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Exploring the Impact of Classroom Size on EFL Teaching and Learning Processes: The Case of Fourth-Year Pupils at "Benyani Benouda" Middle School

Dissertation submitted to the Department of English as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's degree in Didactics.

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Dedication

To my cherished parents Naima and Mustapha, my loving and caring grandmother Khedra,

my sister and biggest supporter Fedwa, and my beloved friends Nabila, Chaimaa, Hanane, and

Salsabil I dedicate this humble work.

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Abstract

EFL education in the classroom is a critical aspect of learning, necessitating qualified teachers who employ effective instructional methods for classroom management, teaching, and assessing students' language and communication skills. Additionally, active learner participation in the educational environment is vital. However, classroom size can significantly impact the quality of EFL education. For this reason, the research suggests considering classroom size as a significant factor that impacts the quality of the instructional process either positively or negatively. The current study investigates the influence of large and small classroom size on EFL teaching and learning outcomes. The researcher hypothesizes that classroom size affects the EFL teaching and testing process as well as learner's language skills development and to test this hypothesis, an exploratory case study was conducted at Benyani Benouda Middle School of Ouled Mimoune Tlemcen, a classroom observation was done with the forty-four fourth year learners. Additionally, teacher interviews were conducted with five instructors in small classrooms to explore their teaching and assessment strategies for enhancing students' communicative skills. Using a qualitative approach, the findings from the classroom observations revealed challenges faced by teachers and learners in larger classrooms, particularly in managing learner behavior and promoting effective language acquisition. Conversely, results from the teacher interviews highlighted the positive impact of smaller classroom sizes on teaching and testing methods, ultimately leading to improved language learning outcomes. These results confirm that classroom size strongly affects the teachers' teaching and testing processes and the learners' behaviors and communication skills development, which may influence the EFL educational process as a whole.

Key Words: classroom size, large classroom size, small classroom size, EFL, classroom education.

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Key to Abbreviations and Acronyms

CE: **C**lassroom **E**ducation

EFL: **E**nglish as a **F**oreign **L**anguage

TPD: **T**eacher **P**rofessional **D**evelopment

CLT: **C**ommunicative **L**anguage **T**eaching

TBA: **T**ask **B**ased **A**pproach

CS: **C**lassroom **S**ize

LCS: **L**arge **C**lassroom **S**ize

SCS: **S**mall **C**lassroom **S**ize

T-S: **T**eacher **S**tudent

CM: **C**lassroom **M**anagement

General Introduction

General introduction:

Education is a crucial and key aspect of fostering the development and growth of individuals and society across various fields. As a broad term, education encompasses effective methods and techniques of teaching and learning the subject matter to acquire the targeted knowledge, skills, and competencies, besides, the educational process requires a competent and qualified teacher coupled with a curious and motivated learner. To ensure their success, providing a positive learning environment is essential. From centuries up to nowadays the classroom has remained the classic educational setting where learners engage in studying, asking questions, and participating in discussions with their instructors reinforcing their face-to-face interactions with each other as this latter is significant, particularly for the teacher to receive feedback on his students' needs and the learning style of each one of them allowing him to provide the adequate teaching strategies.

The design of an efficient classroom is an important consideration that involves mainly a spacious place enough to accommodate learners comfortably in addition to suitable use of the physical resources, One major factor to take into account for classroom effectiveness is the classroom size as it plays a vital role affecting the teaching and learning process either positively or negatively, ultimately causing educational outcomes for both short and long terms.

Foreign languages, especially English language studies, are commonly taught in classrooms as part of national educational systems. Unlike other subjects that rely mostly on problem-solving and logical reasoning, English language education demands further and diverse instructions and methods, which emphasize not only grammar and vocabulary, but also improving language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This focus on linguistic and communicative aspects considers a skilled teacher who possesses deep knowledge and understanding of the language and can intelligently manage his classroom. In recent years, while technology has heavily influenced education and attempts to replace traditional learning, classroom education remains a necessary and effective method of teaching and learning particularly English as a foreign language and as a lingua franca worldwide, for instance, Algeria is one of these countries that has given high importance and value to English education where this latter is taught in all levels of schooling including primary, middle, secondary schools, universities, in addition to private institutions. It is generally common that there are schools that accommodate a small number of learners in small classes while others handle larger

and overcrowded classrooms due to the learners' huge population compared with the available number of classrooms in the school, despite its importance, classroom management, in this case, may be found as a short-term solution to this phenomenon since it can be challenging for the teacher to use strategies for managing the class and improving competencies simultaneously, this can be even more complicated considering part of these strategies are dedicated to his numerous learners as he is compelled to know the learning preferences of each on. Typically, large classroom size is seen as a challenge facing not only teachers but also learners who encounter hardships in terms of in-class focus, participation, and motivation to learn.

The concept of classroom size has become a controversial issue in education and a wide debate among educators as some of them believe smaller classes provide an effective learning environment, while others concluded that the size of a classroom cannot be called an "issue" if a teacher efficiently manages his classroom.

In light of the above, the current research's objectives are to explore the implications of large classroom sizes on EFL teaching and learning outcomes. The purpose of this study is to examine how a large number of learners in a classroom can affect the individual's linguistic input and behavior, also it seeks to explore the effect of a large number of learners in a classroom on the teacher's methods of teaching and assessment. This study might be considered a contribution to the field of classroom education, mainly EFL classroom education, besides, it can suggest insights to classroom designers and dealers with large classroom sizes for optimizing the teaching and learning environment as the study's goal attempts to improve foreign teaching and learning qualities of the English language in Algeria particularly.

