teacher with the rest of the class who are listening. This leads the teacher to give feedback and checking the students’ comprehension.

1.8.4.6. Student to Student (S-S)

In many of the classroom activities, students work in pairs, groups, or sometimes they move around the classroom talking to their classmates in a mingling activity. This kind of interaction is beneficial as it gives students an opportunity to speak and teachers to get feedback on how well do their students understand and use the language s/he taught them. This kind of interaction sometimes is not the favorite of some students because they think that talking to native speakers is better. However, the teacher should encourage them, make the move, and ensure that they involved in a real interaction with much more speaking practice. Mingling activities are useful; they lead students to speak to many students and improve their interactive skills as how to begin a conversation, develop it, and end it.

1.8.4.7. Individual Work (S)

The classroom time should not be given to an interaction between students all the time, but there should be a space for thinking and using mental abilities. For example, writing activities or preparing something before a speaking activity.

1.8.5. Large classroom size

1.8.5.1. Definition of a large classroom size

Baker and Westrup (2000, p. 2) state that “a class is large if the teacher feels that there are many students for them all to make progress in English. So a large class can mean any number.” Here, the number is not determined. The number that makes the classroom large, without considering whether the number is huge or not, is the number that makes the students unable to learn effectively, so any kind of improvement and level of progress will be impossible.

1.8.5.2. Characteristics of large classes

Most of large classes have some characteristics.

- Teachers and students can not easily move desks and chairs since they sit in form of rows.
- Sometimes, textbooks are inadequate for the whole number of students.
- The school copying facilities and teaching resources are limited.

1.8.5.3. Problems of large classes.

One of the main problems within EFL classes is the large classroom size which may affect the instruction negatively in terms of quantity and quality. Coetzee et al (2008, pp. 80-1) state the following problems:

- Students may not understand the instruction and its goals.
- They less can not know their level of improvement.
- There is a lack of motivation for the students because the number is huge.
- Students have fewer opportunities to interact and they have less care and no individual attention from the teacher.
- The teacher can not fulfill each student's particular needs.

Other problems are seen in big classes by Harmer (1998, p. 128):

- The teacher finds difficulty to deal with students seating at the back of the classroom.
- It is difficult for the teacher to give individual attention and it is difficult for students to ask for it.
- An organization for creative different sessions of teaching and learning will be an impossible mission.
- The students' movement around the classroom will be difficult.

Davies and pearse (2000, p. 129) say “The basic principles of teaching English are the same for groups of fourteen, forty, fifty, or sixty learners. But, it is obviously much more difficult to achieve good results in very large groups.” Here, any process of teaching English encompasses the same principles for every classroom containing a small or a big number, but the mission will be difficult and the teacher will find hardships with the large classes.

The main problems are related to:

1.8.5.3.1. Communication:

Both teachers can not see or hear well all the students and students can not hear or see the teacher well and in fact, it is something very important thing that ensure a successful communication process and build relationship among the students and the teacher.

1.8.5.3.2. Number:

- It is difficult for the teacher to know all the students’ names.
- There will be no individual practice and students can not be all given feedback especially on written tasks.
- Observing students working in pairs or groups working and monitoring them will be a difficult task for the teacher to do.

1.8.5.3.3. Cooperation

Large groups are most found within captive student situation in which the student’s attendance is compulsory. As a result, teachers will have a number of students who do not want to attend. Thus, they will not cooperate with the teacher.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, our focus was on the issue of classroom management and all the elements that are included in it or related to it; from its aims and how teachers should work effectively to realize these aims. Then, we referred to its main problems until we reached the problem of an overcrowded classroom, its characteristics, and the problems raised under it. The next chapter will be devoted for one of the four skills in EFL that is the speaking skill and all its components focusing on the nature of the oral communication within EFL classes.

Chapter Two

The Speaking Skill: Concepts and Definitions

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Introduction

Speaking is a skill that deserves attention as the rest of the other skills in a foreign language. Students need to be able to speak with confidence and success and this is their prior aim as the teacher's one. In this chapter, we will start by an overview about the speaking skill and its importance moving to classroom elements and skills which are both required to speak English accurately and fluently.

We will discuss some of the problems or exactly some of the factors that hinder students to speak following them by speaking activities that improve the students' level and involve them in much more speaking situation with the help of the teacher that is the role of the teacher ending with how to assess the speaking skill

2.1. Overview about the speaking skill

In order to give an overview about the nature of the speaking skill, the following elements gives a clear overview about it starting by defining speaking, classroom speaking, showing its importance, and the value of oral communication.

2.1.1 Definition of speaking

It is crucial for students, learning English as a foreign language, to speak English and use it competently when communicating. Speaking can be defined as a productive skill in which language is produced orally.

When coming to define speaking as communicating in the classroom, Davies and Pearse (2000) state that“..Speaking ability should partly be the natural result of using

English as the main means of communication in the classroom.” (p. 82). Studying English, students have to use English as the main tool to speak inside the classroom because they need to use the foreign language they are studying in order to communicate.

2.1.2. Classroom speaking

Generally, in most classrooms, speaking is considered to be just the student’s repetition of words and sentences. In fact, this is not the only way to speak English, but it is useful for students to use the language they are studying in situations that are similar to their living situations outside the classroom for the reason that they will have the chance to use English to express themselves, talk about their lives and beliefs, and have a chance to discuss and debate.

A good example is compared with a real situation. When students are asked to talk about a particular topic, they will have space to generate ideas and to speak using their own style, not repeating what they heard. As in real life, people do not repeat one another’s speech, they construct their own speech and conversations. So, teachers should specify time for his/her students to talk by suggesting topics and situations similar to their lives in order to speak, and not just parroting words and sentences for a whole lesson (Baker and Westrup, 2003, p. 7)

2.1.3. The importance of speaking

Both teachers and learners are concerned with; teachers to teach mainly grammar and vocabulary, and students to master grammar tasks and memorize a wide vocabulary. Besides, students will use this knowledge only in examinations in which they will be tested. As a result, students will find themselves unable to use English outside the classroom though they have enough knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. So, an

important question will be asked, why should students speak English, and teachers teach speaking?

At the level of education, educators and ministries of education need people who speak very good English. Companies and organizations need a staff able to speak English, to communicate with international companies. Thus, students speaking English very well will have great opportunity for further education.

Speaking good English helps students also to get and understand information in scientific, economic, and social fields. As a result, speaking English well make students, indirectly, an efficient element in their community and country.

At the level of the classroom; speaking activities give the students more chances to learn new vocabulary, grammar, or functional language. They push students to use their language that is English. In addition, these activities give a chance for advanced students to compare the new language with their previous language in different situations and topics (Baker and Westrup, 2003, pp.5-6).

For different reasons, students often need to use the language they are studying that is English or they need to practice speaking inside the classroom. Hedge (2000, p. 261) says that one initial reason is that, most of the students consider speaking English competently as a priority even if it is a difficult task to do. One other reason is that students speak because they need this skill; for example, to keep up rapport in relationships, impress people, and win or lose negotiations.

2.1.4 The value of oral communication

When learning, students most of the time think of communication as “one way”, but teachers conversely, they think about the feedback in order to assess students. This latter,

generally, takes the form of written tasks. But, an oral feedback asking questions in which the student ought to answer. Thus, to speak, is not only the teacher's role to ask questions; it is "two-way" communication. The students should ask for more explanation or clarification in case of misunderstanding and answer at the same time. So, it becomes an oral communication without being afraid of making mistakes because making mistakes is learning indirectly.

Sometimes, students may attend more formal lectures in which an opportunity of speaking and asking questions may not be available, or they have at least one chance to speak. This latter, for sure, needs some degree of self confidence (Robertson and Smith, 1987, p. 53).

Being a process of an oral communication, Brown and Yule (1983, p. 13) state that the spoken language may have two distinctive functions that are transactional and interactional functions. The former is concerned with a main purpose which is to convey messages that should be understood by the listener, so the main focus in a transactional function is the transference of information and it is message -oriented. The latter is a listener-oriented and it is based on the exchange of information between a speaker and a listener.

2.2. Elements of speaking

Language features and mental processing are two main things that Harmer (2001, pp. 269-71) suggested for the speaker to produce language.

