

CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN
LARGE CLASSES: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY

Ramesh Khatri

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AN ABSTRACT

of the dissertation of *Ramesh Khatri* for the degree of *Master of Philosophy in English Language Education* presented on *21 January 2025* entitled *Challenges and Coping Strategies of Teaching English in Large Classes: A Narrative Inquiry*.

APPROVED BY



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Assoc. Prof. Tikaram Poudel, PhD
Dissertation Supervisor

The study aimed to explore how university-level English language teachers perceived the challenges and strategies involved in teaching large classes. The participants of this research study were the English language teachers of the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University. I explored the issue in four large classes through a narrative inquiry method. I used class observations and interviews as the research tools to collect data for the study. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data collected through observations and interviews. I analyzed the data by putting them into computer files and transcribing the raw data verbatim into texts. Then, I generated codes for all data and drew themes related to the research questions. The findings and results were presented according to the themes. Based on the data analysis, I found five important challenges encountered by the research participants in teaching large classes, including insufficient classroom space, difficulty in taking student attendance, students' inability to see and hear, controlling noisy classrooms, student absenteeism, low student engagement, inability in using student-centred approaches, lack of monitoring, failure in assessing student progress, difficulty in giving individual student feedback, and inadequate resources for teachers.

The research participants were found to adopt various coping strategies for addressing the challenges that they encountered while teaching in large classes, including assigning the class monitor for taking attendance, increasing the teacher's mobility in the class, making the fonts larger on the board or screen, using punishment, student guidance

and counselling, building good relationships with students, addressing them by their names, setting up classroom rules, encouraging student participation, promoting self and peer assessment, and designing and using reading materials for their classes.

In conclusion, the research participants faced challenges in large class teaching, but they also found some strategies to deal with the problems. The findings of the study may contribute to understanding and enhancing university-level English pedagogy and teaching-learning of other subjects. Policymakers and professionals may find the findings of the study useful when it comes to teaching English in large classes in Nepalese higher education. Teachers can become more aware of the phenomena, comprehend the real joys and challenges of teaching large classes, and develop plans and policies appropriately.



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Ramesh Khatri

Degree Candidate

21 January 2025

शोध सार

अंग्रेजी भाषा शिक्षामा दर्शनशास्त्रको स्नातकोत्तर डिग्रीको लागि रमेश खत्रीको शोध प्रबन्धको शिर्षक “ठूलो कक्षामा अङ्ग्रेजी शिक्षणका चुनौती र सामना गर्ने रणनीतिहरु: एक संकथन” ८ माघ २०८१ मा प्रस्तुत गरिएको थियो ।

Tikaram Paudel

सह. प्रा. टिकाराम पौडेल, पिएचडी

सोध निर्देशक

यस “ठूलो कक्षामा अङ्ग्रेजी शिक्षणका चुनौती र सामना गर्ने रणनीतिहरु: एक कथात्मक अनुसन्धान” को उद्देश्य विश्वविद्यालयमा अध्यापन गराउने अङ्ग्रेजी भाषाका शिक्षकहरुले ठूलो कक्षाहरुमा के-कस्ता चुनौतीहरु सामना गर्छन र तिनीहरुको समाधानका लागि के-कस्ता रणनीतिहरु प्रयोग गर्छन भन्ने अन्वेषण गर्नु हो । यस अनुसन्धानका सहभागीहरु ग्राज्युएट स्कूल अफ एजुकेशन, मध्यपश्चिम विश्वविद्यालयका अङ्ग्रेजी भाषाका शिक्षकहरु हुन् । मैले कथात्मक सोधपुछ विधिद्वारा चारवटा ठूला कक्षाहरुमा यस मुद्दाको अन्वेषण गरें । अध्ययनका लागि सूचना संकलन गर्न शिक्षकहरुको कक्षा अवलोकन र उनीहरुसँग अन्तर्वार्ता गरें । अवलोकन र अन्तर्वार्ता मार्फत संकलन गरिएका सूचनाको विश्लेषण गर्न विषयगत विश्लेषण विधि प्रयोग गरिएको छ । मैले संकलित सूचनाबाट पाठहरु तयार गरेर विश्लेषण गरें । त्यसपछि मैले सबै पाठहरुका लागि कोडहरु तयार गरें र अनुसन्धान प्रश्नहरुसँग सम्बन्धित विषयवस्तुहरु बनाएँ । निष्कर्ष र परिणामहरु विषयवस्तु अनुसार प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ । सूचना विश्लेषणको आधारमा कक्षाकोठा साँघुरो, विद्यार्थी उपस्थिति लिनमा कठिनाई, विद्यार्थीहरुले बोर्डमा लेखेको देख्न र शिक्षकलाई सुन्न असमर्थता, कक्षाकोठा नियन्त्रणमा कठिनाई, विद्यार्थी अनुपस्थिति, शिक्षण सिकाईमा विद्यार्थीको कम संलग्नता, विद्यार्थी केन्द्रित विधिहरु प्रयोग गर्न असमर्थता, शिक्षकको अनुगमनको अभाव, विद्यार्थी प्रगतिको मूल्याङ्कनमा असफलता, विद्यार्थीलाई पृष्ठपोषण दिन असमर्थता र शिक्षकहरुका लागि अपर्याप्त स्रोतहरु जस्ता ठूला कक्षाहरु पढाउँदा अनुसन्धान सहभागीहरुले सामना गर्ने पाँच महत्वपूर्ण चुनौतीहरु फेला पारें ।

अनुसन्धान सहभागीहरुले ठूलो कक्षामा अध्यापन गर्दा उनीहरुले सामना गर्ने चुनौतीहरुलाई सम्बोधन गर्न विभिन्न रणनीतिहरु अपनाएको पाइएको थियो, जसमा उपस्थिति लिनका लागि कक्षा मोनिटर नियुक्त गर्ने, कक्षामा शिक्षकको गतिशीलता बढाउने, बोर्ड वा स्क्रिनमा अक्षरहरु ठूलो बनाउने, विद्यार्थीलाई अनुशासित गराउने, सानातिनो सजाय दिने र परामर्श प्रदान गर्ने, उनीहरुसँग राम्रो सम्बन्ध स्थापना गर्ने, उनीहरुलाई नामले सम्बोधन गर्ने, कक्षाकोठाका नियमहरु बनाउने, विद्यार्थी सहभागितालाई प्रोत्साहित गर्ने, आफ्नो स्व-मूल्याङ्कन र साथीहरुको मूल्याङ्कन गर्ने पद्धति प्रवर्धन गर्ने र विद्यार्थीहरुको लागि पठन सामग्री तयार र प्रयोग गर्ने समावेश छ

निष्कर्षमा, अनुसन्धानबाट सहभागीहरूले ठूलो कक्षा शिक्षणमा थुप्रै चुनौतीहरूको सामना गर्नको लागि केही रणनीतिहरू प्रयोग गरेको भेटिन्छ । यस अध्ययनको निष्कर्षले ठूला कक्षाहरूमा अध्यापन गर्ने विश्वविद्यालयका अङ्ग्रेजी शिक्षकहरू र अन्य विषयका शिक्षकहरूलाई कक्षा शिक्षण-सिकाईलाई बुझ्न योगदान दिन सक्छ । साथै, शैक्षिक नीति निर्माताहरू र अन्य शिक्षणसँग आबद्ध व्यक्तिहरूले नेपालको उच्च शिक्षामा ठूला कक्षाहरूमा अङ्ग्रेजी अध्यापन गर्ने सन्दर्भमा अध्ययनका निष्कर्षहरू उपयोगि पाउन सक्छन् । शिक्षकहरू विषयका बारेमा बढी सचेत हुन सक्छन्, ठूला कक्षा शिक्षणको वास्तविक आनन्द लिन सक्छन् र योजना र नीतिहरू उचित रूपमा विकास गर्ने सक्छन् ।



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रमेश खत्री

उपाधि उम्मेदवार

८ माघ २०८१

This dissertation entitled *Challenges and Coping Strategies of Teaching English in Large Classes: A Narrative Inquiry* presented by *Ramesh Khatri* on *21 January 2025*.

APPROVED BY



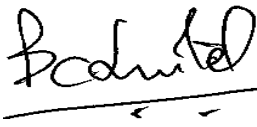
Asst. Prof. Bal Ram Adhikari, PhD
External Examiner

21 January 2025



.....
Assoc. Prof. Tikaram Poudel, PhD
Dissertation Supervisor
Head of Department, Language Education

21 January 2025



.....
Prof. Bal Chandra Luitel, PhD
Dean/Chair of Research Committee

21 January 2025

I understand that my dissertation will become a part of the permanent collection of the library of Kathmandu University. My signature below authorizes the release of my dissertation to any reader upon request for scholarly purposes.



Ramesh Khatri
Degree Candidate

21 January 2025

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my original work, and it has not been submitted for candidature for any other degree at any other university.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ramesh', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

.....

21 January 2025

Ramesh Khatri

Degree Candidate

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated
to all English language teachers around the globe
who teach in large classes effectively
despite having numerous challenges.

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Ramesh Khatri
Degree Candidate

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ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Anno Domini
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
BS	Bikram Sambat
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
KU	Kathmandu University
L2	Second Language
M.Ed.	Master of Education
M.Phil.	Master of Philosophy
MU	Mid-West University
TU	Tribhuvan University

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I present why I conducted this research with a scene-setting and support it by discussing the background. Then, I state my study's research problem and explain my purpose. And then, I formulate the research questions and delimit the study. Finally, I wrap up by summarising the chapter.

Scene Setting

I taught compulsory English to the Bachelor of Education (hereafter B.Ed.) first-semester students at the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University, Surkhet, Nepal, for nine years. I have experienced the benefits and challenges of teaching English in a large class. In 2070 BS (2013 AD), I was assigned to teach the compulsory English class of 70-plus students. The compulsory English class in each academic session presented several challenges and a few opportunities for both the teacher and students. Many students enrolled in the first batch of my teaching. I had never taught in a large class like that before. After a couple of weeks, I thought of giving up teaching in the class because I was scared of standing in front of many students staring at me. I could only see the faces of the students. I could not control the large class and teach them effectively to meet the objectives set in the curriculum. As Hayes (1997) claims teaching a large class is always challenging and frustratingly to lose interest; I was frustrated with my teaching in the class.

At the same time, as a teacher, I realized many students caused a sense of competition among them. This was because the large class comprised students of different levels, and each student wanted to perform better than others. As Ky (2002) states, students compete with one another in their academic endeavours in a large class. Shan (2020) also supports this view and states that large classes foster a competitive atmosphere that enhances students' motivation. As I observed cooperation and care between students in the class, I found students collaborating for mutual learning and fostering a sense of community. In this regard, Haddad (2015) argues that a large class creates an atmosphere of cooperation among students. He further says that students learn to support each other while getting engaged in group and project work in the class. Consequently, students work better in their studies. In addition, I also realized that a large class can develop students' confidence in their

studies since they work in pairs and groups. Moreover, I could sometimes use the varied nature of the students' experience in the class since they were from different linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds. Because there are so many diverse students, Hayes (1997) and Hess (2011) claim that human interactions characterize large classes. Stressing the importance of interaction in a large class, Heever (2000) highlights that through interaction with one another, students learn the English language, which widens their social network. When teaching in a large class, I could ask students to share their ideas and fascinating life stories related to the teaching item. I realized that it fostered collaboration among the students.

On the other hand, teachers worldwide encounter many challenges when teaching in a large class (Benbow et al., 2007; Roshan et al., 2022). In my large class, I confronted various challenges related to classroom management, pedagogy, student assessment and evaluation, and providing individual counselling and guidance to the students. For example, I faced challenges such as difficulty in controlling noises, recalling students' names and addressing them by their names, moving around the class because of crowded and congested classroom space, engaging students in the teaching-learning process, minimizing the use of students' mother tongue for providing exposure to the English language, taking student attendance, and assessing and providing feedback on their performance issues. Moreover, I felt that students lack "a voice," which is a significant challenge in a large class, as Sarwari (2018) noted. I also realized that teaching a large class is challenging and overburdened for the teacher, requiring more time for class preparation, activity management, student assessment, and behaviour management, like dealing with disruptive students. Subsequently, I had difficulty completing the course within the allocated time. I also felt the same experience as Locastro (2001), who states that teachers cannot provide the kind of teaching that would enable students to progress toward proficiency because of the large class. Furthermore, I could not recall half of the student's names, even if I taught them for the whole semester.

Against this backdrop, teaching in a large class is common worldwide, especially in developing countries like Nepal. According to Chowdhury and Shaila (2013), a large class is common in developing countries like Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan. Similarly, Anderson (2016) opines that Africa (particularly sub-Saharan Africa) and Asia (particularly the Indian subcontinent and China) are the two continents where teachers most frequently teach large classes. Supporting this view,

Moghal et al. (2019) and Roshan et al. (2022) express that in the educational context of South Asian countries, large, overcrowded classrooms are a reality. With more and more students pursuing degrees and being required to get employment, large-class teaching is a reality that many higher education institutions must deal with (Hornsby, 2013). Ming and Qiang (2017) report that teaching English in large classes is a common phenomenon in China.

Research shows that large classes are a common phenomenon in educational institutions in Nepal (Adhikari, 2010; Dhakal, 2017). According to Dhimi (2016), teaching a large class is challenging for teachers because they face problems involving students in activities, managing the classroom, and preparing teaching and learning materials. Dhakal (2017) states that large-class teaching is regarded as challenging and tough for EFL teachers. Heever (2000) argues that many teachers view large classes as a serious issue that negatively impacts students. According to Lipinge (2013), teaching large classes, especially in university education, is a worldwide phenomenon. The compulsory English subject in the first and second semesters is generally taught in large classes at the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University, where the student number generally exceeds 60.

Despite facing numerous challenges due to the large class, I tried to use various coping strategies to teach English effectively. For example, I was well prepared for the topic I would teach before the class. To engage all students in the teaching-learning process, I involved them in peer and group work and tried to give them equal attention. I often moved around the class to monitor whether they were doing the assigned tasks. When disciplinary issues arose, I addressed them in the class immediately, and sometimes, I called the students out of the class and counselled them individually and in groups if needed.

Though I put much effort into addressing the challenges, I could not make my teaching more effective because of the large number of students in the class. Some of the students ignored what I taught despite my best attempts. They seemed reluctant to participate in peer and group work, and I could not ensure whether learning was happening in them or not. Sometimes, I became almost completely unable to motivate them towards teaching and learning activities. When results were published, more than half of the students failed in semester-end examinations in every batch. The large number of students failing final examinations upset me. Moreover, I thought I would never teach in a large class again.

To understand some coping strategies for adapting to my class, I often talked to other teachers who were also teaching large classes in my department and other neighboring campuses. They also shared similar experiences of encountering challenges while teaching large classes with me. Ram (pseudonym) expressed the major problems that he faced while teaching a large class: difficulty or almost impossibility in maintaining everyone's attention, students' motivation level being poor, students having problems hearing the teacher and seeing content written or projected on the board, and taking student attendance being time-consuming. Sita (pseudonym) spoke about various challenges she experienced when teaching in her large class, including classroom management, student engagement, needs assessment of the students and providing feedback on student's performance, and availability of resource limitations. Hari (pseudonym) found teaching in a large class challenging. He shared that there was little interaction with the students, low motivation among students, group activities were almost impossible to conduct as the furniture was permanently fixed to the floor, and examining student assignments and providing feedback was exhausting. Though a professionally qualified and experienced teacher, I had no experience teaching large classes. I had never worked with large classes in my prior educational institution.

Most English language teachers find the large class reality (Todd, 2006). There might be many teachers in the country and throughout the globe who are encountering similar challenges in teaching English in large classes. At the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University, it is a fact that the number of students in the compulsory English class would not be economically viable due to the shortage of teaching faculty members and classrooms. There will always be large classes in this situation at the university. Both campus teachers and students complain about poor management in large English classes, monitoring and controlling the class, giving students feedback, and providing appropriate teaching materials. These are just a few of them here.

Teaching English in a large class has always led me to consider effective techniques for handling challenges to provide quality teaching. Therefore, I chose to carry out this study on the challenges English teachers face in large classes and the effective strategies they adopt to maximize student learning at the campus level in the Nepalese context.

Rationale of the Study

An English language teaching (ELT) class should be small to facilitate student interaction and engagement (Buglio, 2013). However, a significant issue for many teachers throughout their careers is having a large class. In this regard, Todd (2006) argues that the problem of large classes has been overlooked in the literature. Teachers generally face challenges in managing large classes, involving students in learning, assessing learning, and providing feedback on their performance. According to Dhakal (2017), large classes are opposed to effective teaching and learning because they make it difficult for teachers to provide students with quality instruction.

Regarding teaching strategies for overcoming challenges that English language teachers face, there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to teaching large classes (Haddad, 2015). Every individual teacher may have a way of overcoming challenges that he or she faces in a large class, which may or may not match those of other teachers. However, many teachers are found to be having similar types of challenges because large classes almost present the same types of challenges for all teachers and students. Teachers who can discuss their practices, challenges, and solutions for teaching English in large classes can help other teachers dealing with the same issue.

More research is required, especially in Nepal, where fewer researchers address the large class size-related issues for teachers and students. Some studies have focused on teaching large, multi-level classes in various contexts, particularly in underdeveloped and developing countries. In my teaching experience in large classes, I have employed various techniques over nine years, such as question-answer techniques to engage students and pair and group work to overcome challenges caused by large classes. Such experience has motivated me to carry out this study.

This study aimed to familiarize those who encounter challenges in large classes with different coping strategies they can employ for successful teaching and learning activities. The results of this study can be valuable to those researchers who plan to study other aspects of teaching in large classes. Therefore, this study may be beneficial for future research on English language teaching and learning in large classes in university settings. Furthermore, policymakers can benefit from this research while formulating policies about managing large classes to facilitate teaching

and learning. Finally, to maximize learning in large classes, I expect the findings of this research will be useful for my teaching.

Problem Statement

The large class has become an important issue in developing countries (Bhutto et al., 2023; Bughio, 2012; Roshan et al., 2022; Sarwari, 2018; Todd, 2006). With many local languages and large classes, teaching English as a second language is challenging in a nation like Nepal. I have observed that some English language teachers even teach without employing effective strategies to handle the challenges posed by large classes in Nepal. Research shows that teachers who lack the required skills and knowledge of teaching and management strategies cannot manage large classes and improve students' achievement (Trang, 2015). In this regard, Bishop (1989, as cited in Heever, 2000) argues that when teachers are poorly skilled in managing teaching in large classes, they are believed to harm effective teaching. Therefore, teachers should focus on resolving issues related to large classes and employ appropriate strategies to overcome those challenges for effective teaching and learning.

The compulsory English subject in the B.Ed. first and second semesters are run in large classes at the undergraduate level at the Graduate School of Education and some constituent campuses of Mid-West University. Thus, teachers facilitate compulsory English classes where more than 60 students are in each academic session. Sometimes, students and teachers share their experiences managing the possibilities, difficulties, and procedures of teaching and learning in large classes. Research demonstrates that ELT teachers deal with challenges including, classroom management, offering feedback on students' assignments, managing instructional materials, and having access to resources in large classes (Duwadi, 2020; Safura et al., 2023). Similarly, Dhami (2016) claims teachers face challenges in student involvement, classroom management, and content preparation in large classes. Chand (2023) also has a similar opinion regarding teaching in large classes. As reported by him, a large class can adversely affect teaching and learning since there is a lack of proper space in the classroom, no or little time for one-on-one attention, overwork, and a lack of creativity.

Haddad (2015) claims there is no "best way" when choosing coping strategies for addressing challenges that large classes present. However, teachers employ various techniques, such as pair and group work, to overcome the challenges they

experience in large classes. Studying the challenges of teaching English in a university setting is crucial in light of the difficulties involved and the absence of studies in the Nepalese context. So, I researched to explore teachers' experiences with challenges and solutions to teaching English in large classes.