Therefore, the researcher seeks to answer the research questions below:

- ❖ How can a classroom size determine the effectiveness of EFL teaching and learning?
- ❖ Does a large classroom size negatively impact teaching methods and linguistic outcomes?

Based on the above-mentioned research questions, two hypotheses are formulated:

- ❖ A classroom size impacts the learner's behavior and linguistic development and the teacher's instructional processes.
- ❖ The classroom size is not considered an important factor of the EFL education effectiveness.

It is important to highlight that the research objectives led the researcher to conduct an exploratory case study research dealing with the fourth-year classroom in "Benyani Benouda" Middle School (Ouled Mimoune-Tlemcen), a qualitative approach is decided to be followed, thus, qualitative data will be provided through the use of two data collection instruments, a classroom observation dedicated for the teacher and learners in large classes and interview with private school teachers of small classes. Qualitative findings will be used to increase the comprehension and validity of the research.

The current research paper consists of two chapters, the first covers the theoretical part of the study while the second is considered the practical part. The first chapter reviews the literature on the importance of classroom education and the main characteristics of effective classroom education, it also provides insights into the roles of both the teacher and learner within the classroom. Moreover, the first chapter highlights EFL education in classrooms with an emphasis on English as a foreign language, the literature review of this study also brings to light the importance of classroom sizes as a major factor influencing the effectiveness of teaching methods and linguistic outcomes.

The second chapter i.e. the practical part of the study explores particularly at "Benyani Benouda" middle school the effects of classroom size on fourth-year pupils' development of their language skills and teacher's methods of teaching and testing in a large class. A teacher interview will be used to explore the impact of teaching in small classrooms on teaching methods.

The second part explains the research design followed in this study including sampling, research instruments, and the data-gathering tools of observation and interview. After discussing the findings, qualitative data will be analyzed to reveal the impact of large and small classroom sizes on the EFL educational outcomes.

In short, classroom size plays a significant role in determining the effectiveness of classroom education, and providing a positive learning environment is a significant consideration to promote EFL classroom education, enhance learners' linguistic development, and clarify the use of effective teaching methods.

Chapter One: Literature Review

1.1 Introduction:

Classroom Education is an essential aspect of the educational field and represents the area where learners acquire knowledge about a subject matter and learn important concepts and theories, CE helps learners increase their focus and experience real-life communication with their classmates and teachers inside a comfortable learning environment, it also enables the teacher to observe and analyze his learners' strengths, needs, and learning styles to improve his methods thus making education efficient and successful. The effectiveness of CE relies on a variety of criteria and can be positively or negatively affected by multiple factors. One of the most affected areas is EFL education and classroom size is among the significant factors that impact it.

Based on this, the focus of the current chapter is primarily centered on exploring the importance of CE with the principles that should be committed to it by teachers and learners and detailing the key characteristics that contribute to its effectiveness. The essential aim is to reveal the concept of classroom size as a major factor that affects EFL teaching and learning processes in the classroom.

On the other hand, it should be noted that EFL education in the classroom has such tremendous significance that will be discussed in this chapter highlighting the essential principles that make EFL effective. Teaching methods and language skills education within different classroom sizes will be addressed to explore the difference between education in large and small classroom sizes and the impact of each size on EFL teaching and learning outcomes.

1.2 Understanding the Concept of Classroom Education

A traditional part of education is called Classroom Education, It refers to the process of giving and receiving information about a particular subject in a suitable learning environment and requires the presence of a teacher, learners, and physical settings to be carried out. It generally takes place in schools or universities and needs a qualified teacher and curious learners in addition to the accessibility of physical and digital resources to accomplish the efficiency of the educational experience. CE provides a realistic connection between learners and their teacher to make it a unique and important way of leading them to real-world communication. Besides that, it represents the distinct area where learners acquire knowledge

and satisfy their thirst for learning, and educators not only impart knowledge but also teach ethical values and principles. This as a consequence, will promote the learning atmosphere by positively reflecting on the teacher-learner relationship.

1.2.1   The Importance of Classroom Dynamics

Classroom dynamics encompass sets of actions, interactions, and relationships that take place in the classroom between teachers and learners, These actions represent learners' behaviors within different situations, while the interactions involve the communications that occur among learners or between learners and their teacher through group work, participation or asking questions, effective classroom dynamics play a significant role in influencing CE generally and the learning environment especially as they can profoundly strengthen relationships and increase respect among teachers and learners. From a psychological standpoint, positive dynamics promote the sense of belonging and increase good behavior, consequently, learners build self-confidence and autonomously increase their motivation to learn as they feel comfortable in participating and expressing thoughts.

1.2.2   Role of the Teacher in Classroom Education

Teaching and learning generally revolve around one essential thing: knowledge, which the teacher offers primarily to his learners. An effective teacher must use relevant resource materials to provide information and understanding of the subject matter and ensure that what is being taught is well delivered and comprehended by learners. Nevertheless, careful teaching methods that involve facilitating the process of knowledge providing are essentially recommended, One of the key responsibilities of the teacher as a facilitator centers on supporting learning experiences and keeping a positive learning atmosphere where learners can acquire knowledge, ask questions, participate in discussions, and develop their critical thinking skills comfortably.

Undoubtedly, to be informed of learners' comprehension of the course in particular and learning development in general, teachers rely on assessment. As a teacher being an effective assessor is a task that requires the use of appropriate methods of evaluating the learners' performances and measuring their competencies including quizzes, examinations, group work, or project assignments which enable instructors to provide feedback, and then developing strategies for teaching and learning outcomes improvement.