2.2.1. Language features: which are the elements necessary for speaking.

2.2.1.1. Connected speech

It means that English speakers who speak competently do not only have to use English phonemes in isolation, but also to use connected speech in which the sound are modified in terms of assimilation, added in terms of linking, or omitted in terms of elision. So it is necessary to involve students in the activities that ameliorate their connected speech

2.2.1.2. Expressive devices

These devices are useful to convey meaning and they are beneficial especially to have an effective communication. Among these devices; change of pitch and stress of certain parts of utterances, varied speed, and some paralinguistic features of language that are used to express emotions especially in face to face interaction. These are devices that characterize native speaker's speech.

2.2.1.3. Lexis and grammar

They are common lexical and grammatical phrase that are used in order to say something for a particular purpose or a language function. Expressing approval, disagreement, or surprise are some of the language functions that have specific phrases that students have to use in specific speaking contexts.

2.2.1.4. Negotiation language

It is a language that effective speakers use to negotiate with listener in order to seek for clarification which is crucial for both speakers and listeners to understand each other.

Asking for clarification can be on the part of the speaker or the listener. Teachers have to show students how to use this language to reach a successful process of communication.

2.2.2. Mental/Social processing

The ability to speak does not involve just those elements discussed previously. However, it requires the so-called mental/social processing.

2.2.2.1. Language processing

Language should be processed in the speaker's mind in terms of order, coherence, connecting words and phrases, and producing propositionally and syntactically meaningful sequences. Language processing can be done when students practice speaking activities in the classroom.

2.2.2.2. Interacting with others

In most speaking situations, interaction is between two and more interlocutors. So, to interact effectively, speakers have to be good listeners, understanding the other's feelings, and respecting the so labeled turn taking in order for the communication process to be done successfully.

2.2.2.3. (On-The-Spot) Information processing

It is to process the information when getting it from the listener. It is related especially to culture and it is beneficial to not be less effective communicators. So, the speaker, in order to process the information, needs to understand the speaker's intentions especially his/her culture.

2.2.3. Accuracy and fluency

The ability to speak English is based on two essential things that are accuracy and fluency. Baker and Westrup (2003, 7) state that

Someone who can use English well is both accurate and fluent. Accurate speakers do not make mistakes in grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation. Fluent speakers can express themselves appropriately and without hesitation.

In other words, the students have not to use English with faulty grammar or mispronunciation, that is to speak accurately. They ought not to speak with fear and hesitation, thus speaking freely and with lack of confidence.

Pinter (2006, p. 55) clarifies that one of the big challenges for EFL students is to speak accurately and is to be fluent speakers. It is somehow difficult for them especially when it comes to fluency because fluency includes two processes which are speaking and thinking at the same time. In other words, when speaking, the students will find him/herself thinking about what s/ he is saying at the moment and controlling his/her speech and trying not to make mistakes, and if so, s/he has to correct them.

2.3. Speaking skills

In order to speak and interact, students need the following skills:

- Students have to think always to say something in English and express it with high self confidence.
- They need to use words, phrases, and sentences using grammar and vocabulary; saying them correctly in order to convey meaning and ensure the listener's full comprehension.
- To speak quickly keeping at the same time the flow of the conversation, students need to be fluent speakers.

- Students have to stretch their language to know how to deal with certain situations. For instance, when forgetting a word, or being unable to find the exact word to say, students need to find another way to explain the intended meaning.
- A final skill that students should have when interacting is to know how to communicate appropriately and not just saying things for the sake of saying. In other words, responding to what the others say, respecting turn-taking and the when to interrupt, expressing interest and asking for clarification sometimes keep the flow of the conversation (Hadfield and Hadfield, 2008, p. 105).

2.4. The Relationship between speaking and the other skill

2.4.1 Speaking and writing

Language teaching, along its history, focused on the study of a written language that is called language of literature and scholarship and any educated person has to have a good deal with literature and scholarship being taught through excellent models. As studying these models, the student finds him/herself producing a language or speaking. Halliday (1989, p. 92) says that “They are both realizations of meaning of language because what can be written can be said and vice versa. They are both a form of language that is the most important whether written or spoken.”, This means that both written or spoken form of language are both realization of meaning because the speaker’s speech as it is spoken, it can be written.

2.4.2. Speaking and listening

Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, and Pincas (1980, pp. 65-6) It is a fact that students will produce sounds without listening to them before whether in his or her mother

tongue or a foreign language without having a first listening to the form that s/he is expected to do.

Generally, listening is considered to be a passive skill and speaking an active one. However, it is not, because listening that is decoding a message needs active participants in communication. So, a receptive skill or a passive one that is listening is for sure essential in understanding the message of communication. Listening is related to speaking also because the speaker can not keep talking unless s/ he is sure that his/her speech is understood by the listener and this is through the listener' body language, eye contact, or non verbal noises.

Moreover, speaking also is important because even if a student is good at listening, this does not always mean that s/he speaks well. Most of the time listening leads o speaking, but there should be a practice in speaking. So, being a good listener needs from the student to be a good speaker.

2.5. Classroom speaking problems

Ur (1991, p. 121) There are some factors which hinder the student to talk in the classroom and prevent him/her from speaking accurately and fluently. So as, s/he will not speak the foreign language s/he is studying as s/he has to do. They are divided into:

2.5.1. Inhibition

Unlike the other skills, the speaking skill is a skill that requires from the student to use the language and to face an audience, but most of the students are inhibited when trying to say speak for the coming reasons; fear of making mistakes, fear from any kind of criticism or losing face, or shyness because of the attention given to them by the audience.

(Also in Davies and Pearse, 2000, p.82)

2.5.2. Nothing to say

This is another problem. There is no inhibition on the part of students; they are unable to speak because simply they can not find what to say. They are not motivated enough to express themselves and inside them, they want to speak.

2.5.3. Low or uneven participation

It has a relationship with some students' dominance or a large group. In other words, some students do not speak at all in the classroom or they speak very little especially when the number of students is huge. In addition to some students' dominance who speak nearly all the time or during the whole session.

2.5.4. Mother-tongue interference

The case here is when the whole class or a number of students share the same mother tongue, so they may use it for its easiness or they feel comfortable, spontaneous, and less exposed as they use it.

2.5.5. Lack of confidence

Baker and Westrup (2003, p. 14) mentions the problem of students' lack of confidence. Learning together in one classroom, some students have to bear in mind that some students within the same class may show their unwillingness to listen to them or they are unwilling to give any kind of help or participation when communication takes place. Differently, this kind of students feel embarrassed most of the time, they are not sure about what to say or unable to speak freely; their requests and questions are always misunderstood. All these characteristics represent one main thing that is lack of confidence.

2.5.6. Other problems

Davies and Pearse (2000, p. 82) state two other problems facing EFL students which are first, a comprehensible pronunciation is essential because sometimes speakers with strong regional accent can not understand non native speakers. Second, the speaker finds difficulty in terms of time because s/he will not find time to think carefully about his /her speech when speaking. Moreover, s/he has to listen to the other's speech. Finally, s/he should be ready for any change of topic or what to say when moments of silence raised.

2.6. Speaking activities

In order to improve the speaking skill, speaking activities are used in the classroom; most of them improve the students' capability to communicate effectively. Harmer (2001, p. 271-4) differentiates these following activities:

2.6.1. Acting from a script

It is an activity in which students act out scenes from plays or their course books or dialogues they prepare themselves. This is frequently get them performing in front of the class. Besides, students should be given time for rehearsal and good preparation and the teacher with the rest of the class will be as "theatre directors" and evaluators. All this should be in a comfortable, supportive classroom atmosphere. Students do a lot of practice in order to ensure that learning and language production are included in this activity.

2.6.2. Communication games

It is a kind of an information-gap activity that brings students to communicate with one another. In other words, a student will communicate with his/her partner, for instance,

to depict a picture, arrange disordered things, or solve a puzzle. Television and radio games are good means to improve students' fluency in the classroom.

2.6.3. Discussion activities

It is something in which students fail sometimes because of less confidence and fear to speak as they do not have what to say or they are shy. The "buzz way" is a proposed way for the teacher in order to use to avoid this problem. It means that students will have space for discussion working in small groups and there will be no stress or fear from speaking as when speaking in front of the whole class.

The buzz group is used, for example, to predict a content of a reading text, students' reaction towards it, or a discussing after listening to a song or conversation. There is another way of discussion that is including "instant comment" mini activities into lessons in which students are going to comment about photographs or introducing topics and say what come into their minds seeing those things. There is a kind of discussion that happens in the middle of the lesson; it is unexpected and not pre-planned, but if it is encouraged, it can be very useful.