Research Purpose

This research aimed to explore the challenges of large classes on teaching and learning in general. It specifically examined the challenges faced by university-level English language teachers when teaching large classes at the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University. Further, the study looked for the potential coping strategies teachers employed to overcome those challenges and enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

Research Questions

To materialize the purpose as discussed in the research purpose, I sought to answer the following research questions:

- a) How do university-level English language teachers reflect on their experience of the challenges of teaching large classes?
- b) How do these teachers handle the challenges they encounter while teaching English to a large class?

Delimitations of the Study

The delimitations of the study were as follows:

First, the study was delimited to campus teachers teaching English in large classes. It explored the challenges those teachers faced due to the many students and revealed the strategies they adopted to meet these challenges. Second, it was limited to four campus teachers from the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University. Third, open-ended questions in the form of interviews and class observations were used as research tools for data collection in the study.

Chapter Summary

I began this chapter with a brief scene-setting that depicted the circumstances I have been facing in teaching English to many students at my workplace. Then, I made a brief problem statement of my study, research purpose, and research questions. Having stated the research questions, I presented the delimitations of the study at the end of the chapter.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, I review related literature on the challenges and coping strategies of teaching English in large classes. I begin by discussing the thematic and empirical reviews and then present the gap I noticed after reviewing the literature in the related field. Then, I discuss the conceptual framework of the study, followed by the chapter summary.

Thematic Literature Review

The Notion of Large Class

The term 'class size' refers to the number of students in a particular class being taught by a certain teacher (Heever, 2000). Then, what is a large class? The question of how many students constitute a large class has no solution. According to Hayes (1997), it is difficult to give a clear definition of what constitutes a large class. Generally, the perception of a class as large or small relates to the teachers' familiarity with classes with varying student enrollment numbers and the availability of teachers. For instance, a teacher who taught 20 students in the past would think 30 students make a large class. On the other hand, a teacher who previously taught a class of 40 students could view a classroom of 60 students as a large class (Todd, 2006).

Depending on various factors, a large class can indicate different things to different people, including the setting in which the class is taught, the age of the learners, and the teacher's teaching methodology. The concept of a large class is difficult to define because it is not a concrete construct but rather a subjective concept depending on a variety of factors (Shamim et al., 2007). For example, a large class in Western countries like the UK or the USA can be a small class in Nepal or India. According to Hayes (1997), the ideal class size should be no more than 30 students, although there is no definitive quantitative definition of a large class. In this regard, Ur (1999) concludes that there is no universally accepted definition of a large class since it varies depending on the context and the teachers' prior experience with large and small classes.

Research shows that it has not been possible to set a standard that if a student's number exceeds that, everyone can agree that a class becomes large (Christensen,

1994). However, Coleman et al. (1989) opine that the general perception of a large class is around 50 students. Similarly, Ur (1999) agrees with Coleman (1989) regarding the number of students. Benbow et al. (2007) define large classes as those where the student-teacher ratio is 40:1. Haddad (2015) concludes that there is no "exact size" for a large class.

Generally, a class becomes large when students exceed the ideal number, hindering teaching-learning. On the other hand, Renaud et al. (2007) argue that the exact number of students in a class is not an issue to be considered; rather, the important factor is how a teacher perceives the class size in their context. Another argument by Shamim et al. (2007) is that when defining a large class, additional elements must be considered in addition to the number of students in the classroom. These include the physical conditions of the classroom, the amount of space available, teaching methodology, teaching emphasis, and resource availability.

In Nepal, the notion of a large class in school education varies according to the geographical location. The Ministry of Education (2017) eighth amendment states that the maximum number of students in community schools in the mountain ecological belt is 40; for the hilly region, it is 45; and for the Terai region, it is 50. However, no policy states the number of students per class in higher education in Nepal.

Regarding the number of student seats in a class at bachelor's and master's levels, Mid-West University has fixed 48 and 40 students in non-technical subjects like education, respectively (Mid-West University Student Admission Guideline-2080, 2023). For this study, a group of more than 60 students is a large class.

Teaching English to many students can have benefits and drawbacks (Renaud et al., 2007). In Nepal, English is taught in large classes, especially at public schools and campuses, compared to private schools and colleges. Generally, students in large classes have much fun with one another while maintaining classroom discipline, monitoring and assessing students, and successfully teaching many students, which provides a variety of challenges for the teachers. According to Dhimi (2016), teaching English to large classes is challenging because of issues related to student engagement, classroom management, and the preparation of teaching and learning materials. Similarly, large classes are problematic for EFL teachers and difficult to manage (Dhakal, 2017; Duwadi, 2020). Due to disruptive students, disciplinary problems, and unwanted noise, Duwadi (2023) finds teaching in large classes difficult

and tedious. In this regard, Choudhary and Batwal (2024) say, “The larger the number of students, the more diverse and challenging it will be to teach” p. 5.

What challenges related to classroom management do university-level English language teachers face in large classes? What disciplinary issues do they encounter in large classes? How do teachers assess students internally in large classes? What techniques or strategies do they use to overcome challenges due to the many students in the classes? These questions have been addressed in this study.

Large Classes in EFL Contexts

English is a second or foreign language in Nepal (Khatri, 2010; Bista, 2011). It is taught to Nepalese students in schools and campuses as a second or foreign language. It is taught as a compulsory subject from Grade 1 through the bachelor's degree level at different universities in the country. Depending upon various factors, the number of students learning English in schools and colleges varies from one level to another, from one class to another, or from one institution to another, like education and private and government-added schools. So, there is no fixed size for the large classes. However, Shamim et al. (2007) argue that the number of students is irrelevant. How the teacher views the class size in his/her particular setting affects them. Moghal et al. (2019) maintain that large classes, particularly in language education, have emerged as one of the most serious problems for educational institutions and teachers.

Like other Nepalese universities, Mid-West University offers English as compulsory at the B.Ed., and the number of students exceeds 60 in the class. Treg (2015, as cited in Moghal et al., 2019) opines that a maximum of 20–25 students should be enrolled in each class, especially for English as a foreign language course. On the other hand, the average number of students in the Lancaster University project was around 50 (Coleman, 1989). Thus, this is not the case everywhere. However, the exact description of a large class is unknown (Hayes, 1997). The present study considers a class with more than 60 learners large. The large class possesses some opportunities and creates various challenges for EFL students and teachers in the Nepalese context. Large classes affect the quality of students' learning outcomes in English.

Teaching and Learning in Large Classes: Opportunities and Challenges

Large classes have many students, which may present several opportunities for teachers and students. Firstly, there are students of different levels. They may want to

perform better than others. Consequently, there is a feeling of competition among them. A teacher can take advantage of this by creating healthy competition among students in the class. Secondly, large classes can develop students' confidence. There can be many weak students in the class. So, one student in the class may feel that others are weak, like him. In group and project work, the weaker students can get support from the bright students. Thirdly, there is the possibility of sharing a wider range of experiences. The classroom is diverse because students come from various linguistic, sociopolitical, and cultural backgrounds, each with conventions, beliefs, presumptions, and traditions. Asking students to share their rich and varied experiences can make class fascinating and fun. Finally, large classes can create an atmosphere of cooperation among students. Students work with peers and groups, so they learn to collaborate. As a result, it develops social and interpersonal skills in the students.

According to Todd (2006), teaching and learning English in large classes may create several challenges. Mulryan-Kyne (2010) also reports that large classes at the university level provide unique challenges for teachers and students, many of which can result in less successful teaching. Many students in the class are responsible for their poor academic achievement results. Dhakal (2017) found that teachers have challenges working with and teaching in large classes. Duwadi (2020) stated that ELT teachers face challenges in classroom management, giving feedback, and finding a balance between the availability of resources and teaching materials in large classes.

Research reveals that large classes present several challenges that have been discussed below:

Post-Method Pedagogy and Large Classes

The 'post-method condition' in second language (L2) teaching results from dissatisfaction with traditional methods. Kumaravadivelu (1994) proposed a framework consisting of macro strategies for teachers to design specific micro strategies tailored to their classroom contexts.

'Critical ailments' in pedagogy refer to problems in teaching practices that hinder effective learning (Kumaravadivelu, 1994). Common issues include lack of engagement, standardized testing pressure, one-size-fits-all approaches, inadequate teacher training, resource limitations, resistance to change, and the essence of intellect. He further says that addressing 'chronic ailments' is crucial for improving educational outcomes. Solutions may include professional development for teachers,

adopting more flexible teaching methods, and ensuring resources are available to support diverse learning needs.

Kumaravadivelu's (2001) post-method pedagogy provides the theoretical foundation for my study. It focuses on the parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility. He states that a post-method pedagogy should foster context-sensitive language education, disrupt traditional theorist-practitioner roles, and encourage sociopolitical awareness among participants to support identity formation and social transformation while allowing teachers to formulate their practice theories.

The post-method pedagogy covers several topics related to the educational context. It includes the socio-political and financial situation of the nation in which teaching and learning occur. The parameter of particularity is the relevance of the pedagogy to the teachers and learners and the socio-cultural condition of the context in which teaching and learning occur. The parameter of practicality pertains to the viewpoints and reflections of educators, which results in the development of helpful strategies and educational materials. The parameter of possibility is the pedagogy of teachers that should align with the socio-political conditions of the context (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

The sociocultural, political, and economic conditions of the teaching context have impacted teaching in general and a foreign language like English in particular. However, what is accessible in a particular setting may not be accessible in another. Because every setting has different requirements, what works in one may not work in another. With Nepal's distinct sociocultural, political, and financial conditions, I believe conducting the current study based on post-method pedagogy—emphasising particularity, practicality, and possibility—will enable me to better understand how teaching and learning in large classes can occur in Nepal.

To sum up, Kumaravadivelu (2001) states that the fundamentals of a post-method pedagogy require that teachers successfully address the main issues they face. So, his three-dimensional parameters framework is the most suitable choice for guiding this study.

Reviewing Empirical Studies

Researchers have carried out some research on different aspects of large classes. Some of the major ones have been discussed below:

Christensen (1994) researched the nature and implications of problems that language teachers face in excessively large classes. He presented three types of

problems in large classes: pedagogical, management, and affective. Firstly, pedagogical problems include challenges with speaking, reading, and writing assignments, difficulties with monitoring and providing feedback, difficulties with individualizing work, avoidance of difficult-to-implement activities, trouble navigating the classroom, and poor attention from pupils. Secondly, long essay corrections in writing classes, difficulties with pair and group work, difficulties in providing attention to all students, discipline problems, and difficulties in checking assignments and examinations on time are examples of management problems. Thirdly, affective issues include teacher boredom with pair and group work, difficulty recalling student names, difficulty building a good rapport with students, and difficulty assessing student interests and moods.

Hayes (1997) explored the problems that teachers face in large classes. Through his research, he found that teachers feel discomfort, difficulty in classroom control, insufficient individual attention to the students, a lack of time for evaluating students' performance and learning ineffectiveness.

One of the other authors Heever (2000), investigated how South African secondary schools successfully managed their large classes and used instructional strategies. The researcher visited classrooms, observed teaching and classroom management, and conducted interviews with teachers to gather information on how teachers handled the difficulty of large classes. He highlighted issues related to classroom instruction and classroom management. Experienced teachers employed questioning strategies to ensure student engagement, whole-class teaching, cooperative learning, and individualized teaching in a large class. Moreover, he concluded that rather than being discouraged by the situations, teachers and educational planners should research and implement appropriate strategies to cope with challenges caused by the large number of students in the class.

Valentic (2005) explored some advantages of teaching English in large classes. He pointed out that there can be a work climate for collaborative work between and among students. Todd (2006) points out several issues related to large classes, such as issues with management, practical or physical issues, emotional aspects, interaction issues, and issues with feedback and assessment. Similarly, Shamim et al. (2007) presented some solutions to teaching large classes. They suggested coping strategies like using various topics, techniques, and texts, making activities interesting, encouraging collaboration among students, individualizing by

allowing learners to choose tasks or materials they use, personalizing by creating or modifying tasks, utilizing mandatory and optional instruction, and using open-ended cues. They further recommended common management rules, such as maintaining discipline within the classroom by setting rules, recalling each student's name, assigning seats correctly, fostering a positive learning environment, and electing student captains.

Nyaupane (2007) investigated English language learning in large classes in the Nepalese context. His study aimed to investigate the efficient teaching and learning strategies that improve language acquisition in large class settings. He employed both reflective journals and observations to gather data for the study. His investigation revealed that they struggled to fulfil their needs and desires. He suggested that teachers personalize their teaching by preparing plans, among other things.

G.C. (2011) conducted a study examining how teachers use and understand general strategies in large English language teaching (ELT) classrooms. Using purposeful non-random sampling, twenty English teachers at the higher secondary level from 10 schools in the Kathmandu Valley were chosen. Class observations and questionnaires were used to gather data. The study concluded a need for a greater understanding of various teaching strategies since teachers' proficiency with efficient teaching strategies for large ELT classes was low. He presented the idea of large classes, classroom management, advantages and disadvantages, and fundamental strategies for teaching English in large classes.

Similarly, Hess (2011) has presented the advantages of large classes: more interaction among students, varied human resources are available, and teachers are professionally developed. He also discussed the challenges that teachers often feel out of control, face management problems, and are overloaded by the large amount of written work of the students.

Qiang and Ning (2011) investigated the experiences of Chinese English teachers in large classes. They identified the challenges teachers encounter in maintaining class discipline, meeting the needs of students with varying interests and abilities, planning appropriate activities, giving students opportunities to participate and practice, and providing timely and effective feedback and performance evaluation.

In Pakistan, Bughio (2013) conducted a study on strategies for enhancing the teaching of English in large classes. She offered suggestions for using the action

research cycle method to deal with the difficulties of large classes. In 'Practical tips for teaching large classes: A teacher's guide,' Haddad (2015) gave some practical tips for teaching large classes by creating a well-managed classroom, planning lessons, selecting appropriate alternatives to the format, and evaluating learning and teaching in large classes.

Similarly, Hadi and Arante (2015) suggested two strategies to handle challenges caused by large classes: using a variety of games and managing English classes outside the classroom to attract students' attention.

Kadelya (2015) looked into how large classes affected Tanzanian public elementary schools' teaching and learning process efficiency. The study aimed to explore how students, teachers, and other stakeholders perceive large classes, to identify challenges students and teachers face in the classroom, and to offer some potential solutions for resolving such challenges in public primary schools. A case study research design was used. The study used questionnaires, interviews, observations, and documentary reviews to gather data. The study found that managing the classroom, conducting classroom assessments, and grading students' assignments were difficult tasks for teachers and students. Additionally, it was found that having a large class reduces student-student and teacher-student interactions and harms academic performance. The study found interactive teaching methods, team teaching, and double shifts were effective options for tackling challenges brought on by large classes.

In the Nepalese context, Dhakal (2017) examined the strategies used by English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers to teach and manage large classes. The study employed class observations and interviews with the four teachers in Chitwan District who facilitated large classes. According to the study, participants viewed the large class teaching as challenging. He explored those large classes, which presented teachers with several problems, including noise, distraction, a lack of teaching materials, flexibility in class activities, and the students' varying nature, interests, and learning. Furthermore, although teaching English in large classes is common in Nepal's public schools, the study investigated whether this approach always yields the best learning outcomes. He concluded that large classes hinder successful teaching because they prevent teachers from providing students with quality teaching and learning. Some strategies for overcoming those challenges that he suggested include using pairs and groups to improve interdependent learning, providing equal chances

for students to maximize their learning, and using praise and rewards to manage classroom issues.

To better understand the difficulties of teaching English in large, under-resourced classes at the Afghan Public University, Sarwari (2018) conducted qualitative research examining the teachers' techniques for resolving the perceived challenges. The study was built on the post-method pedagogy—parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility—that Kumaravadivelu (2001) proposed. Theme classification and analysis were used to obtain data from interviews with four ELT teachers at the university. The results revealed several challenges ELT teachers encounter in their large, multilayered classes. The study identified some challenging areas, such as managing the classroom, providing feedback, balancing the instructional materials, having resources available, and addressing each person's needs and preferences. The study results also show how to maximize the efficacy of teaching in large, multilevel classroom settings by utilizing teachers' resources, integrating technology, doing early needs and desires assessments, receiving peer input, and drawing on their own teaching experience.

Duwadi (2020) explored English language teachers' experiences and instructional strategies in large classes employing a narrative inquiry approach. Through classroom observations and the analysis of teachers' narratives, he obtained firsthand accounts from research participants. The study found that ELT teachers faced challenges while teaching large classes. He concluded that in the large classes, English teachers had difficulties in various areas. For instance, they faced challenges with managing the classroom, giving student feedback, and managing the resources and materials available. The study showed that the teachers overcame these challenges by maximizing the efficacy of their teaching through the use of technological integration, self-developed resources, assessments of students' needs and desires, peer feedback, and teaching experiences.

Marzulina et al. (2021) researched English teachers' management techniques for large classes. The study aimed to investigate how English language teachers handled large classes and what coping strategies they used in their large-class teaching. The study found that English teachers employed strategies like lesson planning, classroom management, monitoring talking time, and giving written and timely feedback on students' work. They also concluded that students had a favourable opinion of how teachers used these strategies.

Similarly, Bhutto et al. (2023) investigated the challenges and coping techniques related to teaching speaking skills in large classes, focusing on the perceptions of teachers and students. Professional and experienced teachers found practicing speaking skills less difficult when using large classroom teaching strategies and exercises. The study used qualitative research, with in-depth, semi-structured interviews with fifteen English language teachers from Karachi, focusing on concerns, classroom management techniques, assessment methods, and suggestions for teaching speaking abilities in large classes.

Habibi and Sadam (2024) highlighted the importance of teaching in small groups to foster academic achievement and positive attitudes while identifying common challenges teachers face when managing large English classes. Reducing class numbers to less than 20 students usually has advantages considering factors like teacher quality, student motivation, and parental role.

Having reviewed earlier literature, it is clear that very little research exists on large classes and their consequences in Nepal. Thus, little is known about the strategies teachers in large classes adopt.

Researchers hold different views about the number of students in a large class, the challenges and opportunities such classes pose, and the coping strategies teachers adopt to make their teaching effective. Nevertheless, a class of more than 60 students counts as large. Although some studies have explored the difficulties and strategies of teaching English in large classes in the Nepalese context, I was interested in researching the challenges English language teachers face when teaching English in large classes and the solutions they come up with at Mid-West University.

Gap Analysis

Having reviewed the earlier literature on the topic, it is clear that large classes impact class teaching and learning and learners' performance and achievement. It is also clear that different scholars worldwide have perceived the notion of a large class differently.

However, there are very few studies on the large classrooms, the challenges teachers face, and the strategies they use to overcome them in Nepal. I reviewed some research reports and articles published inside and outside the country. However, no research has been conducted on how English is taught in large classes in a Nepalese university. This study aimed to bridge a gap by exploring the challenges and strategies

English language teachers used at Mid-West University, Nepal. Therefore, this study is completely different from the earlier studies.

Conceptual Framework

Large classes present various challenges for EFL teachers (Roshan et al., 2022). Consequently, they negatively impact students' achievement. Since I faced numerous challenges, I investigated university-level teachers' experiences teaching English in large classes and the coping strategies they employed to deal with their challenges. I employed the post-method pedagogy to support my argument.

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of the study.