Additionally, the teacher's help and guidance are of great importance for learners since they cannot educate themselves autonomously, especially at the primary level, the teacher as a guide needs to carefully plan his lessons that should be adapted to his learners' styles, "A teacher is supposed to be an absolute authority in a class. A classroom environment and learning activities are affected mainly by a teacher's characteristic traits, beliefs, and modes of teaching" (Siddiqui & Ahamed, 2020 p.284). An effective guide is required to help students distinguish between right and wrong and clarify the unclear for them, Furthermore, teaching learners ethics, setting the classroom rules, and informing them of what is permissible and what is prohibited is necessary, and applying these methods in the first days of school particularly will help in maintaining easy classroom management and providing a positive learning area in addition to building successfully the generation for long term outcomes.

In essence, the teacher possesses a vital role in the educational process and has to ensure that the learning environment is positive and supportive because it is where learners get their skills shaped and critical thinking developed, he also represents the primary source of knowledge acquisition to the learners in the classroom, through careful use of his teaching methods, the teacher's crucial aim in the class is to assure personalized attention to each of his learners by analyzing their strengths and needs, this method facilitates the process of both teacher and his learners to promote their competencies then build their academic and personal growth, therefore, making CE successful.

The roles, however, are divided and give the learner a great amount as he is committed to following the below-mentioned principles to be part of CE efficiency.

1.2.3 Role of the Learner in Classroom Education

The learner's major role in the classroom is learning, he has to be consciously certain of his responsibilities and duties in and out of the classroom. Inside the class, it is compulsory to attend and not be absent for no convincing reason, the learner is required to complete the assignments given by his teacher during the course and to keep the learning environment clean and positive. On the other hand, since success and achievement do not come from laziness and negligence, the learner should pursue his learning outside his usual class learning such as further researching on a previously explained lesson and doing home assignments.

Another aspect that involves critical thinking and intensive searching for information is curiosity. Curiosity serves as a source through which the learner gains knowledge and clarifies what is ambiguous to him. A neurological study has concluded that curiosity makes learning more enjoyable and prepares learners' brains to be more receptive while studying (Stenger, 2014). Although curiosity is considered more innate than acquired, it is essential for the learner to be curious and inquirer while studying, asking questions, seeking more information, and looking for further explanation from the teacher not only provides clear comprehension of the studied subject and enhances learning achievements but also motivates the teacher to learn more and improve teaching skills.

An essential process that is based on logical reasoning and involves curiosity is called critical thinking, it refers to the process of identifying, explaining, creating, analyzing, evaluating, and drawing conclusions from the gathered information generally from observing. Thinking critically, especially in CE allows the learner to promote his problem-solving and decision-making skills which will effectively reflect on his active learning process, it also plays a pivotal role in fostering the learner's self-confidence and intelligence level in addition to communication skills.

Collaborative learning is a fundamental aspect that plays a no less important role than others within the classroom, in the context of CE collaboration means engaging in classroom activities such as participation during the course, being an active member in group work, role-playing, or playing educational games. Collaboration improves communicative skills and fosters teamwork, it involves insights and knowledge exchanging and it is considered as an efficient tool of helping learners develop their critical thinking skills through collaborative problem solving and decision-making activities.

1.3 Characteristics of Effective Classroom Education

CE has usually been learners' preferred modality of education owing to a combination of principles crafted to ensure its effectiveness to benefit learners and teachers.

1.3.1 Classroom Design

Classroom design stands as the physical organization of educational furniture to create a comfortable and efficient learning environment, it includes the arrangement of desks and classroom elements in addition to other classroom decoration tools and lighting. According to

Ayers & Glauber (2022), designing a classroom is not just decorating it, rather it must have a positive influence on the educational environment which is the main purpose behind this design. The correct seating arrangement involves a crucial aspect which is the physical space. This latter plays a significant role in designing the classroom as it facilitates visibility and promotes learners' engagement and interaction with teachers. Certainly, the classroom design is considered the bedrock that paves the way toward CE effectiveness.

1.3.2 Classroom Management

Managing a classroom goes beyond mere task-to-accomplish and desks to arrange, it is considered an art and one of the foundations of CE that plays an essential role in determining its efficiency, Classroom management serves as the methods, strategies, and rules employed by the teacher to create an effective learning environment and increase learners' productivity and positive behaviors, maintaining how to control the classroom is a serious task that requires intensive learning and pedagogical planning from the teacher as he is primarily concerned with his students' learning and promoting their outcomes, for this reason, an effective classroom manager should carefully design and structure the lesson and classroom materials using techniques to facilitate knowledge delivery and actively engage learners within the learning atmosphere, these techniques go hand in hand with a correct desks arrangement and analysis of learners' seating as the latter can vary and needs modifications according to learners' different physical dimensions.

Another aspect that should be considered when managing the classroom is behavior management which entails preventing and minimizing learners' disruptive behavior by absorbing anger caused by misunderstandings, One of the reasons behind the misbehaving is the classroom layout as unorganized seating can cause conflicts among learners, and obstruct the learning process without teacher's involvement. A skillful behavioral manager guides learners to group discussions to solve problems and fix conflicts, the teacher has to cultivate respect and a sense of active listening among learners which will lead to improving the learning process and reinforcing outcomes.

1.3.3 Teacher Professional Development

TPD can be defined as the teacher's continuous process of acquiring knowledge and developing teaching skills, assessment strategies, and classroom management techniques for

the sake of enhancing teaching and learning experiences, Professional development is not restricted by a specific period, it is rather ongoing and progressing along with the teacher's academic journey to build a career full of successful teaching and learning experiences. Professional development is processed in different forms according to teachers' preferences of learning, For instance, one traditional form can be classroom observation, a teacher can go to several classrooms to observe experienced teachers, learn from their pedagogical strategies, and analyze learners' interactions, additionally, since technology and digital resources become indispensable tools for knowledge acquisition in recent years, an educator can attend webinars, online workshop conferences, or organized online courses that aim to assist teachers with their needs and provide innovative teaching approaches.