2.6.4. Prepared talks

It is a kind of activity in which students prepare talks which are topics chosen and developed by students themselves. They are formal and they are written through, it is better, if students prepare them from their notes than from a script. Well organized talks will be interesting for both speakers (students to students) and listener (teacher and students).

2.6.5. Questionnaires activities

Questionnaires are good especially when they are pre-planned because they ensure that there is speech between questioner and respondent. Students may design a questionnaire choosing a suitable topic with the teacher's assistance. Then, they may do written works, discussions, or prepared talks from the results of the questionnaire.

2.6.6. Simulation and role play

Role-play is when students are asked to play dialogues or they are pretending to do something or a character or performing in a specific situation. Edge (1993, p. 97) says that:

As its simplest, role-play is built into (ELT) from the earliest stages, when we ask students to say the lines of a dialogue. If we keep this in mind, we can make better use of dialogue by not letting students simply read each line aloud. When students are speaking a dialogue, make sure that they look at the person they are addressing, and that they speak their lines meaningfully.

Here, in role plays, students should not be asked just to read a dialogue, but to perform it looking to the person s/he is talking to and speaking meaningfully.

In simulations, students are asked to play something or imagine themselves in a situation as it may happen in their real life like a business meeting, or an interview. Hedge (1993) explains "Like role-plays, simulations involve pretence. In simulations; however, students are not so much asked to play at being someone else. They are rather asked to be themselves in an imaginary situation."(p. 99). So, in simulations, students are asked to imagine themselves in a situation in which they find themselves performing other characters.

2.7. The role of the teacher

According to Harmer (2001, pp. 275-6), teachers have different roles in the classroom according to different situations. When it comes to the speaking activities which are done for the purpose of fluency, the teacher's major roles are:

2.7.1. Teacher as a prompter

The teacher, here, takes the role of prompter in order to give a kind of assistance for his/her students in case that they find themselves lost or unable to carry on or unaware of what to say next. However, the teacher should let the students solve the problem by themselves, and indeed it is a useful strategy. Besides, the teacher may offer suggestions with the condition of not disturbing students or disrupting the discussion.

2.7.2. Teacher as a participant

When teaching, the teacher asks students to do various activities and the teacher's participation is an inevitable fact. So, the teacher wishes always to participate in some part of the activity introducing information, giving help, keeping a comfortable atmosphere and ensuring student's involvement. However, the teacher's participation and contribution should not be too much or dominant.

2.7.3. Teacher as a feedback provider

During the speaking activities, the teacher, for sure s/he will give his/her students some kind of an evaluation or feedback. However, the teacher should take into consideration that over correction during the activity impedes the flow of communication and inhibits students. A helpful and a motivating correction may keep the

communicativeness of the correction and avoid any kind of misunderstanding. So, all it is the teacher's role about how to give the appropriate required feedback.

2.8. Assessing speaking

According to Bygate (1987):

..To test whether learners can speak, it is necessary to get them to actually say something. To do this they must act on o knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. By giving them “speaking practice” and “oral exams” we recognize that there is a difference between knowledge about a language, and a skill in using it. (p3)

Before assessing students, they have to speak using his/her grammar and vocabulary. So, when having a speaking practice or an oral exam, they will show their knowledge and their skills in using that knowledge.

Referring to Brown (2004, pp. 141-2), when students try to speak, they always wish to say something that is acceptable at the level of grammar, vocabulary or good pronunciation and meaningful stretches of speech. On the other hand, teachers often wish to see their students speaking accurately and fluently. So, they find themselves unwilling to give students such kind of evaluation and feedback. In other words, assessing their students and their speaking performance.

There are five main tasks in which speaking is assessed:

2.8.1. Imitative

The main focus, here, is the student's ability to imitate a word, phrase, or a sentence. It is only the phonetic level or pronunciation. The main role of the speaker, from a listening task, is to try to retain a short stretch of a language that s/he will have to imitate, and when doing so, s/he repeat just what s/he heard for the sake of speaking and not for the

sake of participation in an interactive conversation in which s/he should must have understood or conveyed meaning.

2.8.2. Intensive

A second type of speaking that is assessed is that at the level of producing short stretches of speech that are correct grammatically and phonologically including stress, intonation with full meaning semantically, for the speaker to be able to understand and respond in an interaction that is minimal at best. An example of intensive assessment tasks includes reading aloud, sentence and dialogue completion, limited picture-cued tasks.

2.8.3. Responsive

Responsive assessment encompasses interaction with comprehension, but included in very short conversations, and small talks, or requests and comments between interlocuters.

2.8.4. Interactive

This kind of speaking task is compared with the previous one that is responsive in terms of the length and complexity of the interaction that may include different changes or multiple participants. This kind of interaction can have two forms: transactional language or interpersonal exchanges. The former means an interaction for the purpose of exchanging particular information and the latter is for the purpose of maintaining social relationship which can be complex and difficult because the speaker will speak casually using ellipsis, humor, or sociolinguistic.

2.8.5. Extensive

This kind of speech includes an assessment for speeches, oral production, and story-telling in which a kind of an oral response from listeners is limited or ruled out together. The language and style in this kind of speech is formal and well-planned, but certain kind of informal monologues are inevitable.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have focused on one of the skills that should be present and given its real value within EFL classes that is the speaking skill. We tried to define it and give an overview about all what have a relationship with it from elements and skills which are crucial for speaking, at the same time mentioning the main problems that may impede students from speaking. For that, certain classroom speaking activities are suggested in order to solve these problems with the teacher's assistance that is the role of the teacher. As a result, students will be involved in real communication, use English competently inside and outside the classroom in different contexts; therefore, their oral proficiency will be developed.

Chapter Three

Description and Analysis of the Classroom

Observation and the Teachers' Interview.

Chapter Three

Description and Analysis of the Classroom Observation and the Teachers' Interview.

Introduction

In the foregoing chapters, we have presented a review of related literature to large classroom size and the speaking skill. The present chapter is devoted to the analysis of both data collection tools; the observation and the teachers' interview. We will start, first of all, by analyzing the results we got from the observation we did with three classes of second year LMD students which we chose randomly, then, secondly, we will analyze the teacher's interview. The results we obtain will enable us to diagnose our hypotheses as we tried to gather data from a real situation as being present in oral expression sessions and from teachers' answers as being teachers of oral expression for many years, so they have enough experience. Thus, they can be both fruitful.

3.1. Description and analysis of the classroom observation.

Introduction

In order to test whether the huge number of students in the classroom affect negatively the students' oral performance, we dealt with the observation as a tool to collect data with second year English LMD classes as being our sample of the study.

3.1.1. Design and description of the observation

In order to observe second year LMD students, we have done our observation with three groups, attending two sessions with each group in a period of two weeks with three

teachers. Time devoted for each session was one hour and a half and these three classes were characterized by an attendance of a huge number of students during the lectures.

The observation took a form of a checklist that contains seventeen items divided into two sections. The first section is about the student's oral performance which includes eight items that we try to observe and be sure that they exist within those classes or not. These items are generally about the students' ability to speak English accurately and fluently, their chances to speak and interact with the teacher or with their peers, and the teacher's role in the classroom or presenting specific speaking activities successfully.

The second section that contains nine items is about overcrowded classes in which we try to observe certain elements that may be found within those classes as front zone and back zone students interaction, each students chance to have an individual attention from the teacher and a chance to ask questions and ask for clarification. Moreover, whether students feel at ease and seat comfortably in the classroom and whether a teacher is able to get control over the classroom and get all the students' attention. In addition to his/her role as a helper and a facilitator.

3.1.3. The aim of the observation

The first section of the observation is about the students' oral performance. It seeks at knowing how students perform in oral expression sessions in terms of how they interact with the teacher or with each other, how their level of the foreign language (FL) they are studying, precisely, how is their English in terms of accuracy and fluency. Then, how is the role of the teacher as a feedback provider. In this section, we aim also at knowing to what extent teachers are able to teach the speaking skill through different tasks and speaking activities with success and to what extent students are given opportunities to participate and develop their speaking skills.

The aim beneath the second section is to know how students study and to what extent they can be productive in a class that is overcrowded. First, it seeks at knowing if students are relaxed, seating comfortably and moving easily, so as to feel at ease to speak. Second, whether they can see and hear well the teacher as s/he may do. Third, to confirm or not that there is always a difference between the students seating in the front or at the back in terms of interaction and superiority. Finally, the ultimate aim of this section is to know to what extent is the teacher able to take care of every student, give the students a chance to ask for clarification, and to get all the students' attention though the mess that characterizes the large classes.