Figure 1

A Conceptual Framework Describing the Challenges and Strategies of Teaching English in a Large Class

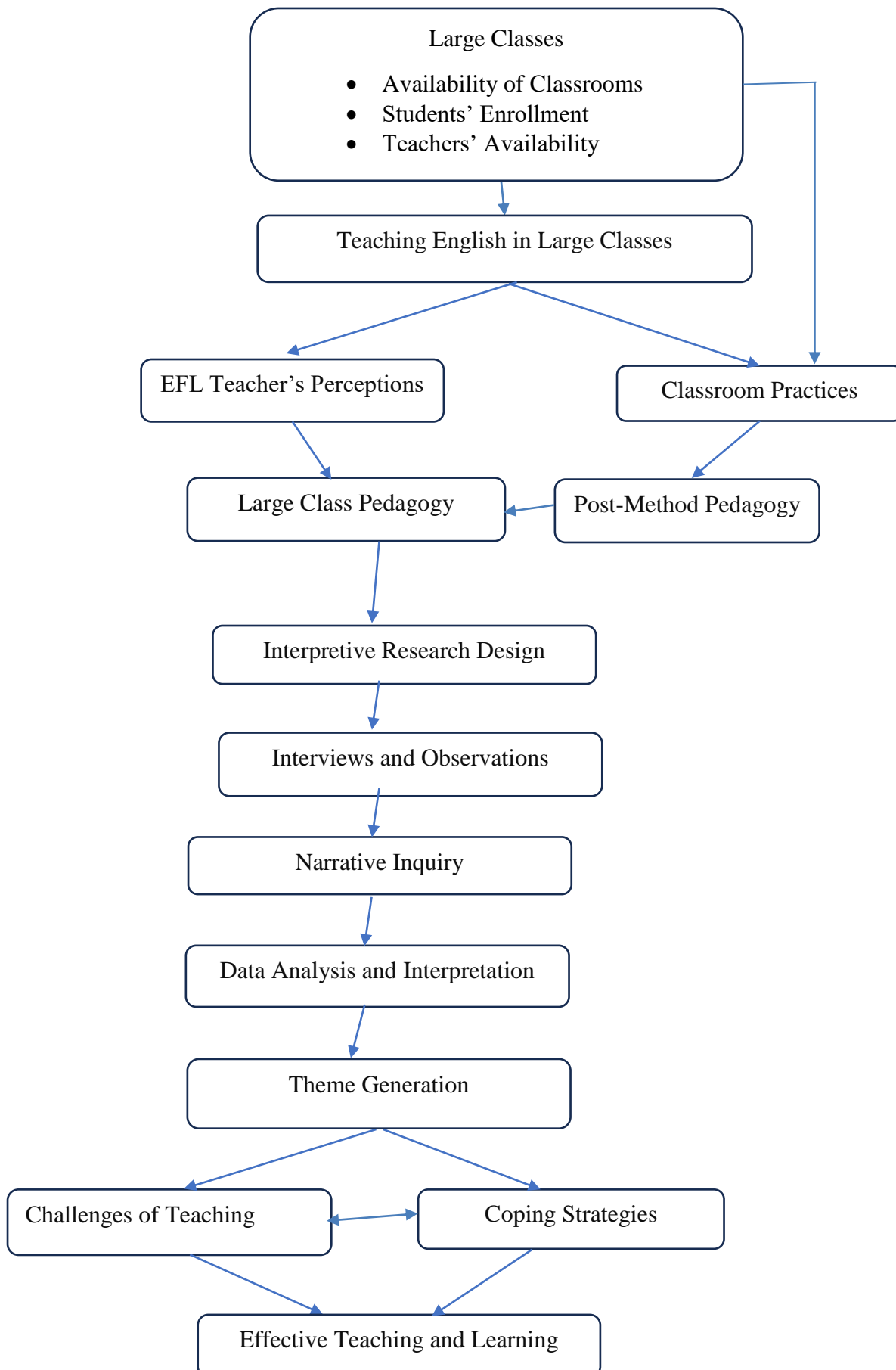


Figure 1 illustrates that a large class comprises a large number of students, few teachers, and few classrooms. The post-method pedagogy as a theoretical lens explored ELT teachers' perceptions and classroom practices. Teachers face difficulties when teaching many students, including challenges with classroom activities, disciplinary issues, classroom management, teaching-learning resources, and teaching-learning issues. To overcome these challenges caused by the large classes, teachers used various strategies, for example, those related to classroom-related activities, disciplinary issues, classroom management, teaching materials, and teaching-learning activities that tend to lead to an effective teaching-learning process. Therefore, effective teaching and learning would happen in large classes if teachers used strategies to overcome these challenges.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented a review of the literature related to the study. I covered the literature review by presenting both thematic and empirical reviews in the EFL context and the large class in the Nepalese context. Similarly, I reviewed some earlier research related to the topic to support my theme as an empirical review. I found a research gap to show how my research differs from others. Finally, I presented the conceptual framework to show how my research has been guided.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I present the research methodology adopted for the study. First, I explain the narrative inquiry method within qualitative research using interpretive philosophical design. Second, I discuss interviews and class observations as research tools for the study. The selection of the research site and participants is the third issue I address. Finally, I focus on the ethical and quality requirements, followed by the chapter summary.

Philosophical Considerations

What and how teachers perceive, feel, and deal with activities, challenges, and coping strategies for teaching English in large classes are the realities of my study. They may have different perspectives on the topic based on their own experiences and perceptions. In other words, my research participants constructed the meanings based on their experiences, discussions, and interactions, and I interpreted them accordingly. My ontological instance is relativist, as there is no absolute, universal truth regarding the issue under study. Therefore, I have conducted the present study to collect their understanding and experiences through the narrative inquiry method.

My epistemological assumption is that everyone's perspective on teaching English in large classes differs. They formulate their perspectives through experiences, interactions, and negotiations between and among individuals. Thus, my epistemological stance is subjective because my research participants' knowledge about their subject matter and pedagogies always exist in teaching and learning activities. I used interviews with the participants and their class observations to collect data for the study.

My axiological instance is to give value to the value of my participants. In my study, I listened to my participants' stories and gave meaning and value to their ideas. I respected every participant's strategy in large classes without being biased. However, I filtered, processed, stored, and analyzed data based on their underlying values, cultures, and contexts against the established values, theories, and knowledge in the available English language teaching literature. The participants' understanding, knowledge, and perceptions are value-laden in the study.

Research Paradigm

A research paradigm is a system of beliefs the researcher follows while conducting their research. In other words, the research paradigm is a worldview about what research is and how it will be conducted (Willis, 2007). The research paradigm for my study is interpretivism, and the research design is qualitative. The reason behind choosing the interpretive paradigm is that teachers' various interpretations regarding the notion of the large class, its challenges, and coping strategies in teaching English can be investigated through narratives of experiences. According to Heever (2000), using a qualitative approach makes it feasible to explain the nature of what is happening in the large classroom in as much detail as possible. Therefore, after thoroughly investigating teaching and learning processes in large classrooms, challenges related to large-class teaching can be recorded, analyzed, and interpreted. An essential component of the qualitative research paradigm is the use of language to describe, analyze, and interpret data.

Therefore, subjective judgment was applied to my research participants' opinions, perceptions, and experiences. My data, in the form of 'field texts' comprising teachers' experiences in the large class, was analyzed and interpreted interpretively.

Narrative Inquiry as a Research Method

The 1990s saw the beginning of the development of narrative inquiry as a methodology for study. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) state, "Because of its focus on experience and the qualities of life and education, the narrative is situated in a matrix of qualitative research" (p. 2). For the first time, Connelly and Clandinin (1990) used the term "narrative inquiry" to refer to a teacher education strategy already taking shape and centred on personal storytelling. Narrative inquiry takes place in human stories. It offers researchers a solid framework through which they may examine the various ways the human experience is portrayed in the stories they tell. Webster and Mertova (2007) mentioned that the tools of the storytelling process include any text and artefact that we use to create and communicate meaning in our daily lives, such as anecdotes, gossip, documents, journal articles, presentations, and media.

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) argue, "It is equally correct to say 'inquiry into narrative' as it is 'narrative inquiry' (p. 2). Similarly, Webster and Mertova (2007) define narrative inquiry as "an approach to the study of

human lives conceived as a way of honoring lived experience as a source of important knowledge and understanding" (p. 7). They viewed narrative inquiry as a way of understanding experience. It is collaboration between researchers and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and social interaction within milieus.

Narrative researchers study the individual's experience in the world. This experience is stored both in the living and telling, which can be studied by listening, observing, living alongside one another, and writing and interpreting texts. Therefore, through dialogues, conversations, and involvement in research participants' daily lives, narrative inquiry seeks to understand and provide meaning to experiences.

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) defined narrative inquiry as 'a way of thinking about the experience' and Clandinin and Murphy (2009) as "a methodology for inquiring into storied experiences" (p. 598). Clandinin and Caine (2008) I argue that in research, narrative inquiry is taken as "first and foremost a way of understanding experience." It analyzes various stories people create. Narrative inquiry aims to understand how people create meaning in their lives through narratives. In this study, I used the narratives of four participants who teach at the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University, to gather information on their challenges and strategies.

The primary research tool in narrative inquiry, according to Smythe and Murray (2000), is the interview. This method is frequently carried out over an extended period in a natural setting. It can require considerable personal involvement from researchers in the lives of those they are studying.

For this study, I used narrative inquiry to investigate teachers' lived experiences regarding the challenges and strategies of teaching English in the large classes at the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University. I used narrative inquiry because it helped interpret human actions and behaviour at a micro-level. I gained insights into the challenges and coping strategies of teaching English in large classes, which corresponded to my purpose and research questions. I used class observations and interviews to gather data as Butina (2015) states that narratives are often collected through interviews and observations. The narratives (stories) collected from the purposefully selected campus teachers were analyzed to learn more about how teachers taught English in large classes.

Selection of Research Participants

For this study, the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University, served as the research site; four English language teachers were the research participants. The main criterion for selecting the research site was the campuses where the number of students in a class was more than 60. In other words, the student-teacher ratio was at least 60:1 or higher. Other criteria for selecting those teachers were that they had more than 10 years of teaching experience and were ready to participate in the study. I used purposive sampling to choose the participants for the study. Purposeful sampling is a procedure by which researchers intentionally choose study participants (Creswell, 2013). Using this sampling technique, I chose four teachers who taught English at the bachelor's level. I collected data through observation and interview techniques to examine the challenges teachers encountered in the classroom and the coping strategies they employed to overcome them for effective teaching.

Approaches to Data Collection

Narrative inquiry aims to understand and make meaning of experiences through conversations, dialogue, and participation in the ongoing lives of research participants (Clandinin & Caine, 2008). For data collection, I listened to teachers narrate their stories and lived with participants as they told their stories. I also observed large classes to see teachers and students in their natural settings, identifying teaching and learning problems and teachers' use of coping strategies to address those problems.

Field Texts

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) take field records as the primary tools for narrative inquiry work, gathered through participant observation in a shared practical context. They further say that field texts can be composed using various methods. Field notes, called data, comprise participant observations, interviews, and conversations. Field texts are composed with attention to the three-dimensional narrative inquiry. Temporality comes into play in two ways: field texts are composed over multiple interactions with participants and through participants' reflections on and of earlier life experiences. Place directs attention to areas where lives were lived as well as to the places where inquiry events occur. Sociality directs attention inward

toward the participants' thoughts, emotions, and moral responses and outward toward events and actions.

Interviews

According to Connelly and Clandinin (1990), the unstructured interview is a data collection tool for narrative inquiry. Interviews are conducted between researcher and participant, transcripts are made, the meeting is made available for further discussion, and they become part of the ongoing narrative record. Following the narrative inquiry, participants told many stories as they described their practice of teaching English and explained their techniques to address challenges caused by many students. Therefore, the study's primary source was the research participants' stories of teaching English in large classes. I visited the study participants' classes to conduct interviews, where they facilitated many students. I primarily conducted the interviews in their classrooms during their off periods, and I also interviewed them in their staff rooms. I conducted one-on-one interviews with the research participants using open-ended questions at least four times (see Appendix I). The interview schedule includes broad areas such as classroom management-related issues, disciplinary challenges, teaching-learning-related challenges, internal assessment-related issues, and insufficient teaching resources with their coping strategies for addressing them for effective teaching and learning in large classes. The language of the interview was both Nepali and English. However, all the study participants preferred to speak in English.

I recorded all interviews with the Sony ICD-Px70 stereo digital voice recorder. The data collection started in September 2023 and ran till December 2023, resulting in about 4 months until I collected adequate data for the study. As I wanted to witness things as they happened naturally and undisturbed by my presence as possible, I took the role of non-participant observer. The role demands a detached, neutral, and unobtrusive observer, ideally sitting in a corner at the back of the classroom, not trying to be part of the events in the classroom.

Observations

To get field experience, I made direct observations in each classroom with a checklist for observation (see Appendix II). For classroom observation, I went into the classrooms to see what was going on, what challenges teachers encountered due to the large number of students, which teaching methods they used, and what coping strategies they used to address those challenges for effective teaching. I recorded my

observations by making field notes. I observed at least four classes of each research participant for the collection of data.

The interview was chosen because it helped me understand their perspectives or situations in detail. I observed at least four classes of each participant and took notes on what happened in the classroom related to teaching. I used 'field notes' to keep track of actions, events, and other qualities to produce significance and an understanding of the behaviour, activities, and phenomena being studied, which supplemented other research tools.

I prepared handwritten verbatim recordings of observations with particular attention to activities, actors, the physical space, physical items, and the order of activities and events. After reviewing the field notes, broad categories of the phenomena noticed (viz., physical setting, teacher actions, and learner reaction) were recognized and used as the base for developing a checklist-cum- observation schedule. I observed things as they occurred in the classroom. I did not disturb the class by my presence, so I assumed the role of non-participant observer. I entered the class with students and sat on one of the room's corners. I did not notice any disciplinary issues during my first two class visits in the classes. However, during my other visits to the class, I found the class quite natural.

The collected data from class observations and participant interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis to determine information about the English teachers' challenges of teaching in large classes and their coping strategies to address them. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), "Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail" (p. 6). Similarly, Maguire and Delahunt (2017) state, "Thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data" (p. 3352).

The first step of organizing and preparing the data stage was transcribing audio recordings immediately or shortly after the interview. I started analyzing the collected data by repeatedly reading and rereading the transcripts to identify recurring words, ideas, or patterns. Then, I made a list of codes to identify the recurring words or ideas for the text and wrote them in the margin. I prepared a list of master codes merged into several categories or themes. Emerging categories/themes were validated during the virtual and personal exchanges throughout the study. For this study, the codes were condensed into five significant themes/categories: a) classroom

management-related challenges, b) disciplinary challenges, c) teaching and learning-related challenges, d) internal assessment-related challenges, and e) insufficient resources for teachers. Having done this, I interpreted the data by simply making meanings. The five key fundamental themes that emerged from the narratives enhanced our comprehension of the challenges and strategies for dealing with those challenges in teaching English in large classes. So, I used thematic analysis in the study because my focus was to find out themes within the collected narratives.

Quality Standards

'Quality standards' are instrumental standards that authenticate the research work. As a researcher, I had to validate the accuracy of the narrative accounts. This validation process occurred throughout the study. I used various validation processes. For instance, member checking, triangulating among data sources, and looking for contradictory evidence were employed to assess the accuracy and believability of a narrative account.

While conducting the research, I did not simply record whatever the participants said as the ultimate truth; I was also engaged in it for an extended period. The following terms were used to maintain quality standards in my research.

Trustworthiness

Building trust and rapport between the researcher and the participants is essential in research. Keeping this point in mind, I built a strong relationship with the participants, which helped me do more productive research while maintaining my credibility. To maintain trustworthiness in my research, I was involved in the research for a long time and did not take anything for granted. I spent about 5 months observing and understanding the context at the research site. After preparing the first draft of the research, I sent transcripts, analyses, and stories to my participants to confirm their agreement. I incorporated their feedback into the study.

Authenticity

To maintain authenticity in the research, I chose four English language teachers who taught the English language in large classes to increase the representativeness of the research at the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University, Surkhet, and two constituent campuses of the University. I incorporated all the information provided by the respondents. I valued the participants' stories as the main tool for my study. To justify it, I quoted some of their original stories in the analysis part of the report. Moreover, I looked at the data from a researcher's lens to

understand the experiences, assisted by the research questions and theoretical literature.

Transferability

To maintain transferability in my research, I interviewed the participants and quoted their experiences and responses directly, as their views and experiences were more important in my study.

Credibility

According to Creswell (2013), researchers should use member checking, that is, sharing interview transcripts, analytical thoughts, and/or drafts of the final report with research participants to ensure that they respond to them and their ideas accurately to promote credibility (internal validity). To make my research more credible, I followed several techniques, such as prolonged engagement in the study, persistent observation, triangulation, and member checking. To obtain more comprehensive data, I confirmed data collected from observation with the data collected from interviews and vice-versa. Finally, I used those data to complement one another to understand better the challenges English teachers face while teaching large classes and their strategies for overcoming those challenges.

I engaged myself for about four months to make this study more credible. Creswell (2013) recommends that researchers use techniques like rich, thick descriptions to increase transferability (external validity). A thick description refers to presenting the study's findings in detail and the overall context. I also described the research participants in this study and provided findings and narrative quotes as supporting evidence. For each of the five themes, I presented my findings in narrative form to support them.

I collected data until it was adequate to prove my research was credible. For this, I collected data from the research participants until they provided all the pertinent stories they could provide, or when new interview data just confirmed or were redundant with what had been found in the previous data, no new knowledge had been gained. Data is sufficient only when that depth, as well as breadth of information, has been achieved (Kim, 2016).

Ethical Considerations

Regarding ethical considerations in narrative inquiry, Clandinin (2006) states, "For those of us wanting to learn to engage in narrative inquiry, we need to imagine ethics as being about negotiation, respect, mutuality, and openness to multiple voices" (p. 52).

According to Clandinin and Caine (2008), "Within each inquiry, researchers attempt to represent the multiplicity of voices and signatures, which are reflected in the importance of diverse textual structure and accounts."

Consent from research participants is very important in any research. The research participant freely gives consent and may be freely withdrawn at any moment. According to Smythe and Murray (2000), there are two types of consent: free and informed. Free consent refers to persons who voluntarily agree to engage in research and are not coerced or subjected to inducement. Informed consent requires that researchers fully and openly provide all information relevant to free and informed consent to prospective subjects or approved third parties.

Israel and Hay (2009) state that consent should be "both informed and voluntary" (p. 60). They further add that informed consent implies two related activities: Participants must comprehend and agree voluntarily to the nature of their research and their role within it.

Privacy and Confidentiality

According to Smythe and Murray (2000), "It is the right of individuals not to have personal and identifying information about them disclosed without their permission" (p. 313). In this study, the research participants' names were substituted by pseudonyms (e.g., Dipak, Kapil, Mohan, and Nabin) to protect their privacy. Confidentiality refers to the researcher's commitment that any personal or identifying information gathered from research participants will be kept confidential and shared only with the participant's free and informed consent. In other words, maintaining the privacy of those participating in research is an objective of confidentiality (Kim, 2016). So, confidentiality is about what can be done with the interview data related to the understanding between the researcher and the research participant. According to the informed consent documents, various techniques are used to safeguard participant confidentiality. These include using pseudonyms instead of participants' real names and excluding identifying information from research reports. Anonymity indicates the

widespread practice of releasing research data without specific, identifying information about the research participant or any tracking methods. The research participant had the option to withdraw their data from participation.

When conducting this study, I was concerned myself with certain ethical concerns. First of all, I told my research participants about the purpose of the research. Secondly, I told them that the data would be used only for academic purposes. The study participants may consent if they understand that the information they provide will be used only by the researchers and in certain ways. The information is private and supplied voluntarily and confidently to the researchers (Israel & Hay, 2009). Thirdly, I collected data from them only after getting their informed consent in written form. The participants had the right to withdraw their consent at any time without penalty. Consequently, beneficence, individual autonomy, and confidentiality serve as the foundation for informed consent. Fourthly, I sought permission from the campus administration for class observation. For this, I met the campus chief and teachers of the institution and shared my research plan with them. Once I got permission from them, I entered the classroom for observation. Fifthly, I assured my research participants that there would be no harm in any form to them for their participation in my research. In this sense, research that involves little to no danger to research participants is considered ethically unproblematic (Smythe & Murray, 2000). Sixthly, I coded each participant to ensure their identities remain confidential. Seventhly, throughout the study, I respected participants. Finally, I analyzed and interpreted the collected data objectively and honestly. As a researcher, I explored teachers' challenges and strategies for teaching English in their classes. In short, I used privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality as ethical standards.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I discussed my research methodology through an interpretive paradigm to examine ontological, epistemological, and axiological considerations as my philosophical considerations. Guided by philosophical considerations, I decided to use narrative inquiry as a method to investigate the challenges faced by English teachers and the coping strategies they employed to deal with them. The four teachers teaching English in large classes at the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University, were the research participants. I followed trustworthiness and authenticity as quality standards of my research and used privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality as my ethical considerations.