Whether conducted in physical or virtual settings, TPD is a paramount aspect of education that makes a qualified teacher and consequently contributes to the efficacy of CE, The knowledge and careful understanding of the subject matter acquired from academic or personal training is crucial as it promotes the teacher's promptitude and enables him to explain lessons and answer questions flexibly and effectively, in turn, teacher's motivation-to-teach and self-confidence will be increased and strengthened, also, learning how to innovate effective pedagogical methods of teaching and being adapted with modern approaches created through international educational reforms helps refine teacher's skills and keeping up to date with creative teaching strategies to make them more beneficial to learners' different needs and improve learning outcomes as well.

1.3.4 Use of Technology

Technology integration is increasingly evolving in modern CE and becoming a subject of debate among many educators. "Technology has a positive impact on student learning. Technology causes students to be more engaged; thus, students often retain more information" (Costley. 2014. P2). This use of technology is going beyond a mere tool of learning, rather it becomes a lifelong method of educational enhancement. Creating modern methods of teaching such as the instruction of a course by utilizing data-show projectors on the whiteboard and integrating educational videogames and visual-auditory songs, not only helps in boosting the motivation to learn and making learning more interesting and enjoyable but also plays an effective role decreasing the feeling of boredom and routine that is often associated with daily and traditional methods of education. Outside the classroom, technology becomes an indispensable tool for knowledge acquisition and task accomplishment. Through assistance

from diverse digital resources and online educational platforms, learners can get access to information, improve research skills, and find innovative insights into autonomous learning.

1.3.5 Learner Motivation

In the context of education, motivation can be defined as the internal and external factors including desires, energies, incentives, and interests that push an individual to acquire knowledge, learn a subject matter, and achieve specific learning goals. Developing learners' skills in the classroom and promoting their motivation rely on the provision of a supportive learning environment (Valerio, 2012). This emphasizes the important role the teacher plays in increasing motivation levels among learners. While motivation comes often internally based on a learner's natural desire for knowledge acquisition, the teacher can be an effective encourager for the unmotivated ones since learners with decreased motivation are less likely to success and achieve desired learning outcomes, consequently, it is necessary for the teacher to effectively explore and control the reasons behind decreased motivation amongst learners, one reason is the negative environment that surrounds learners, the educator must prohibit any kind of bullying or harassment towards learners who encounter hardships in understanding a concept, thereby respect and positivity will increase in the classroom, seeking to involve unmotivated ones to the learning process and making them engage during a course is well advised from teachers, also, providing physical and emotional support such as rewards or positive reinforcement for participating is considered an effective strategy of encouragement to keep learners motivated throughout the educational journey. Teachers as motivators process an important task that not only helps learners to achieve their learning objectives but also reflects on the teaching strategy by making it more effective, thus enhancing the educational satisfaction and desire to teach.

In the field of EFL education, the pursuit of effective classroom instructions that encourage language proficiency, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills relies on a variety of interrelated components. Designing the classroom adeptly creates a suitable learning environment for engagement and participation and an effective management of the classroom ensures its organization and promotes positive behavior as well as linguistic achievements. Ongoing professional development of the teacher allows him to be informed of innovative and efficient strategies of teaching that include an appropriate integration of technological tools for educational enhancement purposes, consequently a skillful teacher can foster the learning atmosphere and increase the learner's desire and passion towards English learning.

Nevertheless, the classroom size is one major factor that is considered a meticulous determiner of the effectiveness of English language education in the classroom. A critical debate has been discussed among educators concerning this subject and many studies have concluded that smaller classroom sizes allow for more personalized attention, careful analysis, and feedback provision on each learner's language needs which results from a facilitation in managing the classroom efficiently and clear face-to-face interactions between the teacher and his learner. Whereas, in larger classroom sizes as the learner number increases, teachers may struggle to provide attention for each learner, interactions and participation during the course become chaotic in addition to assessment which may become more challenging and time-consuming for both teacher and learner.

1.4 English Foreign Language Education in the Classroom

In recent decades, the English language has revolutionized and become the world's global lingua franca that indispensably needs to be instructed to all nations as the knowledge of communication in this language opens gates toward social, political, economic, cultural, and educational opportunities. In the context of education, English as a Foreign Language usually known and abbreviated as "EFL" refers to the process of teaching and learning the English language to non-native English speakers that involves mainly communication and language skills development. In Algeria for instance, since the mother tongue is Arabic, English has been taught as a foreign language besides the French language by the decision of the educational curriculum developers (Slimani, 2016).

EFL education in the classroom stands as the instruction of the English language within an educational area. It is a profession that requires the adaptation of a flexible approach to teaching that aims at imparting the knowledge of language and developing grammar, vocabulary, and linguistic skills to non-English speakers considering learners' diverse language proficiencies, needs, learning styles, and learning objectives desired to be achieved within an interactive and structured learning environment. EFL in the classroom is affected by several factors such as teaching strategies and learner motivation, taking into consideration the classroom size which is significantly the critical factor that either improves or blocks language acquisition and communication skills development. It is commonly believed among educators who have conducted research on classroom sizes and their relationship with educational outcomes that smaller classrooms provide a more interactive learning environment and support the implementation of innovative teaching approaches which can be challenging in larger

classrooms, For this reason, it is important to consider the size of a classroom in the EFL instruction.