3.1.4. The analysis of the classroom observation.

The first group

Section one: General observation of the students' oral performance.

Item one: Each student has a chance to speak at least once during the session.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	1	1
Percentage	0%	0%	50%	50%

Table.3.1. The student's chance to speak once during the session.

Being an observer of this classroom, we found that it was impossible for each student to speak at least once because not all of them speak; we noticed that just few members who speak always and some do not speak at all. So, they could not all speak and once in a session. As it is shown in the table, in the two sessions, we found that they could not speak all, never, in one session or it is rarely just when the teacher gives them the chance to speak one by one.

Item two: The teacher talks during the whole session.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	2	0	0	0
Percentage	100%	0%	0%	0%

Table.3.2. The teacher's talk during the session.

As we observed in the two sessions we attended, we found that the teacher was the most active element in the classroom since s/he was the one who talks the whole session and took most of the time talking and explaining, so s/he took a long time and students could not have time to speak at all sometimes or just few members who will do so.

Item three: Students interact actively with the teacher.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	2	0	0
Percentage	0%	100%	0%	0%

Table.3.3. The students' interaction with the teacher.

In both sessions, we found that the students' interaction with the teacher is not an active interaction for the reason that, first, not all of them interact with him/her or they are passive students. Some of them interact actively, but they do not exceed three students and the passive ones do not speak unless the teacher asks them to speak. The rest may not have a chance to speak because the ones who interact actively took a long time talking, so it was in the two sessions that the students did not interact actively.

Item four: Students interact actively with each other.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	1	1
Percentage	0%	0%	50%	50%

Table.3.4. The students' interaction with each other.

In the two sessions, we found that the interaction between students, in the first session is rarely found, and in the second session, it was not found at all. So, what we observed is that the space for an interaction between students is not found at all; they listen to each other, but they do not discuss with one another. They do not ask one another questions, and they do not even criticize or evaluate each other's speech or exchange points of view.

Item five: Students speak making grammatical and pronunciation mistakes.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	2	0	0	0
Percentage	100%	0%	0%	0%

Table.3.5. The students' level of accuracy.

In the two sessions, we observed that all the students who speak commit errors and make mistakes whether in grammar or pronunciation; their speech is characterized by incorrectness. We also observed students misuse words and misplace them, and mispronounce words. There were approximately three students who spoke accurately with the fact that they make some mistakes under stress or anxiety. We noticed that they make some mistakes that they should not do at this level because they have studied English for one year and this year is supposed to be their last year studying grammar.

Item six: Students participate using English fluently.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	1	1
Percentage	0%	0%	50%	50%

Table.3.6. The students' level of fluency.

Since students speak the language with faulty grammar and pronunciation, they will not speak fluently and this was what we have remarked with this group. As we said before just few students whose speech was accurate, they seem to be fluent speakers, but not to be as native speakers. We saw most of them shy, anxious, and afraid from speaking freely. Another thing we observed is that they speak English thinking in Arabic or just translate Arabic into English.

Item seven: Speaking activities are carried out successfully.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.7. The speaking activities carried out.

Doing the speaking activities designed for the session, in the first session, the teacher plans to start by a game for just ten minutes in kind of questions written by students and addressed to each other without mentioning their names. Then, to do another task for the whole session .But, the whole session time was unfortunately for the whole session without doing the second task that was supposed to be done.

In the second session, a number of students working in pairs or groups were supposed to perform plays, but just two pairs did that and the rest plays were postponed. As a result, in the two sessions, the teacher's planning for the speaking tasks to be done during the

session failed. For that reason, it was rarely or never that the teacher does what s/he designed for the session because of time constraints.

Item eight: The teacher corrects his/her students' errors and mistakes.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	2	0
Percentage	0%	0%	100%	0%

Table.3.8. The teacher's feedback to students.

When committing errors and making mistakes, no oral correction was given to students whether directly or indirectly, just few times.

Section two: General observation of large classroom size.

Item one: The teacher gives each student an individual attention.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	0	2
Percentage	0%	0%	0%	100%

Table.3.9. The individual attention given to students by the teacher.

Attending two sessions with this group, we found that individual attention was never given by the teacher for each student. We remarked that the teacher gives attention for those who speak and work actively. Because of their efforts to speak and participate, students succeeded in getting the teacher's attention to them. The rest were not given attention one by one and it was impossible also to do that because the teacher could not do that with the whole number of students.

Item two: Back zone students interact actively.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	1	1
Percentage	0%	0%	50%	50%

Table.3.10. Back zone students 'interaction.

It was observed in both sessions that students seating at the back of the classroom do not interact at all with the teacher and if they do so it was very rare. They were passive; they kept silent all the time and they speak just if the teacher asks them to speak and since the numerous, they let their classmates who are seating in the front speak and for a long time. What we saw also is that, most of the time, talkative students seat always at the back, so when communicating, they communicate just for the purpose of making noise and disturbing the teacher and their peers; they feel hidden.

Item three: Front zone students interact actively.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	2	0	0	0
Percentage	100%	0%	0%	0%

Table.3.11. Front zone students interaction.

We found that students in the front were the most ones who interact with the teacher and for many times. They were also given the entire teacher's attention. So, they took indirectly the chance of the back students to participate or have the teacher's attention.

Item four: Students have a chance to ask questions or ask for clarification.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	2	0
Percentage	0%	0%	100%	0%

Table.3.12. The students' chance to ask for clarification.

In two successive sessions within this group, we observed that students were rarely allowed to ask for clarification or questions because there was no extra time for further explanation or clarification from the teacher. One hour and a half was not enough for the teacher to finish the lecture's tasks, so it was impossible to re-explain. We observed with the case of this teacher that she did not ask hi/her students in both sessions whether they were following him/her and whether they understood him/her or not.

Item five: The teacher knows most of his/her students' names.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	2	0
Percentage	0%	0%	100%	0%

Table.3.13. The teacher's knowledge of the students' names.

Knowledge of the students' names by the teacher reflects how close the teacher and students' relationship is and it reflects that the teacher deals with all his/her students without exception or bias to any of them more than others. However, attending two sessions with the same group, we found that the teacher does not know all the students' names, just few of them especially the ones who were seating in front of him/her.

Item six: The teacher sees and hears all his/her students as well as do the students.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.14. The teacher and students' sight and hearing in the classroom.

We attended the first session in one class in which the teacher was able to see and approximately hear all the students, but the second session was in a classroom in which the number was huge and the class was narrow. So, the teacher was not really able to see all the students and hear them especially the ones seating at the back of the classroom.

Item seven: The teacher moves around students to give suggestions and check for comprehension.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.15. The teacher's role to check for comprehension and give suggestions.

We observed that neither the first session nor the second session, the teacher moves around or ask for comprehension or give suggestions especially in the second session, the students' attendance was great and more than the first session. There was no time to check for comprehension or give suggestions.

Item eight: Students sit comfortably and move easily inside the classroom.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.16. The students' seating and movement in the classroom.

During the first session, students' seating and movement were normal despite the fact that they were seating in unorganized way. The second session, on the other hand, was characterized by a huge number of students studying in a small classroom; there were not enough space or tables, so students brought tables and chairs and seat in unorganized way. Thus, making noise and wasting time when normally the teacher should have started the lesson.

Item nine: The teacher gets all the students' attention.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	0	2
Percentage	0%	0%	0%	100%

Table.3.17. The teacher's role in getting all the students' attention.

The two sessions were characterized by the teacher's failure in getting all his/her students' attention. Some were concentrating, some were talking and the teacher was over the classroom, thus getting all the students' attention.

The second group

Section one: General observation of the students' oral performance.

Item one: Each student has a chance to speak at least once during the session.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.18. The student's chance to speak once during the session.

We observed within this classroom that not all the students spoke in the session, just few of them especially in the first session which was a listening session, then discussing questions; they were not all given the chance to speak and it was also difficult for all of them to answer since it was a listening task and it was difficult for them to answer since they could not all catch the words and understand very well the passage they listened to. However, the second session was a reading session in which students felt at ease since they had papers at hand though not all of them answered and spoke as we observed the teacher obliging them to speak.

Item two: The teacher talks during the whole session.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	1	1	0	0
Percentage	50%	50%	0%	0%

Table.3.19. The teacher's talk during the session.