CHAPTER IV

CHALLENGES OF TEACHING LARGE CLASSES

This chapter analyzes the data collected from the research participants using classroom observations and interviews to answer the first research question: How do university English language teachers reflect on their experience of the challenges of teaching large classes? I have thoroughly examined the collected data thematically concerning the earlier literature and established theories discussed in the previous chapters.

Research Participants' Common Perspectives on Large Classes

I selected four research participants from the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University, for the study. All of them had more than 15 years of teaching experience. When comparing research participants' experiences teaching English in large classes, I realized there were some common themes regarding the challenges of teaching large classes. Moreover, all four research participants considered their classes large and multilevel.

The Participants' Perception of Large Classes

The participants of this research had many students, ranging from 70 to 122. In Dipak's class, the number of enrolled students was 122, whereas only 80-90 students attended the class regularly. In Kapil's class, 70 enrolled, and 55-60 students came to the class regularly. Mohan and Nabin had 72 and 70 enrolled students, respectively, in their classes, and the number of regular students was 52-60.

When the participants were inquired about their notions of a large class, they had different perceptions about it depending upon various factors. Though the University has set a fixed number of students in a class, that is, 48 students for a non-technical subject like Education at the bachelor's level, the research participants' ideal number of students in an English language class ranged from 25 to 40. Dipak stated that it is large when the number of students in a language class exceeds 30. He said,

A large class is one with more students than the pre-determined standard by the Mid-West University is large. So, a class generally consisting of more than 48 students constitutes a large class. However, an English language class in the semester system should have around 30 students only.

(Interview, 27 September, 2023)

For Kapil, the ideal number of students in an English language class was 25 to 30. He believed that if a class exceeds 30 students, it is a large class. Furthermore, Mohan took a broader perspective while defining a large class. He noted,

The room size, available equipment, benches, desks, and other classroom facilities do not support the number of students in a large class. Put another way, a class that is not enough to accommodate all students and the desks, benches, and other facilities are not enough for them is large.

(Interview, 29 September, 2023)

Nabin believes that a class of more than 40 students is large. He looked into this from the classroom management perspective and argued, "If we cannot manage the class due to the large number of students, then it is called a large class."

The interviewed teachers of the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University, stated that they taught in large classes with students ranging from 70 to 122. However, their ideal number of students in language classes was between 25 to 40.

The Physical Size of the Classroom

The research participants were teaching in different classes of various physical sizes. Two teachers were teaching in large and spacious classrooms, while others were teaching in congested classrooms. For example, Dipak regarded the physical size of his classroom as large, but he did not consider it large enough to accommodate all the students when they were present. He mentioned,

Though the classroom is spacious and well-furnished, when all the students enrolled in the program, for example, 122 students come to the class, it cannot accommodate all of them. Sometimes, some students have a hard time finding seats in the classroom.

(Interview, 27 September, 2023)

On the contrary, Kapil expressed that the physical size of his classroom was large and spacious. He argued that his classroom could be enough for around 90 students. Mohan also regarded the physical size of his room as enough to accommodate 50-plus students. He expressed, however, that when all the enrolled students in the program came to the class, it was difficult for him to manage seats for them. Nabin viewed the size of his class as enough to accommodate the enrolled students in the program. But he mentioned that the benches and desks made of wood,

which were heavy and fixed to the floor, made the room unnecessarily crowded, among other things.

Common Perceived Challenges in Large Classes

Teachers usually face challenges as tertiary class sizes rise (Mulryan-Kyne, 2010). All the research participants have experienced common challenges in their large classes. They found large classes quite challenging because there was a lack of enough space, resulting in congested classrooms; teachers had difficulty recalling students' names and seeing and hearing clearly; teacher's fatigue and tiredness; there was a high level of unwanted noise; there was difficulty in paying equal attention to all students; that there was difficulty in involving all students in learning; that there was a lack of applying student-centred methods; that there was poor class monitoring and time management; that there was difficulty in assessing students internally; and that there were insufficient resources for teaching.

For example, time management was the most difficult challenge that prevented Dipak from applying student-centred activities such as pair and group work in the class. Moreover, he believed that dividing the students into various groups required more time and spacious classrooms, which was almost impossible in this classroom. Therefore, classroom management-related issues were the most difficult, and the research participants struggled most in their large classes. They viewed providing individual feedback to students as another big challenge in their classes.

In the following sections, I present the challenges the research participants faced while teaching in large classes.

The research participants encountered various difficulties and challenges while teaching in large classes. For instance, they faced challenges such as congested classrooms, poor time management, disciplinary problems, low student involvement, no individual feedback, and a lack of teacher resources.

Classroom Management-Related Challenges

In large classes, teachers generally encounter problems, including crowded and congested classrooms, time-consuming student attendance, difficulty in recalling students' names, students not being able to see and hear clearly, and teachers' feelings of tiredness and stress. Some major issues that teachers frequently encounter in large classes, according to Haddad (2015), are heavy and fixed furniture on the floor, congested classrooms making teachers feel difficulty in monitoring individual, peer, and group activities, students' inability to see and hear properly, and

teachers' tiredness and fatigue resulting in stress. I discuss classroom management-related challenges that the research participants faced in their classrooms due to the large number of students below.

Insufficient Classroom Space

Large classes often have insufficient space for seating, organizing class activities, and monitoring student behaviours. Al-Jarf (2006) regards space and accommodations as pertinent problems of large classes. Moreover, Wilson (as cited in Benbow et al., 2007) notes that pushing, crowding, and hitting between students happen commonly in large classes.

In his classroom, Dipak often faced the issues of hitting and pushing between students. He shared his experience, *"My classroom is large and overcrowded. However, there is a single door. So, there is often pushing and hitting at the door when the students enter and leave their classes"* (Interview, 6 October 2023).

Another issue the research participants faced in their large classes was the lack of enough space to monitor students' activities. In this regard, Brady (2012) points out that teachers find it challenging to monitor groups if there is insufficient space to move around the classroom. Nabin encountered difficulty in conducting class activities due to the lack of space. He noted, *"The desks and benches made of iron and plywood which are fixed to the floor are heavy and fixed, so they cannot be rearranged for running classroom activities"* (Interview, 2 October 2023). Regarding the difficulty caused by the fixed furniture on the floor, Lipinge (2013) argues that classrooms with fixed furniture make organizing student-centered activities such as group work and discussions difficult.

Kapil expressed that his classroom was large and spacious. However, he argued that some students always came to the class earlier to reserve their seats on the first benches. He said, *"I see some boys and girls who always come earlier to sit on the first benches"* (Interview, 29 September 2023). Mohan also faced the challenge of the congested classroom in his large class. He reported,

I find running class activities difficult in my class, which has more than 70 students. I can hardly manage the seating arrangements. Moreover, there is not enough space to move around the class to check whether students are paying attention to my teaching. Furthermore, the desks and benches are fixed to the ground, so they cannot be rearranged for classroom activities.

(Interview, 4 October 2023)

Overall, two of the research participants experienced a lack of sufficient space for seating, organizing class activities, and monitoring students' behaviours. This situation often led to pushing, crowding, and hitting between and among students as they entered and left their classrooms. Insufficient space for movement made it difficult for teachers to monitor students' activities. Moreover, students often had difficulty finding seats on the first benches, making it challenging to manage seating arrangements and check student attention. One of the participants had enough class space with desks and benches, but they were heavy and fixed to the floor, so they could not be rearranged for running any class activities (Field Note, 29 September 2023).

Difficulty in Taking Student Attendance

Teachers of large classes also face difficulty in recording student attendance. According to Al-Jarf (2006), a large number of students in a class causes a problem when taking attendance. The research participants in the study faced challenges while taking student attendance. Dipak shared his story as,

Taking student attendance has been one of the significant challenges for me in the large class because the number of students is 122. For me, it takes 5-8 minutes to take their attendance. So, I often take attendance twice a week to save time and avoid unwanted noise during student attendance. Though it is time-consuming, I must do it because the University has adopted the semester system, and attendance is one of the major parameters for the internal assessment of the students.

(Interview, 6 October 2023)

Kapil also viewed taking student attendance as a problem in his large class. He assigned the job of doing it to the class monitor to save class time so he could spend it on delivering content. Similarly, Mohan noted, *"The number of students is big (72 students), so it consumes time to take attendance. If I take their attendance, I will consume 5-10 minutes. To save time, I generally do not take attendance"* (Interview, 10 October 2023). Nabin also expressed that taking attendance is time-consuming.

Thus, the research participants considered recording student attendance in a large class as one of the big problems that they encountered. As Hayes (1997) inquires how teachers take attendance without wasting class time, all of them viewed taking student attendance as time-consuming, and they had to spend 5-10 minutes doing it. Instead, they wanted to save time for content delivery.

Inability of Students' Seeing and Hearing

Owing to the vast number of students, large classes are generally noisy. The high noise level and the large class size cause students, especially the backbencher, difficulty hearing clearly what the teacher says. In addition, giving instructions can be affected by the mess and disturbance caused by noise and echoing. Especially in the summer, the noise of fans also adds to the difficulty of making instructions clear and audible in class (Sarwari, 2018). The research participants reported that their students could not see clearly what was written on the board. They also shared that their students could not hear because of the noise and the large size of the class.

Dipak faced the issue of students not hearing and seeing clearly in his class. He reported,

Some students, particularly shy girls, are not audible when asked to answer my questions. I say, "What did you say? Could you please repeat what you said?" This is one of the significant challenges that I usually encounter in the large class. Another reason for the difficulty of two-way communication is the long distance between us, especially the backbenchers. The distance between me standing at the front of the class and the last benchers is more than 10 meters. The long distances create problems in seeing and hearing clearly.

(Interview, 6 October 2023)

Mohan expressed a similar type of experience as to that of Dipak. He remarked,

I often encounter problems from the last benchers and sometimes even the middle benchers related to their inability to see board writings or projected contents. A possible cause might be the long physical distance between the students and the board at the front. Another problem is that the students, especially the backbenchers, complain about not being able to hear me clearly when four fans hover on the ceiling during the summer seasons. The last benchers sit eight to ten meters away from the board.

(Interview, 4 October 2023)

Nabin also expressed, *"When I start writing on the board, the students, especially the backbenchers, complain to me about not seeing what is written on the board. They request me to read out what I have written on the board."*

(Interview, 6 October 2023)

Overall, the research participants pointed out that their students, especially the backbenchers, often have difficulty hearing what the teacher teaches. Moreover, the long distance between the board or the screen and the backbenchers, for example, about 8 - 10 meters away, meant the backbenchers could not read the written or projected content on the board or screen. Since it was winter, most students put on tall woolen caps, which blocked what was written on the board to the backbenchers.

Discomfort for Teachers

Teachers feel discomfort in teaching large classes since they need to exert much effort to control the class and speak loudly to be heard by all students. Dhami (2016) argues that teaching a large class demands much effort from teachers. As there is noise in the class, teachers should speak loudly, which makes them tired (Christensen, 1994). They also have problems managing their time. Thus, they need to maximize the time allocated for study. Adu et al. (2014) emphasize the importance of time management by preparing beforehand. Shan (2020) also supports the view that teachers of large classes often struggle with time management. Similarly, Duwadi (2020) points out that teaching large classes is stressful, complex, and challenging. Moreover, teachers should complete the course within the time frame which causes stress to them (Sarwari, 2018).

Dipak shared his difficulty regarding having discomfort while teaching in his class,

Completing a lesson within the stipulated time is challenging in my large class. Firstly, I generally spend 5 to 10 minutes motivating the students to learn. So, I begin the class either with warm-up activities or by revising the earlier lesson. It takes time to make them ready for learning. Secondly, taking student attendance consumes about 5-10 minutes for the 122 students. I will look at the students' assignments for about 10 minutes. What I often do is that I ask them to place their assignments on the table and check whether they have done it or not. If I only see their assignments this way, they feel that the teacher at least sees what they have done. They regularly do their home assignments. However, due to time limitations, I cannot individually examine, correct, and provide feedback on their assignments. Having done all these activities, around 30 minutes are left for me to deliver the content to the students. So, the allocated time is insufficient for achieving the set objectives

of the lesson. I struggle to manage time for teaching the course as I have three textbooks, which creates stress for me.

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

Kapil also had time constraints in his class. He noted,

Due to time constraints, I cannot assess every student's performance and provide personal feedback. Although I am well aware that every student needs individual feedback, the large number of students and the limited amount of time available prevent me from being able to deliver it, which makes me dissatisfied with my teaching.

Mohan also had a similar type of experience as he expressed,

Generally, I do not run any class activities regularly in the class. This is because there is not enough space to organize them. The desks and benches are heavy and fixed to the ground. Moreover, I cannot even move around the class to monitor students' behaviour. It would have been almost impossible if I had to reach every student in the class. There is no gap or space between the two benches. If any student has to go to the other side of the bench, other students on the bench should stand up and let him go. Completing the course is a big challenge within the stipulated time. When I think of the course, it creates stress for me.

(Interview, 10 October 2023)

Nabin also shared his difficulty with stress as,

I should speak loudly to be heard by every student. I often have to move to the back of the class to make backbenchers silent. I also have to administer mid-term examinations, provide students with assignments, collect and check them, and prepare each student's portfolio. All these activities make me feel tired and overburdened.

(Interview, 6 October 2023)

To sum up, the research participants felt discomfort with teaching in their large classes. This finding aligns with the study by Choudhary and Batwal (2024) as they argue that teaching a large class can be mentally and physically demanding, which could lead to teacher tension. Constant pressure, a heavy workload, and inadequate resources can negatively impact a teacher's well-being and job satisfaction.

Overall, teaching in large classes often renders teachers uncomfortable because they must control the class, speak loudly, take attendance, and manage time

to complete the course. These activities lead to fatigue and pressure on the part of teachers. McLeod (1989) remarks that teachers in large classes have difficulty recalling their students' names, establishing a rapport with them, identifying their mood or interest, and maintaining eye contact. Moreover, these findings reinforce the studies by Ming and Qiang (2017) who concluded that teachers have challenges managing large classes due to limited space and time for classroom activities.

Disciplinary Challenges

One of the biggest challenges teachers face in large classes is disciplinary issues. Al-Jarf (2006) states that disciplinary problems arise in large classes. The teacher should talk louder because there is much noise, making him tired and disturbing students in neighbouring classes (Christensen, 1994). Similarly, Bahanshal (2013) regards the noise of some students as one of the problematic issues in teaching English in large classes. He further states that it creates disturbance and prevents students from learning. According to Dhakal (2017), maintaining discipline in the classroom is one of the most challenging tasks in large-class teaching.

I discuss the disciplinary challenges the research participants encountered in their large classes.

Uncontrolled Class

As the number of students is large, unwanted noise is quite a common problem in large classes. The students may think the teacher cannot focus on them individually. Consequently, they might engage in side talks. According to Choudhary and Batwal (2024), it is challenging to keep order and discipline in a large class. Controlling noise levels, avoiding disturbances, and ensuring that students are actively participating in the learning process becomes more difficult. Similarly, Heever (2000) says that students might feel the large class atmosphere as one of anonymity, in which they feel lost or out of place. Students in large classes tend to be inattentive and disruptive since they are not close to the teacher and do not receive regular attention from him. When students become bored, that boredom often leads to misbehaviour. The research participants mentioned that they faced problems in controlling their large classes. Regarding uncontrolled classrooms, Dipak stated,

Sometimes, a few students make irrelevant talk and disturb the whole class. They might think that the teacher is at the front of the class and is inaccessible to them.

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

When students do not find lessons enjoyable and valuable, they start talking with other friends, creating noise in the class. He further added,

There was a group of students in my class last semester. They wanted to go to Japan for further study or to earn something. One day, they tried to violate the general norms and values of the classroom. They talked to each other loudly and disturbed the whole class. They made a loud noise whenever I turned back and started writing on the board. They talked and talked. I think the reason behind their talks was that they did not find the lesson interesting and useful.

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

Kapil expressed a similar type of experience as,

Unwanted noise is quite a common problem in large classes. Students come from different social and cultural backgrounds. Some are serious about their study, whereas others are not. Sometimes there is a high noise level during my teaching, and I do not know where the noise comes from. These days, some students wear masks and talk to their friends, which disturbs the whole class. Therefore, controlling my large class is challenging.

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

Mohan faced a similar type of problem in his class. He said,

I want to share one anecdote regarding a disciplinary issue in my class. In the last semester, a student was from a hilly area. At the beginning of the semester, the student was not disruptive, but as the days passed, he started showing disruptive behaviour. He used to sit with his friends in a group at the back, talk with them, and make them laugh. When he started talking to them, other students laughed loudly. I often noticed them laughing in the class. To address the problem, I asked for the contact number of the boy's father and made him a call. Only after calling his father, I knew why the boy was showing disruptive behaviour in class. The boy was not from a good family background. After my counselling, he stopped showing disruptive behaviour in class.

(Interview, 6 December 2023)

Regarding the uncontrolled situation in his large class, Nabin said,

In my teaching career, I have experienced that the students studying Education are naturally silent in the classroom. However, a few students come to the class just for time pass; especially the last benchers do not pay attention

to my teaching. If the lesson is not interesting, they will make noise and disturb the whole class. For instance, when I am delivering content on a particular topic, some students are engaged in side talks. I noticed them engaged in side talks and asked them to pay attention to my teaching. They did not accept that they were making noise. Instead, they say, "Sir, we are listening to you carefully or talking about the subject matter you teach." What I have experienced in teaching English in a large class is that such students create problems.

(Interview, 8 December 2023)

He further added,

Ten years ago, I was teaching in a large class. The class had approximately 200 students. Some students were stupid. One day, in the middle of my teaching, a naughty student made a tail and put it on my back. Then, the whole class burst out into laughter. I was puzzled as to why everyone was laughing at me. I asked the students what the reason was for laughing. One of the students said, "Sir, look at your back." Oh my god! There was a tail. I stopped teaching and left the class. For me, controlling students in a large class is one of the biggest problems in the large class.

(Interview, 8 December 2023)

In short, all participants expressed that they find it difficult to control their large classes because students make irrelevant talks and create disciplinary problems. Hayes (1997) argue that teachers often feel out of control. Similarly, Dhimi (2016) claims that a high level of noise in large classes causes stress to the teacher. During my class observations, students, especially backbenchers, were engaged in side talks and using mobile phones.

High Level of Noise

Generally, there is a high level of noise, and the noisy class disturbs its neighbouring class too (Christensen, 1994). The noise levels were found to vary in the classes observed for the study depending upon the type of activities being undertaken, the teacher's tolerance for noise, and class size. Having faced with a noisy class, Dipak reported,

I can see every student in the class while delivering a lecture. However, once I start writing on the board, some students from the back benches start talking. As I turn back and look at them, they begin writing. So, I cannot identify the

students who make unwanted noise. They even make noise at the beginning of the class, so I spend a couple of minutes making them silent. For controlling noise, I write a beautiful quotation on the board and ask them to read it. Sometimes, I make them silent by revising the previous lesson briefly. Once they get motivated, they become quiet. As they are quiet, I start teaching the class. Secondly, they make noise when I conduct classroom activities, for example, pair work, group work, or some presentations. Thirdly, they make noise during attendance. Taking attendance has become one of the major challenges for managing time and unwanted noise in the large class. Due to the large number of students and the class size, there is noise. As the room is large, the sound also gets echoed.

(Interview, 17 December 2023)

Kapil expressed a different view regarding noise in his class, as,
Noise depends upon the activity I run in my class. If I teach them through lectures, I make all students listen to me carefully. However, if I engage them in discussion, pair, and group work, they make noise as they may engage in off-task activities.