1.4.1 Principles of EFL Education in the Classroom

As in any other aspect of education, EFL in the classroom is based on a combination of pedagogical principles that are instructed to facilitate education, make it more effective, and hence improve short and long-term language learning outcomes:

1.4.1.1 Effective Teaching Approach

A teaching approach stands as an important component of education that plays a pivotal role in impacting learners' short-term knowledge acquisition and long-term educational achievements. An approach to teaching can be defined as the instructional methods, ways, and strategies that the teacher adapts when teaching a subject matter and delivering information. It aims to enhance the teaching and learning process and the overall educational outcomes, to make it effective, the instructor must consider an approach that fits teaching objectives, learners' needs, and level of comprehension. An effective teaching approach in EFL focuses on the learner's communicative skills and language proficiency development to increase motivation, engagement, and interaction in the classroom, Several approaches are adopted in EFL classroom education among them three are proven by research findings and teachers to be the most effective:

1- Communicative Language Teaching: CLT has been a widely used approach since the 1970s and scholars such as Littlewood (1981) validated its effectiveness. It focuses on learners' language use and communication skills, and it aims at developing their listening and speaking abilities through integrating role plays and group discussions within the course. Assessment is based on speaking activities or group discussions.

2- Task-Based Approach: TBA is a method that also aims at developing communication skills but through practicing them using individual or group language tasks rather than basic language learning. The aim of TBA is to make learners' performances in tasks a tool for increasing their knowledge about language (Ellis, 2018). TBA encourages critical thinking and collaborative work, the teacher assesses language outcomes through organizing interviews, group projects, or paragraph writing tasks.

3- Content-Based Approach: aims at integrating the teaching of subject contents such as history or literature as an indirect tool for language acquisition, it is seen as effective because it delivers knowledge on the content being studied while enhancing language proficiency simultaneously. The effectiveness of content-based instruction lies in enhancing the linguistic skills of the learner and teaching him new concepts of the content (Heo, 2006). The assessment focuses on measuring listening, speaking, reading, and writing through tests, presentations, projects, or activities that are related to subject matter content.

1.4.1.2 Grammar Instruction

Grammar is an indispensable component of a language education whether it is a mother tongue or foreign, in EFL particularly, acquiring knowledge of grammatical rules and the structure of words that make a coherent sentence is essential not only in improving writing and speaking skills but also in possessing effective communication skill which reflects on learner's language proficiency and self-confidence when communicating. It plays an important role in developing the receptive skills of listening and reading as a good understanding of it eliminates ambiguity and clarifies comprehension when listening or reading a passage. The teacher is seen model by his learners therefore, a high level of grammatical knowledge and proper language use serve as must-have characteristics of an effective grammar teacher, Since it is agreed that grammar teaching requires careful consideration of the learner's proficiency and needs, choosing appropriate teaching methods that simplify the process and mitigate complexity are crucial for successful grammar education.

1.4.1.3 Language Skills Development

Language skills encompass listening, speaking, reading, and writing, they are considered to be the foundation of language and need to be effectively instructed. These skills serve as the abilities to receive and produce the language to communicate efficiently encompassing vocabulary and grammar acquisition and development. In the field of EFL, teaching each skill requires a diligent selection of strategies that differ from one skill to another to identify needs and preferences and then increase progress within a positive and interactive learning environment. For listening, since effective methods center on the learner, traditional strategies that focus on the teacher's speaking and storytelling are rarely used. In contrast, integrating audio authentic materials such as podcasts or educational recordings of native

speakers within the course is the widely agreed method for teaching listening because it enables the learner to enhance his abilities to understand diverse accents and discover the use of language in real-life contexts. The speaking skill integrates techniques involving verbal interactions among learners or between the teacher and learner. These techniques especially for teaching beginners focus on fluency more than accuracy, the latter is taught progressively throughout the educational journey, group debates or discussions, role plays, or listening to a passage, and then repeating and correcting spelling or grammatical errors are the usually used tools. When getting involved in the process, the learner must feel at ease expressing thoughts and communicating to increase language objectives. Concerning the reading development, in order to expose learners to the correct reading process, the teacher includes himself and proficient learners in reading a specific passage to enable learners identify and analyze the word spelling and correct their mistakes. Reading skill is considered a great tool for developing and acquiring new vocabulary in context. Finally, developing skills in writing requires careful methods of imparting the knowledge of how to write different types of genres such as essays, poems, emails, or letters. The teacher guides learners through the important steps that complete an effective writing process including brainstorming, planning, drafting, revising, and editing. Attention to punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and spelling mistakes sharpen the proofreading of their writings. Each of the four skills is of great importance and necessitates an appropriate selection of teaching methods and attentive learning processes, which will develop communication and grammar skills, enrich the learner's vocabulary, and then tailor an effective language skills education.

1.4.1.4 Use of Authentic Materials

Adapting any approach to teaching requires tools that refine the process and make it more flexible, These tools are called authentic materials which were first dedicated to native speakers, however, EFL teachers have found that it is beneficial to integrate these materials when instructing the language for learners to increase motivation and interaction during the course, Authentic materials are objects that help in instructing a subject matter such as maps, books, or newspapers. When speaking about language education, authentic materials are a variety of resources such as literature including traditional texts, books, stories, fairy tales or newspapers, and articles, as well as modern audio-visual videos or songs. The teacher must take into account learners' level of language proficiency when choosing the materials to hamper any kind of complexity or ambiguity among them. Besides cultivating cultural awareness of the

language, authentic materials are deemed to be an essential resource for teaching facilitation and enhancement as they allow learners to discover the use of EFL in real-life contexts beyond grammar rules learning. Literary materials help in improving reading and writing skills, and audio materials represent a great way for listening and speaking skills development. The selection of appropriate authentic materials when teaching a skill can significantly contribute to success in enhancing language outcomes and the educational process as a whole.