During the first session, the teacher was the one who talked too much since it was a listening task because students were not all good listener just few of them who understood the passage and could interact with the teacher. After listening, the teacher asks them questions and tries to get them speak, but students were afraid and not sure about their answers, so the session was characterized by the teacher speaking all the time. In the second session, the teacher talked less than the first session, but s/he was the one who talks more.

Item three: Students interact actively with the teacher.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.20. The students' interaction with the teacher.

As we observed, in the first session, students were less active and did not want to participate with the teacher. In the second session, their participation was considerable, but there were always excellent members whose participation was apparent.

Item four: Students interact actively with each other.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	2	0
Percentage	0%	0%	100%	0%

Table.3.21. The students' interaction with each other.

In the two sessions, the students made efforts in order to interact just with the teacher as s/he does strongly to encourage them to speak and the interaction among students themselves was rarely found and if it is; there were some students who were courageous than others, who show willingness to discuss with their peers, but the process failed since the others remain silent and afraid from expressing their ideas and point of view.

Item five: Students speak making grammatical and pronunciation mistakes.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	2	0	0	0
Percentage	100%	0%	0%	0%

Table.3.22. The students' level of accuracy.

Attending two sessions within this class, students' speech was full of grammatical mistakes with mispronunciation. Their speech was characterized by misconjugating verbs, misplacing words, speaking English thinking in L1 and with some students; the pronunciation was like the (L1) accent. Their speech also was full of idiosyncratic expressions as saying "I am a fashion show instead of saying a fashion designer" or "they invented me instead of they invited me". Even if they have been prepared before and they still commit errors and using strange expressions or combinations that do not exist in English.

Item six: Students participate using English fluently.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	2	0
Percentage	0%	0%	100%	0%

Table.3.23. The students' level of fluency.

In both sessions, the students' speech was with faulty grammar and pronunciation. So, reaching fluency was something difficult for them. In addition to grammar and pronunciation mistakes, students were not able to speak freely. They speak with a lot of hesitation, fear, and shyness; they were not able to answer quickly. They misunderstood each other's questions or words sometimes and this lead them to lose concentration.

Item seven: Speaking activities are carried out successfully.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.24. The speaking activities carried out.

We observed that, in the first session, the teacher prepared two tasks: a listening task with discussion as a part from a lecture and performing plays which were postponed later; they have done just one task. In the second session, the teacher succeeded in the completion of the speaking task though time constraints.

Item eight: The teacher corrects his/her students' errors and mistakes.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	1	1	0	0
Percentage	50%	50%	0%	0%

Table.3.25. The teacher's feedback to students.

The teacher's correction and feedback is very important in developing the students' level. In the first session, no immediate correction for students after committing the error or making the mistake just at the end of the session, there was a general evaluation for the student's level with correction of their mistakes but, not all of them. In the second session, there was no correction either directly or indirectly.

Section two: General observation of large classroom size.

Item one: The teacher gives each student an individual attention.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	1	1
Percentage	0%	0%	50%	50%

Table.3.26. The individual attention given to students by the teacher.

There were no individual attention given to every student during the two lectures just, in the second session, the teacher gives attention for a number of students more than

others. Consequently, it was impossible to give every student an individual care or attention.

Item two: Back zone students interact actively.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	2	0
Percentage	0%	0%	100%	0%

Table.3.27. Back zone students ‘interaction.

Back zone students interaction or participation was rarely active. They were reluctant to speak or participate, and if they do, just few of them who try to show that they are “there” and present. We remarked that whenever students feel at ease especially when the classroom space is large, they feel as who stay in the front, this is in the first session. In the second session, it was the contrary, students were too numerous and seating in the back, they felt isolated from the rest of the classroom.

Item three: Front zone students interact actively.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	2	0	0	0
Percentage	100%	0%	0%	0%

Table.3.28. Front zone students’ interaction.

Front zone students in both sessions were actively participating and communicating more than the ones at the back. This is may be because they feel comfortable even if there were some students in the front especially in the first row that seems to be scared from speaking being near from the teacher.

Item four: Students have a chance to ask questions or ask for clarification.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	1	1
Percentage	0%	0%	50%	50%

Table.3.29. The students' chance to ask for clarification.

The chance to ask questions or to ask for clarification was not found at all in the first sessions because all the time was devoted for the tasks that should be done (listening, discussing, then performing); So, it was difficult or there was no enough time for students to ask for clarification. In the second session, there was some time for that, but just two students asked for clarification, not all of them.

Item five: The teacher knows most of his/her students' names.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	2	0	0
Percentage	0%	100%	0%	0%

Table.3.30. The teacher's knowledge of the students' names.

Within this classroom, the teacher was able to recognize nearly half of the classroom students' names, but sometimes s/he mixed some or be mistaken in naming others.

Item six: The teacher sees and hears all his/her students as well as do the students.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.31. The teacher and students' sight and hearing in the classroom.

During the first session, the teacher was not able to see the students who were seating at the back and s/he could not hear them well. The second session was somehow better because the session was in a large class.

Item seven: The teacher moves around students to give suggestions and check for comprehension.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	0	2
Percentage	0%	0%	0%	100%

Table.3.32. The teacher’s role to check for comprehension and give suggestions.

In these two sessions, the teacher did not move around students and did not give them suggestions just if the student asked for clarification.

Item eight: Students sit comfortably and move easily inside the classroom.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.33. The students’ seating and movement in the classroom.

In the first session, the students found difficulty to seat especially at the back and as an observer, we could not find a place to seat and when trying to move in order to perform their plays, students were annoyed moving between tables.

Item nine: The teacher gets all the students' attention.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	1	1
Percentage	0%	0%	50%	50%

Table.3.34. The teacher's role in getting all the students' attention.

Within this group, the teacher was not able to get all the students' attention especially in the first session because they kept silent, just when they were listening and then they start talking and the teacher could not get their attention. The teacher was annoyed each time to ask them to keep quiet. The second session was with a more calm atmosphere with some noise even the teacher was surprised on some students' behavior and s/he told them that this was not their usual behavior.

The third group

Section one: General observation of the students' oral performance.

Item one: Each student has a chance to speak at least once during the session.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	0	2
Percentage	0%	0%	0%	100%

Table.3.35. The student's chance to speak once during the session.

Attending two sessions with this group, we observed that it was something impossible that all students talk once during the two lectures especially in the first lecture there was a considerable attendance of students that made the classroom overcrowded. So, there was no chance for each student to speak. In the second lecture also, we observed that

a number of students talked once, but always not all of them, nearly the half of the classroom.

Item two: The teacher talks during the whole session.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	1	1	0	0
Percentage	50%	50%	0%	0%

Table.3.36. The teacher’s talk during the session.

As we saw, the teacher’s talk in the first session was more than the second one because in the first session; the teacher admired the play that students were performing, so s/he kept on speaking, commenting, and asking questions without giving much time for students though they talked, but the teacher’s talk was more. In the second session, the teacher’s talk was less, but s/he was the one who always have more time than students for the reason that not every student has an opportunity to speak at least once.

Item three: Students interact actively with the teacher.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	1	1	0	0
Percentage	50%	50%	0%	0%

Table.3.37. The students’ interaction with the teacher.

Observing this group, we found that their interaction with the teacher was less than in the second session. In the first session, their interaction with the teacher was of an average level. However, in the second session was better. We noticed that when students like the topic being discussed or the topic of the plays, their interaction was great especially with the teacher.

Item four: Students interact actively with each other.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.38. The students' interaction with each other.

Here, we found that the communication space between students was rarely found. For instance, in the first session, we found that the interaction between students was not found at all, just interacting with the teacher. Differently, in the second session, we noticed the ice wall was broken between them, but not all of them and all of that was because they liked the topic of the monologue one student was performing that was about “his grandmother who wanted to have a face book’ account”. Thus, they were so excited to speak about this topic that they admired so much and it is a topic of these days.

Item five: Students speak making grammatical and pronunciation mistakes.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	2	0	0	0
Percentage	100%	0%	0%	0%

Table.3.39. The students' level of accuracy.

Most of the students' talk of this group was of an average level, they spoke with faulty grammar. But, there were excellent students who were few who make few errors, but not too much.

Item six: Students participate using English fluently.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	2	0
Percentage	0%	0%	100%	0%

Table.3.40. The students' level of fluency.

The students seem not to be fluent speakers just few of them who were excellent members. When performing also, we noticed that some of them misunderstood each other's questions and words especially the unexpected ones.

Item seven: Speaking activities are carried out successfully.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	1	1	0	0
Percentage	50%	50%	0%	0%

Table.3.41. The speaking activities carried out.