(Interview, 15 December 2023)

Mohan narrated,
The students who sit at the back and corners of the class ignore the teaching. As a teacher, I cannot even check whether they are paying attention to me because there is no space for moving around the class. So, the students who do not get my attention do side talks.

(Interview, 7 December 2023)

In summary, the participants mentioned that they often face the problem of a high level of noise in the class. They expressed that students from the back benches often start talking, making it difficult for teachers to identify and address them. Thus, unwanted noise hampers effective teaching in large classes as Roshan et al. (2022) reported.

Stress on Teachers

Teaching large classes is stressful for teachers (Dhakal, 2017). The noise level is high, which causes stress to the teachers (Adu et al., 2014). Large classes cause noise, inappropriate behaviour of students, the inability of the teacher to interact with all students, and a large volume of assignments that need to be checked and graded,

which causes stress on the teacher (Buglio, 2013). Teachers must do a lot of work, so they remain under great pressure. The difficulty of managing them leads to stressful conditions.

The research participants stated they had much work to do in their large classrooms, including preparing for class delivery, recording attendance, managing unwanted noise, presenting materials, interacting with students, evaluating many students, and giving feedback. Teachers are under pressure to do these tasks, which stresses them out. One cause of stress on teachers is the large number of students in the class.

Dipak noted,

After teaching in a large class, I feel tired. One of the causes of my tiredness is anxiety. The anxiety is that most students do not understand what I teach in the class. I feel troubled psychologically by the fact that many students cannot acquire the necessary knowledge, good skills, and positive attitudes. There could be several reasons why they do not understand what I teach. The first reason can be the poor base or background of the students. I have found some of the students very weak in their studies. Next, I burn a lot of calories while teaching in class. I speak loudly, move around the class, and control the class. I mostly move around the class when I assign them classwork. I have a high degree of mobility. These issues cause me to feel more tired and overburdened. From my side, I am trying my best. However, I feel slightly disappointed when I assess them since they cannot perform well. Some arrogant students annoy me by creating disciplinary problems in the class. Their behaviours also make me feel tired.

(Interview, 10 November 2023)

Kapil shared a similar type of story as Dipak narrated. He said,

I get tired of teaching large classes because I have to spend more energy -I should speak more. I ought to continually deliver knowledge to the students and advise them on appropriate behaviour. I am doing my best to actively engage all students in class and ensure they get whatever I teach. Moreover, performing internal assessments of a large number of students is challenging.

(Interview, 10 October 2023)

Mohan stated that teaching in the large class was challenging, extra-burdensome, and complicated compared to the small class. Nabin mentioned,

I feel overwhelmed when teaching in a large class. Teaching one period in a large class equals teaching three periods in a small class. I must manage the pressure of students, maintain discipline, minimize noise, and focus on the students. Therefore, teaching English in a large class is an overburden.

(Interview, 2 October 2023)

The participants expressed that their students often struggle understanding their teachings due to poor backgrounds and disciplinary issues. One expressed that teaching one period in a large class equals teaching three periods in a small class. They all faced challenges in managing student pressure, maintaining discipline, and minimizing noise, which caused stress on them.

Absentee Students

Students' absenteeism is another major problem in large classes. As the number of students is large, there is a greater chance of absenteeism. The research participants expressed various reasons behind students' absence in the class.

Dipak said,

Most of the students come to the class regularly. However, a few students do not attend class regularly for various reasons. Some of them teach in private schools, and others are job holders. Last week, some students majoring in mathematics tried to bunk my class as my class was in the last period of the morning shift. I told them to be regular since student attendance carries five marks in the internal assessment. Having done counselling, they regularly came to the class. If they had not attended the class regularly, they would have gotten fewer marks in the internal assessment than regular ones. Once I made them aware of the importance of the internal assessment, they came regularly to the class. The second reason behind the absenteeism of the students in the class is because of the priorities in their lives. For example, a group of students showed disruptive behaviour in my class last semester. Later on, I found that they were studying the Japanese and Korean languages for going abroad for work, so they did not care about their study at the campus. I think studying at the campus became a second or third priority for them. The third reason could be that they do not have prior knowledge of the subject; their base is weak, and they do not know much about the subject they are studying.

(Interview, 27 September 2023)

Kapil also faced the challenge of student absenteeism in his class. He stated,

Many students attend my class regularly; however, a few frequently miss their classes. Since my class is in the last period, a few students leave it earlier because they are job holders. Some other students do not come to the class regularly. They only come to the campus during final examinations.

(Interview, 10 October 2023)

Student absenteeism is also a major problem for Mohan in his large class. He mentioned,

Some students neglect their studies. They do not even enter the class, though they are present on campus. If students are not doing their homework, I ask them to submit their work the next day. I pay more attention to those students who do not come to class, though they are present on campus. I meet them and provide them with individual counselling. After that, I noticed a positive change in their behaviour, and they came to the class.

This semester, I am teaching 72 students in the class. I took attendance of the students today, and out of 72 students, were only 60 in the class. So, 12 students were absent from the class. Absenteeism is one of the major problems in large classes; the greater the number of students there are, the larger the number of absent students.

(Interview, 30 September 2023)

Nabin also suffered from absenteeism among students in his large class. He said,

In my large class, student absenteeism is one of the big problems. The enrolled number of students is 70, whereas only 55-60 students attend class regularly. About 10-15 students do not come to the class. There might be several reasons behind the students' absenteeism. For me, students are absent because they do not have a clear-cut road map in their lives. Many of them do not know why they are studying for a four-year bachelor's degree. Because of the current trends, instead of coming to the class, they want to go to the Korean language class, or they want to go to the Public Service Commission's preparation classes, police, and army services. The other reason is that they might feel learning English is very difficult. Because of this, they want to keep themselves isolated from the English class. They do not want to learn English because they feel that English is a difficult subject.

(Interview, 6 October 2023)

In short, all the participants agreed that student absenteeism is a significant issue in their classes. They expressed that many students attend classes regularly, but some do not come to classes regularly due to various reasons. During my classroom observations, about 10-30 students were absent in the classes.

Many Students are Off-task, Particularly in Group Work

Generally, many students do not pay full attention to the teacher in large classes. Some students, especially backbenchers, are engaged in side talks and do not perform the assigned work during group work. Due to the crowded, congested classrooms and many students, teachers cannot move around the class and reach each bench to monitor their activities. The research participants in this study faced the problem of students off-task, particularly during group work.

Regarding students' off-task behaviour in his large class, Dipak said,

Organizing class activities is challenging in a large class, especially when I teach them reading activities. I divide the class into 15-20 groups. While dividing them into groups, it is tough because the number of students is almost unmanageable. After dividing them into groups, I ask them to read a text in the groups, summarize it, and share it with others. Many groups do not perform the assigned tasks. They are busy talking. Teaching writing to them is also difficult. While assigning them to write something, only a few students write as instructed, but many students do not try because they think it is tough and the teacher does not know about it. Instead, they engaged in side talks and other off-task behaviours.

(Interview, 27 September 2023)

Kapil also had the same type of experience as Dipak did. He mentioned, *In the large class, finding a noiseless environment is difficult. A disciplinary issue is one of the challenges I generally face in a large class. When I find a student involved in off-task activities, I ask him/her to read the text or answer my question. This strategy has worked a lot to keep the class disciplined.*

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

Overall, the research participants faced difficulty in maintaining discipline in large classes. This finding aligns with the findings by Ming and Qiang (2017) who argue that maintaining discipline in large classes can be very challenging. However, during my class observations, I never saw any teachers engaging all their students in

classroom activities. Thus, the research participants faced the challenge of their students being involved in off-task activities in their large classes.

Teaching-Learning Related Challenges

Large classes present challenges for teachers because they limit the interaction between teacher and student. To put it differently, engaging students actively in the learning process is difficult as there is a limited interaction between teacher and students. It is a fact that when the class size increases, the number of interactions decreases; as a result, it impacts negatively on students' progress. Therefore, teachers must ensure every student is engaged and learning effectively in large classes. Here, I discuss challenges related to teaching-learning activities that the research participants encountered in their large classes.

Students' Low Engagement

Engaging students is a difficult job for teachers of large classes. Hayes (1997) claims that involving quiet students in class activities is challenging. According to Dhimi (2016), engaging students in teaching-learning activities is difficult in large classes. Large class is a factor that could harm student engagement (Panhwar & Bell, 2023). Allowing every student to practice the target language in a group of more than 15 is challenging. (Locastro, 2001). According to Hess (2011), classrooms should allow students—specifically foreign language learners—to participate and interact. However, having an interactive, student-centred class is difficult due to the large number of students. The difficulty of determining whether every student is engaged and learning is happening to students makes larger classes challenging for EFL teachers (Brady, 2012). Similarly, Dhimi (2016) argues that engaging students actively in the learning process is not straightforward in a large class. Blatchford et al. (2007) argue that students interact with their teachers and friends in large classes. They further say, "As the class size [increases], the number of interactions with individual pupils [decreases], and this adversely affects pupils' progress" (p. 162). Although the active participation of students is desirable, it is hardly achievable in large classes (Buglio, 2013). Engaging students actively in the learning process in large classes is difficult. (Adu et al., 2014). The uninvolved students will get bored and be busy talking, and a few students will improve their English. Subsequently, many weak students would make little progress.

Increasing interaction is important in creating a friendly environment for learning (Buglio, 2013). More frequent interaction will help bring teachers and

students closer. He further states that activity-based tasks such as group work, discussion, collaborative writing, peer assessment, and group presentation help increase interaction in large classes.

Dipak shared his experience as,

From my side, I involve all students in the teaching-learning process. When I assign them a reading text, only a few students do the task. I ask questions based on the gender of the students. I also involve them in the discussion based on their seating. Generally, I ask questions from different corners of the class. This way, at least 5-6 students can participate in the class discussion.

(Interview, 27 September 2023)

Engaging students is a challenging task for Kapil. He noted,

I do not like to run class activities in my large class for three reasons. First, class activities take a long time, which I do not have, as I must complete the course on time. Second, while involving students in class activities, they should converse with others and move around the class so the class becomes noisy. Third, many students use Nepali to communicate during class activities. Therefore, I generally do not like to engage students in classroom activities.

(Interview, 10 October 2023)

Mohan faced a similar type of experience. He stated,

Due to the many students, I cannot organize class activities to engage students in the teaching-learning process. The first reason is that there is not enough space for organizing class activities. The second reason is that time is scarce. There is only 40-45 minutes for the class. Taking attendance consumes 8-10 minutes. I only teach them for 30 minutes. Within this time, if I start engaging them in classroom activities, "When do I complete the course?" Because of these reasons, there is little or no involvement of students in my large classes.

(Interview, 4 October 2023)

During the class observations, Nabin did not involve his students in classroom activities.

To conclude, the research participants articulated engaging students in classroom activities is challenging in large classes, as teachers struggle to incorporate student-centred approaches due to limited time and space. A few students—seated in the front—participated actively in the classes. The large class size was a major factor in this, but the primary cause was the lectures that were used for teaching (Panhwar &

Bell, 2023). According to Wang and Calvano (2022), students believe that larger classes result in less teacher interaction and satisfaction. Bughio (2013) made an effort to overcome this issue using group work and other communicative teaching techniques. The teachers continued to use teacher-centred methods like the lecture method to ensure effective teaching and learning experiences for their students. During my class observations, I found many students inactive in the classrooms despite teachers' efforts to engage them in learning.

Inability in Adopting Student-Centered Approach

Since teachers mostly use teacher-centred methods such as the lecture method, there is little or no interaction in large classes. The majority of large-class teaching is teacher-centered (Christensen, 1994). The research participants shared that they found it difficult to adopt a student-centred approach in their large classes. Dipak noted,

It is excessively challenging to conduct learner-centred activities like pair work, group work, discussion, and presentations because the time for the class is minimal. Within the 60 minutes, I have to take student attendance, maintain discipline, motivate them, and complete the course on time.

(Interview, 10 November 2023)

Mohan said,

Engaging students in class activities takes almost all the time. The course is lengthy. I have to teach three books to complete it. Therefore, I do not usually use student-centred approaches with my many students.

(Interview, 4 October 2023)

Nabin stated,

Teaching English in large classes is challenging. The most difficult thing for me in a large class is engaging the students in teaching and learning activities. If I attempt to use student-centred activities like pair, group, and class work, they consume lots of time. However, I do have limited time to complete the course. Therefore, I use teacher-centered methods, particularly the lecture method, in my large class.

(Interview, 6 October 2023)

In short, the study participants discussed the difficulties of implementing learner-centred activities in small class settings, emphasizing the need for discipline, motivation, and course completion. Mohan found engaging students challenging due to a lengthy course and teaching three books. During my class observations, three

teachers did not involve their students in any activities in their teaching. I found teachers using the lecture method heavily in their teaching.

Dominance of Bright Students

Because of the large number of students, there is minimal interaction between teacher and student. When only a few students interact and teachers are unable to manage activating many others who appear and act bored, teachers often feel discouraged (Hayes, 1997). Moreover, a few students dominate the class, while the majority remain silent (Buglio, 2013). According to Sarwari (2018), students with confidence, sufficient ideas, and excellent memory power dominate class interaction. As a result, interaction is mostly dominated by a few bright students. Roshan et al. (2022) state that the interaction is always restricted to the students in the front rows. Thus, teachers cannot provide equal opportunities for interaction to all students equally. At the same time, those students who are not involved will get lost, and they will start talking to each other. Consequently, many students will make little progress.

In this regard, Mohan said,

By nature, more talented students dominate the class; they speak more in the class. Extroverted and talented students take the floor and speak more than introverted or less intelligent ones. So, classroom interaction is dominated by a few extroverts who are good at their studies.

(Interview, 6 December 2023)

Thus, classroom interaction is dominated by talented students who speak more and take the floor in class. These extroverts excel in their studies, making them dominant in classroom interaction. During my class observations, I found that most students remained silent, and only a few were active in classes.

Difficulty in Ensuring Equal Participation in Activities

Paying equal attention to increasing students' self-esteem and boosting their confidence in the learning process is necessary (Buglio, 2013). He further says that large classes usually have students with diverse learning abilities due to different educational backgrounds. Some students will be marginalized if the teacher cannot pay equal attention to all students. So, teachers can focus on instructions for the whole class rather than on a specific student.

According to the participants, they all experienced difficulties managing activities in their large class teaching. Whatever activities they run in their classes, teachers cannot ensure equal participation of their students. There is usually a

dominance of bright students, which creates difficulty in providing opportunities to other less active students.

Dipak stated that since there were heavy desks and benches made up of iron and wood, they could not be rearranged for classroom activities.

Mohan stated,

In a large class with more than 72 students, doing class activities is difficult because we can hardly manage seating arrangements. There is no open space. We have just enough benches and desks for them to sit on. The desks and benches are made of iron and plywood and fixed on the ground. They cannot be rearranged for classroom activities.

(Interview, 6 December 2023)

Nabin shared the same story as the other teachers. He stated that the benches and desks were made of heavy wood, making arranging them to suit class activities difficult.

Overall, in a large class with over 70 students, managing seating arrangements and conducting classroom activities is challenging due to the heavy desks and benches made of iron and wood. The fixed desks and benches prevent rearranging for class activities, leaving only sufficient benches and desks for students to sit on. As Choudhary and Batwal (2024) demonstrate group work, pair work, and collaborative activities are more difficult to plan and manage in a large class.

Heavy Use of Lecture Method

The lecture is one of the approaches used in teaching large classes (Carpenter, 2006; Mulryan-Kyne, 2010). A lecture to the entire class can be helpful in large classes (Benbow et al., 2007). According to Bughio (2013), lecturing is the most often adopted form of teaching in large classes. He further says that researchers suggest that the lecture method effectively delivers factual information, uses reading material, clarifies complex ideas, sees the issue personally, and provides information from multiple sources. However, this method does not engage students in the class. Instead, they consider group work more effective for language teaching than lecture methods.

According to Anderson (2016), due to the lecture-based tendency of large classes, soliciting student feedback in large lecture classes (with about 50 students or more) is challenging. As a result, lectures tend to lack interaction" (p. 1).

The study participants used the lecture method widely while teaching large classes. In this regard, Dipak shared his experience using the lecture method in his class. He said,

Most students find it pleasant to listen to my lectures in class. They may think that this is the proper method of instruction. Additionally, they believe that the teacher's word is the last. The lecture method is another simple means of drawing students' attention to the teacher. Thus, with my large class, I employ this method.

(Interview, 27 September 2023)

Kapil narrated his story of using the lecture method in his large class.

The lecture method is widely used in my large class. I mostly teach my students through the lecture method, and I use it almost 100% in some classes. To minimize its use in the large class and the lecture method, I show pictures and use ICT tools in the classroom. I know the lecture method in class is not good for language teaching.

(Interview, 10 October 2023)

Mohan also had a similar type of experience of using the lecture method in his large class, as:

A large class demands the lecture method as the main teaching method. If I attempt to use other communicative techniques, they become almost impractical because of the large number of students. I have only 45 minutes, and more than 60 students are in the class. If I attempt to employ any student-centred approaches, it will take longer, and the course will not be completed in time.

(Interview, 6 December 2023)

Regarding the use of the lecture method in the class, Nabin said,

I heavily use the lecture method in the class. If I think of using any student-centred methods, it is not appropriate as it is time-consuming. Consequently, I cannot complete the course in time.

(Interview, 6 October 2023)

In short, the research participants expressed that they heavily used the lecture method in their classes and did not find any other student-centred methods suitable for their large classes. During my class observations, I found all participants using the

lecture method heavily in their classroom. In addition, they also used the Grammar-Translation method.

High Dependence on Mother Tongue

The number of students is enormous, so they depend highly on their mother tongues. Students mostly use their mother tongues when interacting with their teachers and friends. The research participants expressed that teachers and students use Nepali in teaching and learning. Dipak said,

My students speak Nepali most of the time in the classroom. However, I urge them to speak in English. Most students do not want me to use only the English language in the class. They say, "Sir, tell us in Nepali. We don't understand English." They do so because they were habituated to learning English through Nepali in their schools. Due to their background, they want the class to be delivered in English and Nepali, often using the grammar-translation method.

(Interview, 17 December 2023)

Kapil shared his experience of using Nepali in his class,

In my large class, first I teach lessons in English. If I ask whether they understood the lesson, most respond, "No, sir." So, I revise the lesson in Nepali.

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

Mohan also had the same experience teaching in his large class. He said,

I often use students' mother tongue, Nepali, in the classroom. If I use only the English language, then their faces are perplexed. Therefore, I often use the Nepali language in the classroom to help them understand what I teach easily.

(Interview, 30 September 2023)

Nabin also used the students' mother tongue (Nepali) to help them understand what he taught in the class.

To conclude, all the research participants used Nepali, the student's mother tongue, because their students preferred to be taught English in Nepali. They used Nepali in the classroom to help students understand the subject matter. All teachers used Nepali in their classes during my class observations.

Internal Assessment-Related Challenges

Teachers regularly use various internal assessment tools to determine whether or not students have learned anything from the course. The research participants used

internal assessment tools such as daily student attendance, presentations, take-home assignments, and midterm examinations to evaluate their students internally by the English language requirements of the B.Ed. program at the Mid-West University. They shared their challenges while using internal assessments in their large classes. I present the issues they faced with internal assessments in their large classes.

Lack of Monitoring

Teachers cannot monitor students' learning because there are a large number of students in the class. If there is no space for teachers to move around the class, they struggle to monitor their students closely (Brady, 2012). The study participants shared their difficulties monitoring and evaluating students' activities in their large classes.

Dipak narrated his experience of encountering difficulty monitoring his students,

There are a massive number of students in my class. I have difficulty monitoring whether students have learned from the class during my teaching. However, I often ask the students some questions from the lesson orally. Some students want to hide in class and may think the teacher should not ask them questions. Because the number of students is large, I cannot ensure that all students meet the objectives of the lessons.

(Interview, 10 November 2023)

As far as Mohan's experience is concerned, he claimed,
Since the number of students is 72, it is not easy to ensure whether my students are learning. But what I do is that I ask them questions randomly from the previous lesson and check their homework; I sometimes involve them in small classroom activities. While doing these activities, I try to understand whether they have learned the subject matter. Those students who are good at their studies generally sit on the front benches, and those who are not serious in their studies sit on the back benches. However, monitoring whether all students have learned is difficult since many students are in the class.