1.4.1.5 Effective Testing Approach

Testing in EFL is of significant importance for the teacher as it allows him to be informed of the learner's progress and achievements. An effective testing approach drives the instructor to use different assessment methods depending on the learning objectives desired to be measured, Formative assessment methods such as quizzes or in-class activities help adjust learners' progress constantly and provide feedback on their weaknesses that need remediation work, formative assessment methods in listening, for instance, involves recordings that promote active listening then answering on multiple-choice questions, for speaking, role plays and conversations between learners are recommended to measure spellings and phonetic mistakes, the teacher provides interesting texts that entail vocabulary development and prepares questions to measure learners understanding of main ideas, writing assessments based on real-life situations such as email sending or asking for job applications are used mostly among teachers to assess coherence, grammar, and writing skills. Additionally, to ensure learners' overall comprehension at the end of a course or unit the teacher uses tests, exams, or projects as summative assessment methods. The teacher must cater to learners' diverse learning styles, therefore, integrating digital tools such as audio-visual short videos can be advantageous to measuring listening and speaking skills simultaneously such as oral exams that involve careful listening to a passage and then commenting on it. Book or short story reports are considered effective for a summative assessment of reading and writing. The effective testing approach in the classroom is not only a strategy to measure progress but also can be a great motivational tool for learners to intensify their efforts and achieve better linguistic outcomes.

EFL instruction, in general, demands a positive and conducive educational environment as it represents the key component of maintaining an effective education. The importance of a positive environment is demonstrated when it provides the teacher with individualized attention toward learners' linguistic and communicative proficiencies and needs allowing him to tailor the required approaches. Also, this nurturing environment affords teacher-student interaction

that plays a pivotal role in enhancing learner's engagement and productivity in the classroom. A large classroom size is considered a serious challenge that minimizes individualized attention and blocks teacher-student interaction, a substantial number of learners in a classroom can engender difficulties in teaching, learning, and testing, as a consequence, EFL educational objectives may not be achievable.

1.5 The Classroom Size and EFL Educational Outcomes

EFL education in the classroom is influenced by multiple variables encompassing teaching and testing methods, learner motivation, classroom management, and learning environment, all of these factors are a result of an inappropriate classroom size.

1.5.1 The Concept of Classroom Size

Classroom size is a multifaceted concept in the educational field that can be defined according to multiple perspectives. Physically, it refers to the physical dimensions that make a learning space where a specific quantity of learners are accommodated, pedagogically, it is the defined number of learners selected by administrative policies and distributed equally in each classroom of the institution, and in terms of educational aims, CS denotes the effects of a given number of learners inside a classroom on the opportunities and challenges associated with teaching and learning a subject matter. An appropriate size involves a comfortable and valuable educational process, it plays an important role in impacting classroom dynamics, management, and teaching and learning outcomes.

Typically, CS is categorized into two main variations:

1- <u>Large classroom size:</u> LCS refers to the massive learning environment that is related to a substantial number of learners who generally exceeds 50 in middle and secondary schools and surpasses 80 at universities or higher institutions.

2- <u>Small classroom size:</u> SCS refers to the limited quantity of learners compared with the available space in the classroom, it generally does not exceed 20 learners, SCSs are usually found in private schools and institutions, however, many public schools possess SCSs, especially the primary schools.

1.5.1.1 Finn's Distinction between Class Size and Teacher-Student Ratio

Despite their correlation, the researcher Jeremy D.Finn (1998) stated that CS and T-S ratios are distinguished and not the same as many people think, according to him CS is

the number of learners in the classroom while the T-S ratio entails the comparison of the number of learners to the number of teachers in the school. Finn (1998) emphasized the impact of both CS and T-S ratios on the classroom dynamics and educational environment.

1.5.2 Advantages and Challenges of Education in Large Classroom Size

Teaching and learning in LCSs have usually been a critical subject to discuss among educational researchers, while the majority agree that LCS is an issue that needs to be solved to enhance the quality of learning, others believe that education in LCS requires maintaining effective approaches of teaching and classroom managing.

1.5.2.1 Advantages of Education in LCS

Instructing a large class can be interesting to teachers who support learners' diversity and consider their perspectives, according to Pachina (2020), learners' energy in LCS is increased as a result of feeling less pressured from the individualized attention that SCS involves. Learning in a LCS allows the learner to gain diverse learning experiences, discover cultures, and develop language and communication skills with their classmates. Felder (1997) supported the method of out-of-class assignments in LCS and also stated that teaching in large classes can be effective if the teacher efficiently prepares tasks that integrate learners and make them more interactive in learning, In addition, teaching in large classes can foster the teachers' ability to be aware of diverse learning styles enabling them to cater to innovative teaching strategies that support group work and then create a collaborative learning environment, financially, the idea of learning in LCS is supported by educational institutions as it entails the accommodation of a considerable number of learners in a classroom without additional teachers, classrooms, or classroom furniture.

1.5.2.2 Challenges of Education in LCS

Teaching in large classes can represent a dilemma for teachers as they face challenges in managing the classroom and behavior, as the number of learners increases, their behaviors and attitudes may be influenced ultimately, language learning development will be hindered. T-S interactions resulting from teaching and learning processes are considered an important aspect of the CE that fosters learner engagement and builds a strong relationship between the teacher and his learners, a part of T-S interaction is the teacher's individualized attention given to each learner that involves feedback on the learner's linguistic needs and competencies,

however, providing individualized attention in a LCS can strongly be a difficult task for the teacher. As the learners' number is high, time will not be sufficient to address each learner's interaction. The implementation of Teacher-centered approaches to teaching in LCS may hinder the development of speaking skills due to a lack of opportunities that allow the learner to speak and express thoughts. Testing in LCS becomes challenging, time-consuming, and effort-taking for teachers for various reasons:

1- The likelihood for cheating and sharing information during a test can maximize.
2- Distributing tests consumes time then learners may not have sufficient time to perform.
3- Grading numerous test papers can take time and effort.