During the two sessions we were present in, we noticed that the teacher was able to finish the tasks that were designed for the first session ,which were plays performed by students and there was enough time for that. However, in the second session, just one play was performed and they spent the whole session discussing since they were talking about “parents” then, they moved unwillingly to talk about the issue of “love” at the same time there were others waiting for their turn to perform their plays.

Item eight: The teacher corrects his/her students' errors and mistakes.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	1	1
Percentage	0%	0%	50%	50%

Table.3.42. The teacher's feedback to students.

No oral correction in both lectures was given to students whether after making the mistake or at the end as a general evaluation directly or indirectly. It was rare in terms of that the teacher corrects his/her students when s/he listen to them mispronouncing or when they do not know how to express a word, but grammatical mistakes were not corrected.

Section two: General observation of large classroom size.

Item one: The teacher gives each student an individual attention.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.43. The individual attention given to students by the teacher.

With this class, the teacher in the first session , did not give each student an individual attention since their interaction was not too much and there were no time to take care of everybody. In the second session, all the time was devoted for discussion after the play. So, students who were participating could have the teacher's attention, but the rest "no".

Item two: Back zone students interact actively.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.44. Back zone students ‘interaction.

With this group, in the first session, students were seating in form of rows, so the students who were seating at the back of the classroom were passive and not able to participate or get the teacher’s attention as those seating in the front. On the other hand, the second session was characterized by students seating in form of a “horse show” and it was a very comfortable seating form of seating for them, and they did not felt neglected at all; they felt all equal even if they did not all participate. As we noticed, it was good to stay in a form of a “horse show”.

Item three: Front zone students interact actively.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	1	1	0	0
Percentage	50%	50%	0%	0%

Table.3.45. Front zone students’ interaction.

As we observed, the first session, the students were seating in form of rows, and the front zone students were remarkable since they were the ones who interact actively with the teacher. However, in the second session, the students were seating in a form of a “horse show” and they felt all equal and there were no dominant category of students whether in the front or at the back.

Item four: Students have a chance to ask questions or ask for clarification.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.46. The students' chance to ask for clarification.

We observed in this classroom that students have a chance to show his/her misunderstanding. Thus, asking indirectly for a clarification, but not all students were given that chance especially in the first session, it was rare because of other things that were prior than giving additional explanation from the teacher.

Item five: The teacher knows most of his/her' students names.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	2	0
Percentage	0%	0%	100%	0%

Table.3.47. The teacher's knowledge of the students' names.

It was with this group that the teacher could not recognize all his/her students' names, because as observing this class two times a week, we found that the teacher talks to the same students calling their names. As a result, it was rarely that the teacher calls all his/her students with their names.

Item six: The teacher sees and hears all his/her students as well as do the students.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	1	0	0	1
Percentage	50%	0%	0%	50%

Table.3.48. The teacher and students' sight and hearing in the classroom.

In the first session, the classroom was overcrowded and the teacher could not see all his/her students and s/he could not hear them well especially those at the back. The teacher made efforts to hear students with the big mess inside the classroom

Item seven: The teacher moves around students to give suggestions and check for comprehension.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	1	1	0
Percentage	0%	50%	50%	0%

Table.3.49. The teacher’s role to check for comprehension and give suggestions.

Actually, being present, we did not notice anything about the teacher’s movement around students to check for comprehension or give suggestions. It was just that the teacher , very rarely, asks if the students have understood with time constraints too.

Item eight: Students sit comfortably and move easily inside the classroom.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	1	1
Percentage	0%	0%	50%	50%

Table.3.50. The students’ seating and movement in the classroom.

As the two other groups, we remarked that there is always a matter of seating and movement inside the classroom. Most of the time with the big number of students, there are no enough chairs and tables. Students get out to bring them, then they seat in a noisy way. When moving also, they ask their classmates to let them pass.

Item nine: The teacher gets all the students' attention.

Rating scales	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Sessions (two)	0	0	0	2
Percentage	0%	0%	0%	100%

Table.3.51. The teacher's role in getting all the students' attention.

Within this group, the teacher was not able to get all the students' attention because of what? We found that there was a lot of noise and comments between students, the session was full of jokes and humor since the teacher was such a kind of a jovial teacher. But, as we saw, this gave students a space to make noise. It was something good, and bad at the same time. And due to this noise, the teacher could not control his/her class and s/he kept each time

3.1.5. Discussion of the results of the classroom observation

The obtained results from the observation and attendance with these classes show that students within these classes that are characterized with the huge number of students do not perform well in oral expression session especially this is the session where students are normally supposed to speak and express themselves. As reasons for that, we found that: first, not all the students speak and interact in the session and their interaction was mainly with the teacher, but it was not an active one. Second, their level was medium for most of them except some who were really excellent members or bad for few of them. Their speech was characterized by faulty grammar and mispronunciation with the effect of some psychological factors such as shyness, anxiety, frustration and reluctance to study for some of them.

Studying in a large classroom, students do not have a chance to express themselves since they are numerous and time is insufficient. Moreover, the teacher does not have time

to check for his/her students' comprehension that is, in fact, something good to ensure the student's understanding. Thus, improvement of his/her speaking skills. A final point is that these classes are noisy and disorganized, so teachers may not be always able to finish their lectures and do the tasks as they hope asking them to stop talking in order to speak or listen to them.

3.2. Description and analysis the teachers' interview.

Introduction

As a second tool of data collection, we dealt with an interview with teachers in order to know first, about their experience of teaching the speaking skill and second to know from them how can a large classroom size affect negatively the students' oral performance.

3.2.1. Description and design of the interview

This interview is addressed to English teachers of oral expression with second year LMD classes at Biskra University. This interview consists of fifteen open-ended questions divided into two sections. The first section contains questions about the speaking skill, asking teachers about their experience in teaching oral expression and how they find their students' level speaking English, and whether they are motivated or not or how they can motivate them. We asked them also about the method they use in teaching the speaking skill in order to ameliorate their students' speaking skills and how they challenge the difficulties they face when teaching oral expression.

The second section encompasses questions about the matter of large classes. We interviewed teachers, first, if they teach large classes and whether a large class impedes

their teaching process. Second, we interviewed them about their students' participation and cooperation and whether they perform poorly being taught in large classes.

The teacher's qualification:

Teacher 01: Magister degree.

Teacher 02: Magister degree.

Teacher 03: Magister degree.

Teacher 04: Magister degree.

Teacher 05: Magister degree.

Teacher 06: Magister degree.

Teacher 07: Magister degree.

3.2.2. The analysis of the interview

Section one

Item one: How long have you been teaching oral expression?

Teacher 01: "7 years"

Teacher 02: "5 years"

Teacher 03: "2 years"

Teacher 04: "5 years"

Teacher 05: "8 years"

Teacher 06: "4years"

Teacher 07: “6 years”

Most of the teachers we interviewed had an experience of teaching oral expression for a period of time at least two years till eight years; and it is a period that enables them to evaluate their students’ level when performing orally.

Item two: Teaching oral expression, how can you describe your students’ level when performing orally?

Teacher 01: “Average”

Teacher 02: “Average, but there are excellent members”

Teacher 03: “Most of them have a medium level, however there are few who are excellent”

Teacher 04: “Average”

Teacher 05: “Poor oral performance”

Teacher 06: “Average”

Teacher 07: “Good to average and even poor for few of them”

All the teachers agreed on that the students’ level when performing orally is average. Two teachers added to that fact that there are few who are really excellent. Except one teacher who said that his/her students’ level is bad in terms of bad oral performance and lack of participation.

Item three: Do you find your students, most of the time, excited to speak?

Teacher 01: “Yes, just if they like the topic”

Teacher 02: “Not all the time”

Teacher 03: “Not all, only few of them”

Teacher 04: “Only few of them who are excellent”

Teacher 05: “No, they are reluctant to speak”

Teacher 06: “No”

Teacher 07: “No”

All the teachers said that students, generally, are not excited to speak and if they do, it is not all the time. They are reluctant to speak and they lack self confidence. Few of them who are excited and sometimes just because they like the topic.

Item four: If “no”, how can you be as a motivational factor for them?

Teacher 01: “Encouraging them to speak”

Teacher 02: “Asking questions as a warming up”

Teacher 03: “Changing one’s role to a facilitator”

Teacher 04: “Choosing a topic for different activities”

Teacher 05: “Various activities using authentic materials”

Teacher 06: “Designing activities that goes with students’ level and interests”

Teacher 07: “Involving students and opening up a communication space between teacher and students”

Three teachers, in order to motivate their students, they suggest getting their students involved in communication and asking them questions to feel at ease to interact at the same time giving them equal attention when speaking. Four other teachers suggested choosing

topics for different activities according to their level and needs with the help of authentic materials. One teacher suggested being a helper and more a facilitator.