(Interview, 4 October 2023)

Nabin also expressed that he cannot assure whether learning happened to his students.

There is no assurance of student learning in the large class. Sometimes, I check their assignments, and it takes a long time, say, 2-3 weeks, to provide feedback on them. Can you imagine a teacher checking and giving feedback

on the 70 assignments in one class, and there are five other classes on the same day?

In summary, Dipak and Nabin struggle to monitor large class sizes and ensure all students meet lesson objectives. Dipak uses random questions, homework checks, and classroom activities to monitor learning, while Nabin struggles with feedback taking 2-3 weeks, maintaining a balance between good and bad students. So, the research participants expressed that monitoring and evaluating students is challenging because of the large number of students.

Failure in Ensuring Student Progress

Teachers of large classes also fail to confirm whether students are progressing in their studies because there are so many students. Blatchford et al. (2007) argue that it is challenging for teachers to recognise students' progress and problems and consider appropriate solutions. Teachers may find it challenging to assess effectiveness in a large class (Dhami, 2016).

Regarding the problem of assuring student progress, Dipak remarked,

Before going into the class, I made a lesson plan mentally. At least two objectives of the lesson are already framed in my mind. At the end of the lesson, I often write two questions from the lesson on the board and ask 3-4 students to answer those questions. In most cases, I ask them to respond to the questions orally. If the students correctly answer my questions, they have achieved the lesson's objectives. However, I cannot be sure whether a large number of students learned or not from the lesson.

I also assign them home assignments. I can assure myself they have learned by collecting and checking the home assignments. Moreover, I often ask a few students to review the last lesson during warm-up activities. When they review the previous lesson successfully, I feel happy. It assures me of their successful learning.

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

Ensuring learning on the part of students is challenging for Kapil, as he noted, *The large class is challenging to deal with, and ensuring the learning on the part of students is challenging, though I have been facing this situation for many years. There are several activities that I have been using in the large class so that learning happens quickly on the students' part. Mostly, I follow the same traditional type of activities. I divide the class into groups and give*

them different tasks to engage them in activities. As a result, they pay attention to the task and come up with answers. This is one of the ideas I have followed in my large class for a couple of years. Another way that helps me ensure their learning is the use of ICT. I present contents or inputs sometimes through the use of the projector. I often use cell phones to run valuable apps and search engines such as online dictionaries and Google. In this way, I have been trying my level best to ensure that learning is happening in students in the right direction.

(Interview, 10 October 2023)

In this respect, as far as Mohan's experience is concerned, he said,

Since the number of students is large, it isn't easy to ensure whether or not my students are learning. But sometimes, I randomly ask them questions from the lesson to check whether students have learned. I also check their homework from the previous lesson. By doing these things, I assess whether they understood the lesson. However, I cannot ensure that all students have learned the lesson.

(Interview, 6 December 2023)

Nabin narrated,

There is no assurance of student learning in the large class. Sometimes, I check their assignments and provide feedback, which takes a long time. Can you imagine a teacher checking 60-plus assignments in one class? Moreover, I must teach five classes on the same day.

(Interview, 6 October 2023)

As Roshan et al. (2022) claim assessing the progress of the students is difficult, the research participants expressed their inability to ensure that learning is happening for their students. For example, Dipak and Nabin faced challenges in large classes, including ensuring student progress through mental lesson planning, assigning homework, and reviewing previous lessons. Mohan struggles with assignments and feedback. Despite these obstacles, Dipak and Nabin continue to improve teaching methods for student success.

Difficulty in Giving Feedback

Examining and providing feedback on students' performance is often too much pressure for teachers in large classes. Teachers must plan lessons, teach classes, and deal with many students (Renaud et al., 2007). Thus, giving feedback to every student

would be difficult for teachers (Roshan et al., 2022). Teachers are upset by the lots of written work they have to check (Hayes, 1997). They encounter difficulty in providing responses and feedback to students individually. For example, after giving a test to many students, they have to correct all the papers. Correcting many papers and giving specific feedback would be limited or may not take place (Le, 2002, as cited in Heever, 2000). Shamim et al. (2007) argue, "Since feedback must occur regularly throughout the learning process, teachers cannot give adequate feedback to all students in large classes" (p. 59). In addition, teachers feel exhausted from marking many assignments for students. Dhakal (2017) argues that marking papers and giving students individual feedback in large classes is almost impossible. He further states that checking student assignments and providing feedback on them to assess the student's strengths and weaknesses is hardly possible. As a result, it negatively affects the students' performance. Similarly, Duwadi (2020) claims it can be challenging for the teacher to give feedback to each student in large classes.

Receiving feedback on their performance, Baker and Westrup (2000) state that students may reflect on their writing, learn from their mistakes, and make fewer mistakes in the future. Therefore, students need to receive written feedback from teachers on their assignments. However, because of the many students, teachers may think giving feedback is impractical and time-consuming.

The research participants shared their stories regarding difficulties in providing student performance feedback. Dipak regarded giving individual feedback on students' performance as one of the most challenging tasks in large classes. He stated,

Performing internal assessments of the students in a large class is challenging for me. I should keep records of student attendance, assignments, presentations, project work, and others. Whenever I assign them take-home assignments and some project work, collecting and assessing them takes a couple of weeks. Having evaluated their assignments, I returned them with feedback after 2-3 weeks, which was not good. I believe feedback on assignments should be given immediately within a short time. If it takes a long time, then the feedback will not be fruitful for them. The second thing is that when there is a student presentation, again, it takes at least 2-3 weeks. More than 100 students, each taking about 10 minutes for their presentations,

consumes lots of time. Many students do not have time to make presentations. This is one of the bitter realities in the large class.

(Interview, 27 September 2023)

Kapil finds assessing a large number of students challenging in large classes.

He noted,

One of the major challenges I face in a large class is assessing many students. The assignments that I give them every day cannot be checked regularly. Moreover, I cannot allocate time to make presentations to each student because it consumes much time. So, assessing students internally is a big challenge for me since I should maintain a record of daily attendance, presentations, and take-home assignments. I cannot assess individual students' performances and offer feedback on theirs. I know each student needs help, but I do not have time due to the many students.

(Interview, 29 September 2023)

In this aspect, Mohan noted,

This semester, I am teaching approximately 72 students in the class. There are so many challenges that I face in the large class. The first challenge is related to making students interested in the lesson. Drawing their attention to the lesson and giving immediate feedback on their assignments is very challenging in the class. The core problem here is making students understand the lesson, and a few students who are not interested in the class disturb other students, too. If we talk about teaching in a large class, it creates difficulty, and the students must perform many tasks. If they are divided into groups and given tasks, then every student does not get feedback from the teacher. I provide feedback to the whole group, not to individuals. This is a challenging part of the classroom. So, no students are personally given feedback due to the lack of time. I feel bored collecting many assignments, checking them thoroughly, and returning them with feedback. I have to put extra effort into it.

(Interview, 30 September 2023)

Thus, the research participants claimed they could not provide feedback on student performance because of the many students. In particular, individual presentations in large classes present challenges for teachers due to the lengthy nature of homework and presentations. There were also difficulties in maintaining records of student attendance, assignments, and presentations; this restricts the provision of

helpful feedback. These results reinforce the findings of Choudhary and Batwal (2024) as they say it is difficult and time-consuming to provide timely feedback on assignments, tests, and exams for a large number of students. Delays in feedback can have a negative effect on students' motivation and performance.

Poor Assessment of Students

Since many students are in large classes, maintaining the quality of feedback and assessment is challenging. According to Bell (2012), evaluation is the first important step teachers should take when teaching large classes. Likewise, Bamba (2012) sheds light on the significance of assessment as an essential instrument for improving students' learning, which is put at risk by increased class sizes. The teacher's written feedback on students' assignments is essential to enable students to improve their work (Marzulina et al., 2021). They further argue that effective written feedback gives students an explanation, example, and suggestion of what they are doing well and what requires improvement. In large classes, teachers face challenges with correcting large numbers of assignments and providing students with home assignments quickly after tests (Christensen, 1994). According to Heever (2000), the two main problems teachers face with assessment in large classes are that they lack time to check students' assignments and are overburdened with marking them.

Dipak narrated,

In the semester system at our university, 40% has been allocated for internal assessment. To fulfill the requirements of the internal assessments, I should take student attendance daily, administer mid-term examinations, and assign them take-home assignments and project work. I should prepare every student's portfolio for internal assessment. Maintaining 100-plus portfolios is very challenging for a single class in a semester. I teach two other classes on the same day. I should also prepare their portfolios. Therefore, there is a chance of poor student assessment.

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

Mohan shared his experience of encountering difficulty while assessing his students internally. He said,

At my campus, a period lasts for 45 minutes. Within the allocated time, conducting classwork and other activities is very difficult. If I start correcting their work in class, it consumes the entire period. So, I cannot complete the course within the stipulated time. As I cannot perform all the requirements

recommended for the course for internal assessment of students in the semester system, sometimes I think the students are not studying in the semester system. Instead, they are studying in the annual system. As I cannot record each student's progress, there is a chance of their poor assessment in the internal assessment.

(Interview, 7 December 2023)

To conclude, the research participants mentioned that assessing students' performance is challenging. They should mandatorily maintain records of daily attendance, assignments, presentations, and project work for the internal assessment of their students. Due to the large number of students, there is a chance of poor assessment.

Insufficient Resources for Teachers

Large class teaching becomes challenging with limited resources and learning materials. Teachers generally find difficulty in developing activities and using authentic materials in large classes. Similarly, Bahanshal (2013) argues that teaching English can be hindered by a lack of resources and learning materials in large classes. The lack of teaching materials is problematic for large-class teachers and students in developing countries (Roshan et al., 2022). Dhakal (2017) claims that a shortage of facilities and resources is one of the biggest problems teachers and students face in large classes in the Nepalese context. He further says that teachers find some resources essential for teaching language skills to large groups of students. These resources include textbooks, reference books, dictionaries, encyclopedias, storybooks, flashcards, audio and videos, computers, and the internet. The absence of those important resources limits the ability of teachers to guide large classes, impacts the teaching-learning process, and ultimately affects student achievement. Here, I discuss the difficulties the participants encountered with resources in their large classes.

Inadequate Resources for Students

In developing countries, resources, including textbooks, notebooks, reference books, dictionaries, computers, and the Internet, are limited in large classrooms. So, it is challenging to develop engaging activities and use authentic materials in large classes (Sarwari, 2018). According to Roshan et al. (2022), teachers may think that the available resources are insufficient to meet the demands of many students. They further say that limitations include congested physical space for movement and interaction, few desks and benches, and limited teaching materials such as textbooks.

Benbow et al. (2007) argue that adequate educational equipment, such as benches, a blackboard, chalk, and a teacher's desk and chair, may raise students' achievement. The research participants expressed that they all faced challenges due to the inadequate availability of resources while teaching in large classes.

Expressing his story, Dipak said,

Recently, our university set up lovely classrooms. So, there is a good seating arrangement. However, we do not have comfortable tables and chairs for the compulsory English class. Five or six students sit on a small bench and share one textbook. We have heavy desks and benches in the classroom, which are not suitable for forming groups to do class activities. Many students do not have textbooks with them. The books are not even available in the market. The library has only a few textbooks, which are insufficient for 100-plus students. Another thing about the textbooks is that they were written by foreign writers and published by Oxford University Press. The standard of those books is higher for the Nepalese students. So, my students find it challenging to understand them.

(Interview, 27 September 2023)

Kapil said,

Many students do not have the prescribed textbooks for the course with them. Even if the library does not have a sufficient number of books, many students lack the textbooks. How can the course be taught without books in the class? The campus does not have a computer lab. Even the internet is not available for teachers and students. Due to the shortage of educational materials like textbooks, reference books, and computer teaching, the course is really difficult.

(Interview, 15 December 2023)

Mohan expressed,

Almost no students have the textbook for the course, and only a few students bring photocopies. There are three textbooks for the course, but only a few bring a photocopy of 'Q Skills for Reading and Writing-3'. This may be because the textbooks are not available in the local market. Moreover, there is a lack of textbooks and reference books in the library.

(Interview, 30 September 2023)

Nabin also faced the same problem regarding the availability of textbooks in the class. He noted,

Some reading materials are available in the library but are not enough for many students. In this case, I downloaded those textbooks through different search engines on the Internet and sent them to the students through emails or messenger groups. Moreover, using those materials in the classroom is challenging since they were not written in the Nepalese context. Furthermore, three books have been prescribed for the course, and they are bulky, each book having more than 150 pages.

(Interview, 8 December 2023)

To sum up, the research participants taught their classes without having sufficient reading materials. Many students did not have the prescribed textbooks as they were unavailable in the market or the library. Some research participants stated that a few copies of the textbooks are available in the library, but they are insufficient for many students. This aligns with the finding of Mulryan-Kyne (2010) that if there are not enough textbook copies available, resources can be an issue. If there are not enough textbook copies available, resources can be an issue. Nepalese students find the higher-standard books challenging to understand. The campus lacks a computer lab and internet access, making teaching difficult without textbooks. During my class observations, many students did not have textbooks with them. They seemed to get lost. These findings support the study of Choudhary and Batwal (2024) as they argue the quality of teaching that students get may suffer from a lack of resources. The resources, which include classroom space and environment, equipment, textbooks, and teaching resources, may be severely impacted by large classes.

Problem in Balancing Teaching Materials

Teachers should balance their teaching materials to facilitate multilevel students' benefit from the class and prepare their teaching materials to suit their students.

As far as Dipak's experience is concerned, he said,

I have developed a reading package for the course to meet the needs and interests of the students. I let the students make photocopies of the course package, and they study for the course.

(Interview, 27 September 2023)

Mohan noted,

I have difficulty balancing teaching materials in my class. On the one hand, the course syllabus is based on the three prescribed textbooks published by Oxford University Press. They are unavailable in the market, and the library has only a few copies. On the other hand, the textbooks were written by foreign writers. Nepalese students find these books difficult to understand.

(Interview, 30 September 2023)

To sum up, they expressed that the books and other reading materials in the library are not sufficient for many students, and some of them were complex to understand as they were not written down, keeping the Nepalese students in mind.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the problems experienced by campus teachers in large classes at the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University. Having analyzed the collected data, five themes and numerous sub-themes were generated. The five themes were: a) classroom management-related challenges, b) disciplinary challenges, c) teaching and learning-related challenges, d) internal assessment-related challenges, and e) insufficient resources for teachers. The research participants' experiences with the challenges of teaching large classes led to the development of themes.

CHAPTER V

COPING STRATEGIES FOR LARGE CLASS TEACHING

In this chapter, I present common coping strategies used by the research participants for addressing the challenges they encountered while teaching in large classes to answer the second research question: How do these teachers handle the challenges they encounter while teaching English to a large class? I discuss the coping strategies that the research participants used to address classroom management-related challenges, disciplinary issues, teaching-learning-related challenges, internal assessment-related challenges, and the insufficient availability of resources for teachers.

Strategies for Classroom Management-Related Challenges

Proper classroom management and classroom discipline are more important in large classes where more problems and disruptions are likely to happen (Heever, 2000). According to Safura et al. (2023), effective classroom management is essential for teachers to provide a stimulating teaching and learning environment. Sarwari (2018) mentions that effective classroom management depends on careful organization, thorough preparation, establishing routines, and constantly enforcing rules to manage issues encountered in large classes. To minimize classroom management-related challenges, Dhakal (2017) suggests several strategies, including involving students in the decision-making process, engaging them in class activities, providing clear instruction, building a good rapport between teacher and student, and rewarding and appreciating their achievement. The research participants employed several strategies to tackle classroom management-related challenges in their classes. They have been discussed below:

Strategies for Tackling Insufficient Classroom Space

The research participants expressed that they used several coping strategies to mitigate the difficulties related to classroom management in their large classes. They mentioned that they avoid classroom activities due to insufficient classroom space. Another reason was that the desks and benches were fixed to the floor, so they could not be rearranged for class activities. So, to solve the problem caused by the insufficient class space, the teachers preferred the lecture methods and individual

work to student-centred methods such as discussion, pair, and group work. The research participants focused on their specific context rather than strictly following prescribed methodologies (Kumaravadivelu, 2001).

Strategies for Taking Student Attendance

As taking student attendance was time-consuming, the participants used some techniques to save time for content delivery in large classes. Dipak said, *"I often take attendance twice a week to save time and avoid unwanted noise during student attendance"* (Interview, 27 September 2023). Kapil used the class monitor to take attendance. He noted, *"I assign the class monitor to take class attendance to save time. However, I sometimes cross-check whether he/she is doing the assigned job honestly or not."* (Interview, 10 October 2023). Mohan preferred not to take student attendance. He said, *"To save class time, I generally do not take attendance."* (Interview, 30 September 2023) Nabin passed the attendance register to each student and asked them to indicate their presence. Therefore, the teachers adopted some techniques, such as assigning students to record it doing it twice a week or avoiding doing it. During my class observations, I found teachers taking attendance and sometimes assigning their students to record their presence.

Strategies for Making Students See and Hear

The research participants said they spoke loudly to be heard by every student and often moved around the class. In this regard, Dipak said, *"I speak loudly so that students from each corner can hear me. When I feel that the last benchers could not hear me properly, I speak to the back of the class and ensure that all students hear me"* (Interview, 6 October 2023). Similarly, Kapil adopted a different technique that helped him maintain silence in class. He set up some classroom rules in coordination with the students. Mohan's coping strategy for addressing this problem was different. He zoomed out fonts on the screen and enlarged board writing so that students, even from the back benches, could see his writing. During my class observations, I found teachers speaking loudly and enlarging font sizes to address the challenge.

Strategies for Disciplinary Challenges

Large classes usually present disciplinary issues that negatively impact the effectiveness and efficiency of the teaching and learning process. Preventive measures must be taken to prevent misbehaviour, ensuring that teaching and learning happen without disruption (Heever, 2000). Bughio (2013) argues that since campus students

are mature learners, there should be few disciplinary problems. However, a few students can cause discipline problems.

When the research participants were asked about strategies for resolving disciplinary issues in their large class teaching, they shared various coping strategies. The major coping strategies are presented below:

Punishment as a Form of Strategy

According to Anindya et al. (2020), positive punishment is suitable for the students who misbehave in the class. He thinks that this helps the students recognize or accept their mistakes so they will not repeat them in the future. To maintain classroom discipline in large classes, the participants used punishment as a strategy. Dipak said that the large class created some noise, and there was often bullying in the class. Whenever he noticed the students making noise, he immediately made them stand up and posed some questions related to the topic or asked them to share their understanding. He narrated,

In the last semester, three students disturbed the whole class. Then, I adopted punishment to maintain silence in the class. What I did was that I ordered the troublemaking students to leave the class for about 15 minutes. They obeyed me and went out of the class. After 15 minutes, I let them enter the class. From that day onwards, they never made any noise in the class.

(Interview, 6 October 2023)

Nabin's coping strategy for controlling the class was also asking questions or giving some punishment in his class. He said,

When I see my students making unwanted noise, I ask them some questions to respond. I often use this strategy to make them silent. Let me tell you a story about it. A few years back, one of my students whistled in the class when I was writing on the board. I did not know how I was supposed to deal with that student. What I did was I said, "Who is this?" I recognised the student who was showing disruptive behaviour. I pushed him out of the class. Moreover, he went away. The next day, he came to the class, and everything went smoothly.

(Interview, 8 December 2023)

Two of the research participants faced issues with noise and bullying in their large class. Dipak used punishment to maintain silence, whereas Nabin used questioning to make students respond. Thus, the research participants adopted

punishment to control their classes. However, Dhakal (2017) states that rewards and words of appreciation may be more effective at managing classroom management issues than punishment and harsh words.