As a result, the teacher intensifies methods of classroom management including arranging learners' seating and minimizing noise rather than focusing on developing teaching skills and objectives. Moreover, the incorporation of authentic materials such as real-world written or recorded conversations of native speakers will distract within a LCS therefore, learners' listening skills and exposure to real-world language use will be minimized.

1.5.3 Advantages and Challenges of Education in Small Classroom Size

While education in small classes is considered to be effective for multiple reasons such as providing dynamics and facilitating CM, teaching and learning in SCSs involve challenges that can impact the educational process.

1.5.3.1 Advantages of Education in SCS

Smaller classes are agreed among researchers to be more effective in enhancing learning outcomes than the larger ones. "During the past decade, researchers have produced a considerable body of knowledge on optimal school size. In terms of quantity alone, the preponderance of literature favors the small school" (Williams, 1990, p4). Accommodating a few number of learners in the classroom is considered a successful way to reach better teaching and learning outcomes. "There are those who are convinced that fewer pupils in a class is better for the pupils and for the teacher" (Blatchford & Russell, 2020, p12). In SCSs, as the number of learners is not high, the teacher can easily notice learners' participation, interactions, and questions asked during the course which will in turn allow the instructor to provide detailed feedback on learners' strengths and weaknesses and then select effective approaches to teaching that facilitate the educational process and increase outcomes. SCSs hold many benefits in terms

of teaching methods adoption, integrating flexible strategies of engagement with fewer learners such as group discussions, debates, or role plays will strengthen learner's active learning and develop communication skills. While technology could be an effective solution for teaching in large classes, integrating technological tools in small classes is considered more effective as it offers innovative learning methods that reduce boredom resulting from traditional learning. Learners' diverse learning styles that are easily identified by the teacher in SCSs enable him to cater to effective teaching methods that are adequate to each learner's style. Additionally, classroom and behavior management are often easier to maintain within a SCS, with fewer learners, detecting behavioral issues or disrespectful attitudes becomes easier, consequently, tailoring CM strategies that address learners' behaviors and educational needs is generally effective thanks to the personalized attention that small classes offer. Blatchford et al. (2009) stated that in smaller classrooms learners' social behavior is usually more optimal than in larger ones. Classroom dynamics are more effective in providing a supportive learning environment in SCSs and play an important role in strengthening the T-S relationship which is considered as the key component of an effective CM. Moreover, testing in smaller classes is advantageous for both teacher and learner due to multiple reasons:

1- Fewer tests to grade provide the teacher with detailed analysis and feedback on learners' strengths and needs
2- Test performance in smaller classes with fewer classmates can reduce learners' anxiety and increase concentration.
3- SCSs support using various testing methods such as presentations or T-S discussions rather than relying on traditional paper testing.
4- Cheating and information spreading in the classroom is decreased.
5- Testing is effective in SCS as it can be a tool for increasing learning progress.

In short, SCSs are considered effective in supporting teaching and testing methods, facilitating classroom and behavior management, and providing a positive learning environment. The individualized attention resulting from a small number of learners and T-S interactions are the key aspects that make the principles of CE efficiently work in SCS.

1.5.3.2 Challenges of Education in SCS

While classroom dynamics and learners' diverse perspectives are important for the teacher and learner as well, they can be limited in SCSs due to the few number of learners, as a

result, the teacher will not be able to discover all learning styles and test new methods of teaching. In addition, the learner's possibility to discover various cultures and personalities of his classmates is low. Also, in-class methods of working with peers and collaborative learning may not be effective within a small class. Financially, education in SCS can be challenging in terms of providing more teachers to be in charge of smaller classes, resource allocation such as classroom equipment and different furniture can cause cost-inefficiencies.

1.5.4 The Impact of Classroom Size on Teaching Methods

CS is a great factor that has a significant impact on the educational field as a whole and not only on teaching methods, CS importance lies in the teaching strategies that teachers adopt within different class sizes influencing both teaching and learning processes. In smaller classes, selecting learner-centered approaches to teaching is usually effective as the teacher's personalized attention toward each of his learners is easily provided because of their small number, therefore teaching objectives are successfully reached, and learners' engagement in the educational process and productivity increase. Such methods of developing communication competencies and involving interactive activities such as group discussions, debates, role plays, and oral presentations are better implemented in small classes. This will in turn foster the learner's communicative skills, self-confidence, and motivation to learn. Assessment requires a positive educational environment and the latter results from maintaining effective CM, managing the class is often not hard if it is smaller, as a result, SCSs are considered more efficient when assessing learner's needs and strengths, test scores become higher thanks to successful teaching methods that focus on learner achievements and the testing process becomes flexible and uncomplicated to maintain for fewer learners.

Wright et al. (2019) conducted research on active learning and teaching strategies in smaller classes of higher education in the USA, research findings, in general, have shown that faculty members aimed at implementing specific strategies in smaller classes, and these pedagogical strategies focus on enhancing active learning and using interactive activities during the course, when instructing, teachers were able to provide students with more feedback and information to improve their understanding of the course.