Item five: Do you use certain method or specific activities to teach oral expression?

Teacher 01: “yes, I do”

Teacher 02: “Plays, free discussion, and games”

Teacher 03: “individual and group work”

Teacher 04: “cooperative work”

Teacher 05: “it depends on students’ level and interests”

Teacher 06: “eclecticism”

Teacher 07: “yes, I use role plays, games, story-telling and real life problem”

The majority of teachers said that they have a certain method of teaching the speaking skill with the use of specific activities taking into consideration their students’ level and interests such as; role plays, free discussion, games, storytelling and real life problem solving. Two teachers said that they focus on group work and cooperative learning relying, first, on individual work than group work. One teacher who said that s/he follow what is called “eclecticism” choosing whatever seems interesting to them without following just one single method.

Item six: Do you give your students feedback, and how?

Teacher 01: “yes, it depends on the lecture”

Teacher 02: “yes, I give a direct oral feedback”

Teacher 03: “yes, I do. I squarely ask them”

Teacher 04: “peer feedback or teacher feedback”

Teacher 05: “giving comments in terms of direct and indirect correction”

Teacher 06: “immediate correction and giving advice”

Teacher 07: “evaluating the students’ performance and recommending strategies for improvement”

All the teachers said that they give their students feedback. However, they said differently the ways they do that. Four teachers said that they give an immediate correction by squarely asking them questions and giving feedback. Two teachers said that they give such kinds of comments “in a soft way after the student’s speech” and the correction sometimes is done immediately after the student’s mistake because it has been repeated so many times. One teacher said that s/he uses peer feedback and sometimes, it is a teacher feedback when the error is common.

Item seven: What are the difficulties that you face when teaching speaking?

Teacher 01: “shyness, paucity of role, and faulty grammar”

Teacher 02: “lack of motivation, interest, and prescribed programs”

Teacher 03: “acoustics and authentic materials”

Teacher 04: “poor vocabulary knowledge and grammar and shortage of ideas”

Teacher 05: “students are anxious and unwilling to speak”

Teacher 06: “huge number of students and limited speaking capacities”

Teacher 07: “lack of courage to speak in front of their peers”

All the teachers said that they face problems. Two teachers said differently that they face problems in terms of acoustic and authentic materials and the huge number of students within one class. The rest of teachers agreed on certain problems when teaching oral expression:

- Psychological factors as shyness, anxiety, and fear from speaking in front of their peers.
- Faulty grammar and poor vocabulary.
- Lack of materials and time allotted.

Section two

Item eight: Do you teach large classes?

Teacher 01: “yes”

Teacher 02: “yes”

Teacher 03: “yes”

Teacher 04: “yes”

Teacher 05: “yes”

Teacher 06: “yes of course”

Teacher 07: “yes, I do”

All the teachers said that they teach large classes.

Item nine: If “yes”, what do you think a number of a large class is, in your opinion?

Teacher 01: “daunting”

Teacher 02: “more than thirty students, oral expression needs small classes”

Teacher 03: “when it exceeds thirty students”

Teacher 04: “more than forty students”

Teacher 05: “more than thirty students”

Teacher 06: “it is an obstacle in itself”

Teacher 07: “overcrowded classes are a real setback”

All the teachers said that a large classroom is the one that contains more than thirty students. Two teachers said that a large class is a hurdle in itself. One teacher said that it is “daunting”. In other words, the number that makes a classroom a large one is the number that makes the teacher nervous, and annoyed to teach, whatever the number is.

Item ten: Do you consider teaching small classes easy for you then teaching large classes, and why?

Teacher 01: “in small classes, it is easy to control individuals”

Teacher 02: “it is a matter of effectiveness more than easiness”

Teacher 03: “knowing all the students, and involving them”

Teacher 04: “the smaller, the more time is given to individual student”

Teacher 05: “small classes are easily involved and easily managed”

Teacher 06: “control over the classroom, ensuring each student’s participation”

Teacher 07: “an easy assessment of the students and effective use of the authentic materials”

The majority of teachers said that teaching small classes is easier for them than teaching the large ones. Three teachers said that the smaller the classes are, the more time is devoted to individuals, controlling them, and following their learning progress and

knowing their learning styles and interest. Three other teachers said that small classes are easily managed and controlled. It is easy to involve students and get access to them giving them a chance to speak and participate to set a successful communicative context. One teacher said that within small classes, it is easier for the teacher to make an evaluation for each student' level. Moreover, when using authentic materials, for instance, videos or video tapes, it is better to have small classes for the students to watch and hear well.

Item eleven: What are the difficulties you encounter when teaching large classes?

Teacher 01: “noise”

Teacher 02: “lack of concentration and noise”

Teacher 03: lack of interest of a certain percentage of students”

Teacher 04: “noise, teacher’s voice and audio tapes can not be heard”

Teacher 05: “noise, seating problems, inability to access all students”

Teacher 06: “noise, a large class in a narrow class, and time constraints”

Teacher 07: “noise, disruptive behavior, and few students who participate”

When interviewed, all the teachers said that they face a common problem in large classes that is related to classroom discipline which is the noise and each teacher mentions a problem different than the other except one teacher who mentions just the issue of disruptive behavior. The following are each teacher’s mentioned problem:

- Videos, audio tapes and the teacher’s voice can not be heard.
- Seating and movement problems.
- It is difficult to design suitable tasks for the whole number of students, thus students will lose their rights to participate.

- Teaching a huge number in a narrow classroom. In addition to the matter of time constraints.
- Difficulty to involve all students who lack concentration.
- There a certain percentage of students who are not interested in what is done in the classroom; they are just a source of noise and disturbance.

Item twelve: Is it possible for you to cover the English courses within time with the big number of students?

Teacher 01: “no”

Teacher 02: “never”

Teacher 03: “not always”

Teacher 04: “not always”

Teacher 05: “it is difficult, but it is not impossible”

Teacher 06: “sometimes, but with great difficulties and hardships”

Teacher 07: “in oral expression, it is possible for me because there is no special program”

All the teachers said that they can not always finish the program and if they can; it is with great difficulty because of time constraints and other various factors. There was just one teacher who says that it is possible for him/her because it is an oral expression module.

Item thirteen: Do you have problems in maintaining discipline and keeping control over your class though the big number of students?

Teacher 01: “yes”

Teacher 02: “yes”

Teacher 03: “yes”

Teacher 04: “yes, I often do”

Teacher 05: yes, I do”

Teacher 06: “me, not yet”

Teacher 07: “sometimes, especially with boys who are not interested and intend to disturb others”

When interviewing them, most of the teachers said that they do have a matter in maintaining discipline and setting the needed calm. Just one teacher said that s/he has not this matter yet and another said that s/he has it sometimes with some members in the class especially boys.

Item fourteen: To what extent do your students cooperate when taught in a large class?

Teacher 01: “fairly well”

Teacher 02: “somehow”

Teacher 03: “less”

Teacher 04: “approximately good”

Teacher 05: “an acceptable level”

Teacher 06: “they cooperate, but it needs time and effort from the teacher”

Teacher 07: “they less cooperate because there are some students who talk the whole session; so students lose their rights to talk”

All the interviewees said that the students' cooperation when taught in large classes is of an acceptable level because as they say, not all the students have the chance to speak or to participate because there are others whose interaction is dominant and they take a long time and for many times and the others do not have time to do that. One teacher said that his/her students cooperation in the classroom is less or poor.

Item fifteen: Do you think that the big number in classes make students speak poorly? and why?

Teacher 01: “yes, because of shyness, frustration, and anxiety”

Teacher 02: “yes, fewer opportunities to speak with shyness and anxiety”

Teacher 03: “yes, less time to practice the language”

Teacher 04: “yes, they are shy and face saving”

Teacher 05: “yes, brilliant students took all the time without leaving a chance for others”

Teacher 06: “yes, yes, I strongly agree, fewer opportunities to speak and interact to develop the speaking skill”

Teacher 07: “yes, fewer opportunities for students to express themselves with time constraints, I strongly agree”

All the teachers said that they strongly agree that the big number of students in classes makes students speak poorly. Two teachers said that their student's oral performance is poor because they would not all be given full opportunities or much to speak, participate, and develop their oral skills. Excellent students always are the ones who take all the opportunities and time speaking without letting the others to practice the language and say something. Two teachers referred to the psychological factors that lead

students to speak poorly such as: anxiety, frustration, shyness, and face saving students. One last teacher mentions the two sides.