Setting up Classroom Rules

Teachers should establish classroom rules while sitting with the students. Students should be asked to develop rules for their classes. They will be responsible for following the rules they create, which will help foster a sense of community in large classes (Trang, 2015). The established rules should be communicated to students at the beginning of the session and consistently maintained throughout the session (Heever, 2000). Dhami (2016) recommends setting some rules for class management to lower stress and noise levels. Kapil used some strategies for controlling his large class that were unique to him. He stated,

A large class is really difficult to deal with. I am a strict type of teacher. I do not allow the students to make any noise in the class. I tell them, "When I speak, this is I who speak; you must be quiet and listen to me. Moreover, if you do not listen, I point you out and make you stand up and listen to me." The second strategy I use to maintain discipline in the class is to make them realize that if they do not maintain discipline in the class, they do not understand what I teach. The third and most beneficial strategy I usually follow is establishing certain classroom rules at the beginning of the course. I ask the students to sit together and prepare a set of standard classroom rules. After looking at them, I help them finalize those classroom rules. Once the rules are ready, I ask them to tell me and write them down on the board. Moreover, I ask them to write down in their notebooks. The students, to a greater extent, follow the rules prepared and approved by themselves. These strategies have helped me maintain discipline in my large class.

(Interview, 10 October 2023)

At the beginning of the course, Kapil made standard classroom rules, which students agreed to follow. This approach helped him maintain discipline in the large class. Mohan also established some class rules for the students to follow, but they are not in written form. Teachers work with students to develop classroom rules as students actively engage in knowledge construction (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). However, Roshan et al. (2022) claim that though teachers establish rules for English classes, they are ineffective because of the large number of students.

Student Counseling and Guidance

All the research participants used counselling and guidance to control their large classes. They agreed that counselling and guidance are appropriate strategies for maintaining discipline in large classes.

In this regard, Dipak mentioned,

I pick up needy students and provide them with counselling and guidance. For example, I call the students who make noises in the class out of the class separately and talk to them about their reasons for making noise. I provide them with timely counselling and guidance. After counselling, they realize the importance of education and the English language and do not display disciplinary issues.

(Interview, 27 September 2023)

Kapil also used guidance and counselling as a strategy, as he reported,

I identify the students who need guidance and counselling and provide them with proper guidance and counselling in and outside the classroom. However, providing individual guidance and counselling to many students in the class is impossible.

(Interview, 29 September 2023)

He further stated,

Generally, most of the students are disciplined in the class. However, a few students seem to be undisciplined. For example, they talk to each other while I am teaching and do activities that distract other students' attention, that is, off-task behaviour. To resolve that problem, I identify those disruptive students and counsel them individually and, in a group, and later, they come on the right track.

(Interview, 29 September 2023)

Disciplinary issues distract attention and interrupt the lesson flow, and side talks waste important time and disturb classes. Students with emotional and/or behavioural problems should be seated where the teacher can easily see them (Heever, 2000). This enables the teacher to intervene to keep these learners on task.

Dipak shared his story as,

There are a few disruptive students in every large class. Their disruptive behaviour disturbs the classroom environment. To resolve the problem, I tell

them to sit in their positions quietly and raise their hands to attract my attention if they have any issues, questions, or concerns. Following my instructions, they raise their hands if they have any issues or questions, and I address them individually. In addition, I ask the disruptive students to sit in the front row to maintain discipline in the classroom. Despite my efforts, there was noise due to the large number of students and the large class size. The sound also gets echoed. Sometimes, disruptive students crack desks and benches and scratch the class wall.

(Interview, 10 November 2023)

Mohan said that he would immediately respond to disciplinary issues if they arise in his class. He noted,

Students generally talk when I set up the projector and laptop ready for use. I do not mind it. However, when I start teaching, they become silent and listen to me. If any students are found talking to others, I pose them with some questions to respond to. If they respond to my questions correctly, I thank them, and if they cannot, I tell them to listen to me carefully. In this way, I make them silent in the class.

(Interview, 6 December 2023)

Strategies for addressing disciplinary issues in large classes include identifying students who need guidance. Disruptive students often disrupt the classroom environment, so they need more focus, while needy students can benefit from immediate attention and a positive learning environment.

Motivating Students

Another strategy generally used by the research participants in the study to maintain discipline in a large class is motivating students to learn. Teaching a large class of uninterested and noisy students is challenging (Renaud et al., 2007). So, research participants expressed that they motivated the students to teaching-learning activities in different ways.

Dipak shared that he used several techniques to motivate his students to teach in the class. One of the techniques is telling them a relevant quotation to the topic. He noted,

It is challenging to draw the students' attention to the contents because they are easily distracted. To motivate the students towards the lesson, I begin the class by reviewing the previous lesson or writing a quotation related to the

topic on the board and asking them to read it. If I write a relevant quotation on the board, I describe its meaning. Having done that, most students are motivated towards the topic, but due to the huge number of students, it isn't easy to draw their attention because they are heterogeneous.

(Interview, 10 November 2023)

Mohan shared his strategy of motivating students as follows:

To motivate my students, I start my class with interesting stories, anecdotes, or biographies of famous people. I sometimes even ask the students to share what they would like to do after completing their studies on campus. Despite my efforts, a few students are not well motivated to learn.

(Interview, 4 October 2023)

Nabin motivated his students by highlighting the importance of education in life. He said,

To motivate the students in the class, I tell them the importance of education in student life, how it is helpful for their future careers, and how it can improve their future lives.

(Interview, 6 October 2023)

Thus, the research participants employed various strategies to motivate students, including using relevant quotations, telling stories, and emphasizing the importance of education for future careers. However, some students struggle to draw attention due to their diverse backgrounds. During my class observations I found all teachers motivating their students towards learning.

Building Good Rapport with the Students

The study participants attempted to maintain discipline by establishing and strengthening good relationships with their students in the classes. Learning student names is important for building a good rapport with students (Christensen, 1994). They tried to recall students' names and address them by their names.

Dipak tried to resolve disciplinary problems by establishing a good relationship with students. He mentioned,

Um... Rousseau once said, "A child is a book which the teacher has to learn from page to page." Considering this quotation, I try to get information about students' social status, prior experience, and past academic institutions. After collecting information about them and analyzing them, I treat them accordingly. Secondly, I try to remember

their names and address each student by his/her name. My class has five groups of students: special needs education, health and physical education, population education, English education, and mathematics education. I divide them into different groups based on their subjects, if possible. I learned that a particular student belongs to Group A because he belongs to this subject. It became easier for me, but it was challenging to remember their names in the beginning since the numbers were very high. I know it is good to call them by their names. When students are addressed by their names, they become happy. Calling students by their names makes them feel important and special; they have a good feeling. So, I try to call them by their name, but sometimes it is difficult to remember names. "You, please stand up," I say. Alternatively, I pinpoint a particular student and say, "You stand up," which is generally not good. I have experienced in the large class that it is difficult to recall their names due to the large number of students.

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

Kapil narrated his story as,

I do not find a size-fits-all formula to build a good rapport with students. However, I easily get attached to them, and many students are fond of me because I do not only tell them about which books are helpful for them but also the knowledge and skills that are required for them in their life, the way of living, and the benefits of getting up early in the morning. Moreover, I narrate stories so that they are interested in my teaching. In this way, I maintain a good relationship with them. Those students who need my help for their professional development meet me even outside the class.

(Interview, 10 October 2023)

Mohan shared his strategy for establishing good relationships with his students,

A teacher should have a good relationship with his students. I discuss their health, family, and other personal matters to establish a good rapport with my students. If we immerse ourselves in their family life, they believe us. Students often make me call and inquire about their studies and notices issued by the campus. I am pleased to respond to their calls. Moreover, I appreciate

students' performance. I often say, "Dear students, please feel relaxed and comfortable. Ask me anything you do not understand from the text".

(Interview, 6 December 2023)

Nabin had a similar coping strategy to address disciplinary problems in the large class by establishing a good relationship with his students. He said,

Calling students by name is one way of building a positive relationship with them. When I meet them, I talk to them about their personal life inside and outside the campus. They may feel that the teacher is close to them. When the students are invited for interaction during teaching-learning activities, they do not anticipate or initiate talking to me. Instead, I encourage them to speak to me. They will feel comfortable if I request that they talk in their mother tongue. The class is heterogeneous in terms of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Most of the students are from the Awadhi, the Tharu, and the Nepali-speaking communities. They usually do not use their mother tongues in the class. However, if I permit them to speak their mother tongue, they use it. Speaking their mother tongue in the class builds solidarity with them. However, from the perspective of learning English, this is not useful.

(Interview, 18 December 2023)

The research participants explained strategies for establishing good relationships with students, focusing on understanding their social status, prior experiences, and academic institutions. Addressing students by name, discussing personal matters, and encouraging them to speak their mother tongue is crucial for classroom success. They focus on the students' sociocultural realities. That is specifically valuable in large classes where individual attention might be limited (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). In one of my class observations of Mohan, I found a student presenting her birthday chocolate to the teacher, and he wished her birthday to the whole class.

Using Students' Names

Teachers find recalling and using students' names in large classes Remembering students' names a big challenge (Bughio, 2013; Dhimi, 2016). Christensen (1994) also states that there is difficulty in recalling student names in the large class. Building intimate relationships with students and remembering their names might be problematic (Adu et al., 2014). However, if teachers cannot correctly address students' names, it can cause inattention and discipline problems. Learning

students' names builds good human relationships, helps monitor records, and promotes recognition of individuality, making students feel comfortable and valued (Hayes, 1997).

Teachers should learn students' names in large classes from the first day (Hayes, 1997; Heever, 2000). If they can address them by name, there will be fewer disciplinary problems (Christensen, 1994). He further said that building a positive rapport with them is important. The research participants addressed their students by their names, if possible. According to Baker and Westrup (2000), memorizing and using students' names is the best way to keep discipline and control in the class.

Dipak shared his techniques for recalling students' names in his large class. He mentioned,

In the large class, I address the students by name. But the large number of students makes it hard for me. By the midterm, I can recall some of them by their names. Firstly, I try to remember their names by using their significant subjects. I categorize them according to their major subjects. For example, Student A belongs to Mathematics, and Student B belongs to English. In my previous class, I did not use to group them according to their major subjects. Consequently, it took more than 3 months to remember their names. In some of the semesters, I could not remember their names until the end of the semester. In some cases, it is challenging to remember the names of students. So, I address them, "You, please stand up." Sometimes, I pinpoint a particular student and say, "You stand up", which is not good for me too. If teachers can address them by name, students do not get involved in off-task behaviour. They might think that the teacher will point out me and say, "You, Mr. ABC! Stop talking."

(Interview, 10 November 2023)

Mohan said he was good at recalling students' names in his large class. He claimed,

I often use students' names in my class. For this, I try to learn their names. When learning students' names, I first try to remember their castes and then learn their first names. While taking attendance, I call students' names and match their names and faces if they say, "Yes, sir." I also try to remember their names when checking and returning home assignments. If confused, I ask, "What is your name?" "Where are you from?" However, sometimes, one

semester is not enough time to recall their names. Addressing students by their names makes them look happy.

(Interview, 6 December 2023)

Nabin used student attendance as a strategy for recalling students' names. He noted, "*I take attendance by calling the students' names in the first couple of weeks. So, I usually address students by their names.*"

(Interview, 8 December 2023)

In a large class, the study participants used techniques like recalling students' names, categorizing them by major subjects, and using immediate responses to prevent students' off-task behaviour. They also employed student attendance as a strategy, calling students' names in the first few weeks to make them feel happy and prevent off-task behaviour. I found teachers using their student's names in the class during my class observations.

Strategies for Minimizing High Levels of Noise

The participants stated that unwanted noise is quite a common problem teachers encounter in their large classes. Teachers can adopt various techniques to minimize or control the noise level. If students set up rules themselves, they will follow them and help implement them (Renaud et al., 2007). According to Dhakal (2017), teachers should involve students in establishing classroom guidelines for handling noise and other disciplinary issues. The research participants tried to minimize the high noise level by responding to them immediately.

Dipak tried to control class noise by telling them the importance of time and education. Dipak's strategy for controlling noise in the class is as follows,

The backbenchers often create noise and disturb the whole class. They might think the teacher is far away from them and cannot access them easily. He will not notice them. When I see them making noise, I immediately ask, "If you have something special to share, please share it. I listen to you." However, in return, they say, "Nothing... nothing, sir." Then, I again said, "If you make unwanted noise, it will disturb the whole class. So please keep quiet." In most cases, I tell them to sit silently by telling them the importance of English, courses of study, student life, and many others. If they still make unwanted noise, I ask them to read the text or write something. After that, they become silent.

(Interview, 17 December 2023)

Kapil used the class code of conduct to maintain discipline in his class. He noted,

I am a strict type of teacher. I do not allow the students to make any noise in my class. One of the techniques I usually follow is establishing certain classroom rules. The students establish the classroom rules collectively. I help them finalize after looking at them. Sometimes, they share their rules, and I write them on the board. They make the rules: Rule 1, Rule. Once they prepare the rules, I ask them to read out Rule 1 and Rule 2. They write it in their notebooks, and I ask them to recall it repeatedly.

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

Mohan employed individual guidance and counselling techniques to maintain discipline in his class, as he claimed,

By nature, students studying education are silent. However, a few students show disruptive behaviour in the classroom. During teaching, a few students engage in side talks. I noticed them engaged in side talks and asked them to pay attention to my teaching. A few students did not accept that they were making noise. Rather, they say, "Sir, we are listening to you carefully. We are talking about the matter that you are teaching." What I have experienced in teaching English in a large class is that such students create problems.

(Interview, 7 December 2023)

For Nabin, his coping strategy for reducing the high noise level in the class was properly managing resources and using technology. Nabin noted,

Disciplinary problems are challenging in a large class. The last benchers, in particular, create problems by doing side talks. I sometimes see them playing games on mobile phones when I move to them accidentally. If I catch them playing games on their mobile phones, I advise them not to repeat the behaviour next time. Furthermore, the students are from different social and cultural backgrounds. Some students are serious in their studies, whereas others are not. A few students come to the class to pass the time, especially the ones on the last benches, who do not pay full attention to the teaching. I have noticed that if they do not find the lesson interesting, then they make noise. I strictly prohibit them from doing side talks. They are also not allowed to make and receive phone calls in the class. So far, I have not established any classroom rules and regulations in written form; however, they are in oral

form. Furthermore, I properly manage seat arrangements to move around the class to monitor their behaviour. Despite all these efforts, they make noise in the class.

(Interview, 18 December 2023)

Overall, the study participants employed some strategies to control class noise, including focusing on backbenchers, establishing a code of conduct for the classroom, employing individual guidance, and using technology to manage resources. Despite these efforts, some students still disturb the classroom. Mohan and Nabin used individual guidance and counselling techniques to maintain discipline in their classes. Mohan observed disruptive behaviour from some students, particularly those engaging in side talks. Nabin, on the other hand, managed resources and technology effectively to reduce noise levels. Further, they banned students from playing games on mobile phones and making phone calls in class.

Strategies for Absentee Students

Large classes often pose the problem of absent students. As the number of students is large, some do not attend class for various reasons. To tackle this problem, the research participants adopted various techniques to make them come to class regularly. Dipak's solution to the problem caused by the students' absenteeism in his class is to highlight the importance of regularity. He informed them that attendance covers five marks in the internal assessment in the semester system at the university. He said,

If you attend the class regularly, you will receive 20 marks instead of just five marks. You cannot complete assignments, presentations, and other required tasks for the internal assessment if you do not attend the class regularly. Marks for the internal evaluation will be determined by how many days you are present in your class. So, your attendance matters a lot for the internal evaluation.

(Interview, 17 December 2023)

So, he used attendance to make students regular in class. He argued that because of this strategy, the students are becoming more regular in the class. In addition, he suggested that they should not engage in small jobs. He said, "If you complete your B.Ed. getting good marks, I will help you to find a good job. Till then, acquire knowledge, skills, and good attitudes in your subject". He added that most

students were convinced and understood the importance of regular attendance, as the semester system required collaboration between learners and teachers.

Kapil's strategy to address this problem was also taking student attendance as a major strategy for making them come regularly to class. He mentioned,

I convey my attendance policy to the students at the beginning of my semester. I tell them, "If you are present more than 90% in your class, you will get five marks out of five; if you are present more than 80% and less than 89%, you will get four marks; if you are present around 75%, you will get three marks. If your presence is very low, you will get zero marks and will not be eligible for sitting in the final examination."

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

Mohan used a variety of strategies to solve this problem. He noted,

Generally, students are absent from class due to their work. When regular students become absent, I inquire why they are absent. Another point is that if they are absent and I have given them some homework, then they should do the work compulsorily. I cannot excuse them. I tell them that to get through the internal assessment, they should be present in the class, and if they do not come, their attendance marks will be reduced.

(Interview, 7 December 2023)

Overall, all participants faced the issue of student absenteeism. Kapil's strategy involves focusing on student attendance as a major technique to make them attend regularly. Mohan's strategy involves providing individual counselling to students who do not attend class, which leads to positive changes in behaviour.

To sum up, the study participants encountered various disciplinary issues in their large class teaching. They faced challenges such as uncontrolled and noisy classrooms, stress, student absenteeism, and students' involvement in off-task behaviours. They coped with the above-mentioned challenges by addressing students by their names, moving around the class to monitor students' behaviours, establishing classroom rules in collaboration with students, using punishment for students' wrong behaviour, providing counselling and guidance, motivating students properly, building a good relationship with students, and using appropriate seating arrangements. These findings align with the study by Ming and Qiang (2017) who reported that teachers employed coping strategies including walking around, establishing classroom rules, and adjusting their voices to attract students' attention.

During my class observation of Dipak, a few students attempted to leave the class earlier; however, the teacher convinced them not to leave the class before the scheduled time.

Strategies for Teaching and Learning-Related Challenges

The research participants faced numerous challenges in teaching and learning activities in large classes. They had difficulty involving students; teachers could not use student-centred approaches and heavily used students' mother tongues. They mentioned that they used various strategies to address challenges related to teaching and learning in large classes. For example, they mixed up bright and weak students while forming groups in their classes. Nabin stated,

I mix up bright and weak students when dividing students into pairs and groups. For example, the shy student I pair them with extroverted types of students. Consequently, more active students help fewer active students in pair and group work. I always ask bright students to help weaker students. I engage them in the class as far as I can.

(Interview, 18 December 2023)

Thus, Nabin mixed up weak students with brighter students in pair and group work to promote their engagement in class.

Strategy for Increasing Student Engagement

Student interaction can be increased in large classes through activity-based tasks, including group discussion, peer assessment, collaborative writing, and group presentations (Sarwari, 2018). According to Anderson et al. (2003), because of the lecture-based tendency of large classes, "soliciting student feedback in large lecture classes (with about 50 students or more) is challenging, and as a result, lectures tend to lack interaction" (p.1). Dhakal (2017) suggests pair work and small work as effective teaching activities in large classes to engage students in learning. He thinks that these activities help teachers to generate interaction and provide students with opportunities to express themselves. To practice conversations, exercises, and other language activities, pair work may also be a useful alternative (Dhami, 2016).

Dipak said,

I have experienced active students always sitting on the front benches. Sometimes, I divide the students into groups that share the same bench. So, I group the students sitting on the front bench into Group A and the students

sitting on the second bench into Group B. Other times, I mix up weaker and stronger students so that the weaker ones benefit from the stronger ones.

(Interview, 17 December 2023)

To create opportunities for interaction for all students, Mohan tries to pay equal attention to all students. For this, he mentioned

I involve shy and introverted students by encouraging them to participate in discussions, going to them, checking and providing feedback on their assignments, and inquiring whether they have understood the lesson.

(Interview, 6 December 2023)

Overall, Dipak divided students into groups, focusing on active and weaker ones. Mohan ensures equal attention and encourages shy and introverted students to participate in discussions and provide feedback. Panhwar and Bell (2023) claim that group work can help reduce the negative impacts of large classes. It enables students to work together and maximizes language practice time, keeping them engaged and less likely to lose interest.

Strategies for Engaging Students

Kapil's strategy for engaging students in assigned activities in his large classes by responding to students' off-task activities immediately. He noted,

"When I find a student involved in off-task activities, I ask him/her to read the text or answer my question. This strategy has worked well to keep the class disciplined."

(Interview, 15 December 2023)

However, in my classroom observations, I did not notice any teachers using these activities in their classrooms. Students find it interesting when they are given the chance to participate in discussions based on the lecture because large classes are primarily lecture-based; this encourages them to be more engaged learners throughout the class. Oral presentations are another proper technique that can increase engagement and turn students into active learners (Carpenter, 2006). Dipak said, "I try to make my lectures interactive by involving the students in class discussion. I provide them with topics for individual and group presentations for the internal assessment" (Interview, 12 December 2023). The study participants valued their teaching strategies in their contexts rather than strictly following prescribed methodologies. Teachers adapted their practices based on students' feedback and classroom dynamics (Kumaravadivelu, 2001).

Strategy for Minimizing the Use of Lecture Method

Lectures are preferred in large classes (Mulryan-Kyne, 2010; Trang, 2015). However, Mulryan-Kyne (2010) argues that if good education is to be delivered in large classes, tertiary-level teachers must use more interactive teaching methods.

Teachers focus on the use of the lectures with questions to make their teaching interactive (Duwadi, 2020). The research participants said they heavily used the lecture method in their large classes.

Dipak *noted*,

However, when I realized this method was unsuitable for the topic, I gave them assignments to do something new: class work, peer work, and group work. Sometimes, they write for 5 - 10 minutes. Other times, I ask them to speak from the groups for 5 - 10 minutes. In addition to the lecture method, I incorporate peer work, group work, student presentations, discussion, and interaction.

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

The research participants often employed the lecture method in large classes. In addition to the lecture method, they gave class, peer, and group assignments and incorporated student presentations, discussion, and interaction in their teaching. During my classroom observations, some teachers attempted to make their lectures more interactive using question-answer techniques.

Strategies for Providing Equal Opportunities for All Students

Teachers can use various techniques in large classes to ensure equal attention to every student. For instance, group work, monitoring all students, maintaining eye contact, and remembering as many student names as possible.

When the participants were inquired about how they gave equal opportunities for classroom activities, Dipak reported,

I ensure equal opportunities for interaction for both male and female students in the class. Generally, I form groups incorporating male and female students and their major subjects. I provide opportunities for the girls to lead the group/pair work activities. Honestly speaking, I tend to give more time to noisy students in the class. Second, I focus more on the students who do not look at my face. To make them hear me out and see what is written on the board clearly, I make them sit on the front benches. Additionally, it is simple to ask them questions. I have experienced some visible changes in some of the

students. For example, one girl from the remote area of Karnali has developed her speaking skills in English. These days, she has started reading books and interacting in class. She also requests that I check her assignments. I often encourage her, saying, "You have done great." She is improving her studies by sitting in front of the class.

(Interview, 17 December 2023)

Nabin shared his story as,

The general tendency is that the teacher focuses only on the brighter students. The weaker students do not generally express themselves. My classroom practice is different. While doing classroom assignments, I encourage even the weaker students. So, I provide opportunities to all students in the class.

(Interview, 8 December 2023)

According to Dhakal (2017), equal opportunities for all students could not be assured due to the large number of students. He further says that some students get more benefits than others. I found one of the teachers providing equal opportunities for all students in my classroom observations.

Strategies for Internal Assessment-Related Challenges

The research participants said they could not check many assignments and provide detailed feedback to individual students. However, they attempted to provide feedback on mid-term exam papers and home assignments as far as possible. They encouraged those students who submitted their assignments. For example, Dipak runs a feedback class on the day when he gives students their mid-term answer sheets back.

Strategies for Providing Feedback

Teachers respond to students' written work for two reasons: they need feedback to learn, and they also want to know what other people think about their writing (Hayes, 1997). The research participants employed various techniques for providing feedback on students' assignments.

Dipak shared his stories of marking students' assignments as,

To check mid-term answer sheets, I must spend 3-4 hours daily for a week. After examining the answer sheets, I returned them to the students and spent about half an hour discussing their write-ups. They collect and see their answer sheets with feedback. I also ask them to calculate their marks. I also suggest that they exchange their answer sheets and have a look at them. Most

students may think they have done this so far and should do even better in final examinations. They are excited to see their answer sheets back with feedback. They find the feedback class very fruitful for correcting their errors in the future.

(Interview, 10 November 2023)

Homework can be lightly corrected to make numerous assignments possible and to keep the teacher's workload manageable (Christensen, 1994). Dipak provides general feedback on students' assignments to cover many assignments. He argued,

I am tired of checking students' assignments over eight pages. I do not have sufficient time to check all assignments thoroughly, so I skip pages and provide general feedback on their assignments.

(Interview, 10 November 2023)

Mohan often practices a 'group correction' technique to correct a lot of class work. He mentioned,

I am trying to create various groups in the class. For this, I divide the students into different groups and assign various tasks to each group. When they complete the assigned tasks, I pick one of them from the groups and check it. Then, I advise other groups to make corrections against the corrected one.

(Interview, 7 December 2023)

To summarise, Dipak checked mid-term answer sheets, discussed their write-ups, and provided feedback on students' write-ups. He encouraged students to exchange answer sheets and used feedback to correct errors. Mohan used group correction, assigning tasks and advising corrections against the corrected one. During my classroom observations, I found teachers using class correction by the teachers.

Self and Peer Assessment

In addition to teacher assessment, formative assessment includes self-assessment and peer assessment. For Davies (2000), peer assessment is one of the suggestions for handling large class assessments. Because of the students' active involvement in the assessment process, peer assessment has long-lasting effects on their learning. The research participants used self-assessment and peer assessment in their large classes, especially to save time. Kapil has practised both self-assessment and peer assessment in his class. He claimed,

I generally assign the students homework. I ask them to present homework in class or share what they have done at home the next day. I correct students'

homework in mass to save class time in two ways. First, I write correct answers on the board, and second, I ask them to exchange their copies with each other for peer correction.

(Interview, 15 December 2023)

Mohan reported,

I sometimes assign students with classwork. I collect their work and correct one of them in the class, and other students correct their assignments based on the corrected ones. Sometimes, I take them home and correct them at home if required.

(Interview, 7 December 2023)

Nabin mentioned that he practised a 'mass or class correction' in his class. He said,

While checking students' class works, I often ask them to exchange their copies with their elbow friends and assess each other's assignments. This technique of assessment saves time.

(Interview, 18 December 2023)

Students can become excellent peer reviewers and editors when properly trained, and they can learn much about their writing (Hayes, 1997). All the research participants acknowledged that they could not provide feedback to individual students in their large classes. However, they try to help their students understand their strengths and problems by providing peer and general feedback. For example, Dipak stated that he gives his students some general feedback on the student's answer sheets for midterm exams.

Strategies for Insufficient Resources

Finding and using authentic materials and running engaging activities in large classes is hard and challenging for many teachers. According to Renaud et al. (2007), students in certain nations merely carry a notebook and a pen or pencil to class; they do not even have access to textbooks. They say there are countries where students do not have access even to textbooks, and the only materials they bring to class are a notebook and a pen or pencil.

The study participants expressed that they used various strategies to cope with the challenges caused by the inadequate availability of resources in their large classes.

Dipak's strategy to cope with this challenge was as follows:

I always recommend that some copies of the textbooks be purchased for the library so students can borrow them. However, the library has not added more textbooks. Though it is not ethical, I recommend my students make photocopies of the books and read them. Sometimes, I prepare some reading materials and provide them to students. Moreover, I have e-copies of the textbooks. I send them to the students through messenger groups; students with smartphones can read them on their mobiles.

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

To address this challenge, Kapil claimed,
Instead of relying on the library, I search for textbooks and supporting PPT slides on the internet, such as Google. I mostly prepare PPT slides, present them in the class, and provide them with e-copies. Generally, I do not print out handouts for the class because the number of students is very big. However, if the lesson is important for them, I print some copies and provide them in groups. Each group gets one handout and shares it with others.

(Interview, 12 December 2023)

As far as Mohan's strategy is concerned, he remarked,
Since the majority of students do not have textbooks for the course, I download them from different search engines and provide them to the students through emails and Facebook Messenger. While teaching in the class, I present the books through the projector on the screen, and the students note down the main points from the screen. Sometimes, there is a problem with projection due to power cuts.

(Interview, 7 December 2023)

In this particular aspect, Nabin reveals his experience in the following way,
I ask the students to bring even the photocopy of the textbooks to the class if they do not have the original books. If they cannot afford even photocopies of the books, they should request their senior batches to lend them those books. I also recommend the campus administration that they should purchase some copies of the textbooks.

In summary, the study's research participants asked students to make photocopies of the textbooks and read them. They also sent e-copies of the book to their students through messenger groups. Dharni (2016) reports that teachers might communicate with students outside of class more easily by using their emails. Kapil

prepared PPT slides and handouts with the help of the internet, while Mohan downloaded books from various search engines and provided them through emails and Facebook messenger groups. They also recommended that their campus administration add the textbooks to the library.

Strategies for Balancing Teaching Materials

To balance teaching materials to help their studies, they attempted to prepare teaching materials considering the Nepalese context. They know that the textbooks are not easily available in the market or at the library. Moreover, the textbooks are advanced for them to understand easily. So, three of them designed and produced their teaching materials for classroom purposes. In this regard, Dipak remarked,

Three textbooks published by Oxford University and Cambridge University Press are prescribed for the course. They are bulky and difficult for students to understand, and the contents are not easy for Nepalese students studying for their bachelor's first semester. I prepare my teaching materials based on the course and use them in class to simplify the course.

(Interview, 17 December 2023)

The research participants prioritized preparing their materials to be tailored to the needs of all types of students in the classes. They found their materials useful and practical in the Nepalese context. The research participants discussed coping strategies for addressing insufficient teaching materials and balancing them to help all students learn their classes. Coping strategies include making photocopies of textbooks, preparing a course package, recommending the library to purchase new copies of the books, searching and downloading e-copies of reading materials and sharing them with students through Facebook messengers or emails, printing out some copies of the materials and providing students in groups, using projectors for displaying the books on the screen and asking senior batchmates to lend them old books. English in large classes that prioritizes adaptability, learner engagement, and socio-cultural relevance (Kumaravadivelu, 2001).

Chapter Summary

This chapter discusses the participants' coping strategies for addressing the challenges in the large class at the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University. Moreover, the interviewed research participants revealed emergent themes that support effective teaching in large classes.

CHAPTER VI

KEY INSIGHTS, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter summarises the key insights and conclusions from the data analyzed and interpreted in Chapters IV and V, addressing each research question and the study's pedagogical implications.

Key Insights

This study explored university teachers' challenges in large classes and their coping strategies. I tried to understand the realities of large classes through the experiences of the four research participants who taught classes of more than 60 students. The study helped me realize how serious the issue is and gave me insight into the perspectives of other teachers. I have discussed the findings of the study based on participant interviews and classroom observations. Despite several challenges, the research participants taught English in large classes.

The research participants reported their experiences of teaching English in large classes. They discussed their perceived challenges, divided into five themes and several sub-themes. They were classroom management-related challenges, disciplinary issues, teaching-learning-related challenges, internal assessment-related challenges, and insufficient teacher resources.

I observed at least four classes of each research participant and witnessed different kinds of problems they encountered. For instance, a crowded and congested classroom leads to difficulty in seating, running class activities, difficulty monitoring student behaviours, high noise levels, a shortage of educational materials, unmotivated students, and difficulty giving individual student feedback.

They said that the challenges of teaching large classes demotivated them. Nevertheless, they were convinced they needed to find and practice efficient coping strategies to overcome these challenges.

When interviewing the participants, they highlighted the role of student engagement in the teaching-learning process in their large classes. However, I did not see them engaging in the classes.

Recalling the Theoretical Framework of the Study

The post-method pedagogy of Kumaravadivelu (2001)—the parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility—are the foundation for this study. The practice of teaching L2 in general and teaching pedagogies in particular is increasingly contextualized. He further says that a meaningful pedagogy cannot be developed without a comprehensive understanding of a particular situation, nor can it be improved without a fundamental improvement of those specific situations. Thus, teaching becomes effective when the settings' specifics are considered. According to Atkins and Brown (2002), different contexts require different approaches to effective teaching. Put differently, not everything in one situation will work in another. Promoting certain ideas, like Western-based teaching, which is useful and successful in a certain setting, is not the goal of effective teaching. Instead, teachers must look for natural and contextual methods for implementing effective pedagogies.

Future Research Directions

There are two basic limitations related to the present study. Firstly, I considered involving two male and two female participants in the study. However, the lack of female English teachers in large classes prevented me from implementing this plan. Secondly, I explored teachers' challenges and coping strategies in large classes on broad topics. However, I was unable to explore them thoroughly in a single study. Therefore, focusing on certain aspects of teaching large classes would lead to a more in-depth research study in the future.

The study explores university English teachers' challenges and coping strategies in large, multilevel classes at the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University. The increasing number of new students at Mid-West University needs resourced classes. However, resources like teachers and teaching materials are insufficient for the increasing number of students joining the program each semester. The techniques for coping with teaching large classes effectively found in this study may assist novice teachers in managing large, multilevel classrooms. Acknowledging limitations in the study underscores the potential avenues for further research within Mid-West University. Comparative analyses across varied cultural and institutional contexts could yield a more nuanced understanding of teaching English in large classes in higher education in Nepal. These identified limitations prompt perspective

research endeavours as opposed to broadening both the scope and depth of insights into teaching English in large classes in higher education in the Nepalese context.

Conclusions

The research participants reported teaching English in large classes as challenging as Roshan et al. (2022) viewed it as a problem in ELT all over the world. They faced challenges in classroom management, including insufficient classroom space for seating, organizing classroom activities, and monitoring student activities; time-consuming for taking student attendance; students' inability to see and hear clearly; and overburdening for teachers. They also faced disciplinary issues like difficulty in controlling noisy classes, student absenteeism, a heavy load for teachers, and students' off-task behaviour, especially during group and class work. In addition, they faced the challenges of very little or no student involvement, heavy use of the lecture method, dominance of only a few bright students in classroom interaction, difficulty in giving equal opportunities for all students, and heavy use of Nepali in the classes. Moreover, they encountered problems such as a lack of monitoring and assessing students' performance, failure to ensure student progress, difficulty providing individual feedback, and poor student assessments. Furthermore, the participants had problems finding textbooks and other reading materials and preparing their classroom teaching materials as Roshan et al. (2022) reported that an issue with teaching English to large numbers of students is the availability of resources.

The research participants used several coping strategies to address those challenges related to classroom management issues. The coping strategies included avoidance of classroom activities that demanded large open space, preferring the lecture method to pair and group work, assigning students to mark their presence in the attendance register themselves, speaking loudly to be heard by every student, moving around the class, and enlarging fonts on the board. They employed psychological punishment as a strategy for students' wrong behaviour, setting up classroom rules in collaboration with students, providing counselling and guidance to needy students, motivating students towards learning, building a good rapport with students, addressing students by their names, and emphasizing student attendance to make them regular in the classes. They used various techniques to address challenges related to the teaching-learning process. For example, they mixed up bright and weak students in pair and group work, attempted to engage in class work and discussion, and the teachers made their lectures interactive and focused more on weak students.

They reported using self, pair, and teacher assessments to save time. After the publication of midterm results, they run a feedback class on students' answer sheets. They used several coping strategies to resolve difficulties caused by insufficient resources for teachers. For example, they made photocopies of the textbooks, prepared their course package for the course, recommended the library to add more books, downloaded textbooks, shared them with students through Facebook messengers and emails, printed out some copies of their materials, and provided them in the classes, using the projectors for displaying the books on the screen and asking teachers to borrow old books from their seniors.

This study examines the challenges and coping strategies for teaching English in large classes at the Graduate School of Education, Mid-West University. The findings support Kumaravadivelu's (2001) post-method pedagogy, emphasizing in particular the necessity for teachers to assess the specific context of their classroom and adapt their strategies accordingly. Dhami (2016) claims that a technique or method that works best in one region of the world might not work as well in another. The teachers prepare their own course packages to cater to the needs of their students and implement them in their large classes. The research participants consistently emphasized the development of their teaching strategies to teach effectively in large classes. Teachers and students collaborated to establish classroom rules to maintain discipline and order in their classes.

Large classes are detrimental to effective learning and teaching. Formative testing improves students' performance. However, giving individual feedback and implementing continuous evaluation is challenging. Large classes hurt a teacher's motivation, self-esteem, and morale. According to this study, teaching English to large classes can be stressful.

Implications

This study has significant implications for higher educational institutions and policymakers teaching English in large classes. The findings indicate significant implications for pedagogy and management in higher education. The study highlights the need for educators to be adequately prepared to address the many challenges of teaching large, multilevel classes. Challenges can be predicted in particular areas, including classroom management, disciplinary issues, teaching-learning, and assessment. The study's results show the importance of choosing locally relevant and culturally appropriate teaching materials in large, under-resourced classes. Teachers

in large classrooms must know how to teach large, multilevel students to manage, mitigate, and avoid issues posed by large classes. Providing adequate resources, including technological tools, internet access, and sufficient paper and printing machines, is essential for teachers to teach successfully in large classes. Teachers require support and collaboration from their administration, as teaching large multilevel classes requires increased preparation and planning. The administration should avoid assigning teachers to multiple crowded classrooms, as this puts significant responsibilities on them. Practical and contextualized teacher training programs enable teachers to effectively utilize their resources in large classes. In addition, reducing class sizes to smaller numbers is essential for enhancing teaching effectiveness in under-resourced contexts. Addressing these issues enables higher education administrators to enhance institutional effectiveness and support faculty in managing large classes.

The study will help find solutions to numerous issues about the effective teaching of large classes. The results of this study may help policymakers and professionals in the field of teaching English. Teachers become more aware of the phenomena, comprehend the real joys and challenges of teaching large classes, and develop plans and policies appropriately. According to Heever (2000), two aspects of large class management are the appropriate classroom arrangement and the significance of rules and regulations in establishing a productive working environment. Teachers and educational planners should explore and adopt creative strategies to address problems caused by large classes instead of being discouraged by the situation. Therefore, teachers should manage large classes and teach effectively in large classes.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- Name of the teacher
- Name and address of the campus
- Teaching experience
- Number of students in the class
- The perception of a large class
- The physical size of the class
- How they ensure students' learning
- Effect of large class size on students' learning
- Disciplinary issues and solving them
- Absentee students and reasons for and techniques to solve the problem
- Issues encountered when organizing class activities and solving them
- Methods of teaching, use of the lecture method and other methods
- Teacher's discomforts and solving them
- Visibility of board writings from every corner of the room
- Level of noise and techniques for solving it
- Difficulty learning students' names and techniques for recalling them
- Student interaction and techniques for increasing it
- Possibility of giving attention to individual students
- Monitoring students, giving feedback, assessment and marking load and their coping strategies
- Availability of resources for teaching and techniques for balancing them

APPENDIX B

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

Teacher's name

Class.....

Name and address of the campus

Date:

SN	Statements	Yes	No
1	Is classroom size suitable for the number of students?		
2	Is the classroom design flexible enough to reorganize furniture for classroom activities?		
3	Does the teacher have enough space to move around?		
4	Do students have enough space to work, read, or write easily?		
5	Is the board writing visible from the back of the classroom?		
6	Is there an interaction between the teacher and students?		
7	Does the teacher adapt his/her teaching methods to cater to a large group?		
8	Do the students show disruptive behaviour?		
9	Does the teacher move around the class?		
10	Are students told the norms and expectations in the class?		
11	Does the teacher use methods for controlling disturbances?		
12	Do the majority of students take part actively?		
13	Does the teacher increase student engagement through the use of visual aids?		
14	Does the teacher use summative and formative assessment tools?		
15	Do the students receive timely feedback?		
16	Do the students have books and notebooks?		
17	Does the teacher prepare and use teaching materials in the class?		

18	Does the teacher take student attendance?		
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