3.2.3. Discussion of the results of the teachers' interview

The teachers' answers show that the students' level was average for most of the students and either good or bad for few of them. Though some students are motivated, they feel afraid and reluctant to speak because of lack of confidence and fear from the students or the teacher's negative feedback. So, all the teachers said that they need to encourage their students and make them excited especially when they like the topic. This is one difficulty they face in addition to the students' problem with accuracy and fluency and lack of authentic materials that are really beneficial.

Concerning the impact of large classes on students' speaking skill, the results show that all the teachers said that they taught and still teach large classes and they agreed on that teaching small classes are better when it comes to effectiveness. They argue that in that in small classes they can give every student care and attention. Moreover, the class will be less noisy and the problem of seating and movement are not found. Interviewing them about the effect of a large class on the students' oral performance, they all said that it affects them negatively.

Conclusion

All in all, the negative results revealed in this study concerning the negative impact of a large classroom size on the students' oral performance confirmed our hypotheses. Using two different tools, an interview with teachers and an observation, and the results we got from them, were the same, our hypotheses were proved. This means that whenever students are taught in a large classroom, their speaking skill is poor and oral speaking skills

are limited. This chapter has analyzed how the huge number of students in EFL classes affects negatively the students' oral performance and this emerged from the findings of that study.

Pedagogical Implications

For the purpose of minimizing the problematic features of large classes which we hope would be of use in ELT situations and avoid the students' poor oral performance, we suggest for teachers some practical techniques and solutions to manage large EFL classes:

- The classroom should be divided into small groups and cooperative learning activities should be organized so that to ensure the students' individual work and improvement.
- Students should be involved in the classroom tasks and activities so that the students will be engaged and ameliorate their level.
- Autonomy should be developed in students since it is a technique that helps students to learn by themselves and have learning strategies because in large classes, time is always insufficient.
- Maintaining discipline and reducing the level of noise in large classes is necessary. It is by placing a noise monitor for each group of students to work quietly. Teachers should assign scores for punishment and reward and they should be firm, fair, and friendly.
- Individual attention should be given to students especially the weakest ones in order to cope with others and teachers should be also motivated and enthusiastic to do that.
- Teachers should encourage interaction and engage students by asking them questions and expecting answers in addition to varying activities and methods of teaching.
- Students feel excited to speak if the teacher asks them to speak calling them with their names.

- The teacher should know how to use time especially in large classes in every course in order to get the balance with the learning activities.
- Classrooms should be of enough large space with the provision of sufficient furniture and light.
- Whenever students are given feedback on their performance, they are given a chance for further learning. Whenever students are corrected, they have an intention to know their errors and mistakes, thus to learn more. Teachers also should use peer feedback not just teacher's feedback because peer feedback pushes students to learn more in terms having an experience of providing feedback for their partners.
- In large classes, teachers should create a sense of community, one that shows the teacher's interest and accessibility to students and encourage students too, to know the teacher so to better understand each other.
- May be the English language oral expression curriculum needs to be modified and if possible special curriculum will be developed for large EFL classes. Moreover, teachers should be given special training on teaching and managing large classes since not all the methods can be appropriate.

General Conclusion

Our present research is concerned with the investigation of the effect of large classes on the students' oral performance, mainly, the speaking skill. Our study gives us a space to examine the negative impact on the students' oral performance. Our purpose was, first, to examine how students perform orally in a large class. Second, to prove as we believe and hypothesized that large classes affects the students 'speaking skill negatively in terms of poor oral performance and having less opportunities to interact whether with the teacher or with peers for students and in terms of facing difficulties in their instruction for teachers.

Our dissertation is a sum of three chapters. The first and the second chapters were the theoretical background about the speaking skill and the large classroom size. In both of them, we tried to give a clear overview about the speaking skill and all the theoretical issues that are related to the nature of the speaking skill within the first chapter. In the second chapter, we tried to provide a better understanding of the issue of classroom management and all the elements that have a relationship with it till we reach the matter of large classes in which we tried to give an overview about it and the problems beneath it.

It is by means of an interview with teachers and an observation within second year LMD classes that we investigated the relationship between the speaking skill and large classes and obtained some findings. The obtained results provided us with conclusive observations related to the hypotheses we stated in the introductory part of our dissertation. So, the students' oral performance is poor and negatively affected by the large classroom size in terms of having fewer chances to speak, interact, and communicate. In addition to the negative effects it has on the teachers' instructions.

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Appendices

Appendix one

Classroom observation checklist

Name:

Date:

Class observed:

Time:

Session:

Department:

Rating system:

A: Always

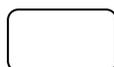
B: Sometimes

C: Rarely

D: Never

Section One: The Student ' Oral Performance	A	B	C	D
1. Each student has a chance to speak at least once during the session.				
2. The teacher talks during the whole session.				
3. Students interact actively with the teacher.				
4. Students interact actively with each other.				
5. Students speak making grammatical and pronunciation mistakes.				
6. Students participate using English fluently.				
7. Speaking activities are carried out successfully.				
8. The teacher corrects his/her students' errors and mistakes.				

Comments:



Section Two: Large Classroom Size	A	B	C	D
1. The teacher gives each student an individual attention.				
2. Back zone students interact actively.				
3. Front zone students interact actively.				
4. Students have a chance to ask questions or ask for clarification.				
5. The teacher knows most of his/her student's names.				
6. The teacher sees and hears all his/her students as well as do the students.				
7. The teacher moves around students to give suggestions and check for comprehension.				
8. Students sit comfortably and move easily inside the classroom.				
9. The teacher gets all the students' attention.				

Comments:

Appendix two

University of Biskra

Department of English

Teacher's interview

Dear teachers, would you like to answer the following questions that are concerned to our research which is the negative impact of large classes on student's oral performance, the case of 2nd year LMD students. Your answers and personal opinions are very important and will contribute effectively in the completion of this survey.

Thank you very much for your assistance

General information:

Male Female

Field experience.....

What is your qualification:

- a. BA (license)
- b. MA (Magister/Master)
- c. Ph. D (Doctorate)

Length of work at university.....year (s).

Section One:

1. How long have you been teaching oral expression?

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2. Teaching oral expression, how can you describe your students' level when performing orally?

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3. Do you find your students, most of the time, excited to speak?

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4. If “no”, how can you be as a motivational factor for them?

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.....

5. Do you use certain method or specific activities to teach oral expression?

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6. Do you give your students feedback, and how?

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.....

7. What are the difficulties that you face when teaching speaking?

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Section Two:

8. Do you teach large classes?

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9. If “yes”, what do you think a number of a large class is, in your opinion?

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.....

10. Do you consider teaching small classes easy for you than teaching large classes, and why?

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11. What are the difficulties you encounter when teaching large classes?

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12. Is it possible for you to cover the English courses within time with the big number of students?

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13. Do you have problems in maintaining discipline and keeping control over your class though the big number of students?

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14. To what extent do your students cooperate when taught in a large class?

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.....

15. Do you think that the big number in classes make students speak poorly? and why?

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.....
.....

Thank you

Appendix three

Résumé

L'habileté de parole est l'une des compétences importantes dans l'étude d'Anglais comme une langue étrangère dans laquelle l'étudiant montre sa / ses connaissances avec ses capacités orales. Cependant, il ya différents facteurs qui lui/elles empêchent d'être un locuteur compétent, et les classes surcharges sont un facteur. Notre étude présente est concerné d'enquêter sur l'impact négatif des classes surcharges sur la performance orale des étudiants. Face à une telle question, nous avons cherché à explorer la relation entre ces deux variables en utilisant la méthode descriptive et c'était par deux moyens de collecte de données qui sont d'une entrevue avec les enseignants et un outil d'observation avec des classes du 2ème année Anglais LMD que nous avons étudié nos hypothèses. D'après les résultats obtenus, l'ensemble des hypothèses que nous a déclarées ont été confirmés en cela, étudiant dans des classes surcharges, la performance orale des étudiants est pauvre et ils ont moins de chances de s'exprimer, d'interagir et de communiquer avec l'enseignant ou avec l'un et l'autre et les enseignants rencontrent des difficultés dans leur instruction.