In larger classes, on the other hand, challenges that face teachers when instructing can negatively influence the educational process, teaching in LCSs often relies on teacher-centered and lecture-based instruction methods. The effectiveness of the educational process is not solely

related to the teacher's knowledge imparting and presentation of the course, the process rather needs T-S interactions and learner's engagement and participation to increase course understanding and develop communication and critical-thinking skills then achieving learning outcomes. Testing methods are often traditional in LCSs and learner exposure to innovative assessment methods is low for this reason, in Algeria particularly, administrators and instructors often tend to divide the large number of learners into two groups for examining them. In addition, CM in LCSs is generally a hard task and teachers often face challenges in terms of managing behavior, minimizing noise, and increasing learners' concentration, this creates issues that hinder teacher instruction and decrease interest in learning and achieving objectives. In this context, Rouabhia's research (2023) on challenges facing primary school teachers in Blida, Algeria concluded that among the issues that face teachers when instructing EFL in the classroom is the management of large classrooms.

1.5.5 The Impact of Classroom Size on Learner Behavior

Learner behavior is one factor that makes the learning environment effective and CS plays a vital role in either optimizing or reducing the learner's good behavior. In smaller classes, while the T-S interaction increases, the teacher's personalized attention is more provided, learners are enabled to enhance in-class engagement and the teacher can straightforwardly address learners' disruptive behaviors and attitudes. On the opposite, in larger classes, teachers may encounter challenges in interacting with each learner as the attention provided to a large number of learners is limited, as a result, some learners can feel less engaged and motivated to learn, and their shyness level increases due to the inability to speak up and ask questions. Wang & Calvano (2022) concluded from research findings that in smaller classes, teacher's interaction and support toward learners is considered as an academic behavior and influential factor that positively impact learners' behaviors which will in turn contribute to fostering learning experiences compared with larger classes which reduce learners learning satisfaction.

1.5.6 The Impact of Classroom Size on Language Skills Development

EFL education involves teaching and learning listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. However, the development of these skills can be positively or negatively influenced by a significant factor which is the CS.

1.5.6.1 The Impact of CS on Listening Skills Development

Listening skill is an important subject in the EFL field and it is considered the key component of developing communication skills, According to Yusuf (2015), the number of learners in a classroom can be a significant determiner of the learner's degree of listening skill acquisition. Previous educational research has shown that a smaller number of learners in the classroom makes the latter less noisy and learners become less disruptive, therefore learners will focus more on their listening ability, and understanding and interpreting what has been listened to will be increased and improved. Owing to the individualized attention provided in smaller classes, teachers are enabled to develop strategies and activities that seek to improve listening competencies to a small number of learners effectively, integrating technological audio materials in SCSs is recommended for its efficiency in developing both individual and group listening practices. However, in LCSs, it can be considered a challenging task for the teacher when providing feedback on each learner's listening skills progress, in addition, the learner's possibility to listen carefully to audio materials is lower than in smaller classes due to the huge space of the classroom and learners' distractions in some cases. Effective teaching methods of listening skills development necessitate a suitable learning environment that supports classroom dynamics and active participation during the instruction and these two elements can be missed in larger classes harming listening skills development. Despite their negative outcomes on listening skills development, it should be mentioned that LCSs can have a positive impact on learning listening as learners have more exposure to listening to different accents, and listening situations, they can learn from their classmates' misspellings which will enable them to enrich their linguistic backgrounds.

1.5.6.2 The Impact of CS on Speaking Skills Development

Speaking is the core of communication and a skill that requires a suitable learning environment to be successfully instructed, CS plays an essential role in affecting it. Aoumeur (2017) found that CS has significant importance in impacting the teaching processes and learning achievements. Wang & Calvano (2022) stated that the interactions that occur among learners in small classes are more effective in developing communicative skills than in larger ones. In smaller classes, fewer learners have more chances to practice their speaking and teachers will have more opportunities to implement methods that address learners' speaking proficiencies. "Speaking is a skill that deserves attention as the rest of the other skills in a foreign language. Students need to be able to speak with confidence and success and this is their prior aim as the teacher's one" (Zeghdoud, M, 2013, p.24). The teacher's individualized

attention offered to each learner in SCS not only helps him provide feedback on the learner's development but also reflects on learner's self-confidence and motivation to improve communication skills as they feel more comfortable when communicating or expressing thoughts. However in larger classes, teachers may encounter difficulties when providing feedback on learners' speaking abilities, in Zeghdoud's (2013) research, findings showed that learners have lower speaking abilities in LCSs and the latter negatively impact learners' oral performances. The responsibility of managing a large number of learners in a classroom can highly impede the teacher's process of personalizing the attention to each one of the learners consequently, not all learners will have opportunities to engage in speaking activities hindering the teacher's methods of analyzing strengths and needs, as a result, pedagogical strategies of enhancing speaking skills may become challenging thus, leading to lower speaking proficiency levels among learners.

1.5.6.3 The Impact of CS on Reading Skills Development

Reading comprehension skills play a vital role in developing learners' critical thinking skills, the process of reading attentively demands a suitable learning environment. The effect of CS on reading skills development is multifaceted, smaller classes accommodating a smaller number of learners allow the teacher to easily analyze learners' challenges encountering them when reading and successfully select techniques and materials that reinforce learners' reading abilities and increase comprehension. Research findings revealed the positive impact of SCS on learners' reading achievements Costello, (1992). Providing a conducive learning atmosphere is significant when instructing the process of reading, smaller classes usually have fewer distractions helping the individual to increase concentration levels and enhance learning reading. In contrast, when speaking about reading instruction quality toward a large number of learners, uneven reading skills development may occur in larger classes due to teachers having less time to focus on each learner's reading skills needs.

1.5.6.4 The Impact of CS on Writing Skills Development

The last language skill, writing can also be positively or negatively influenced by the CS, findings unveiled that learners' writing skills achievements can be significantly impacted by class size Ogunyemi, (2022). Teachers' personalized attention toward each learner in smaller classes provides feedback on learners' writing strengths and weaknesses, this feedback enables the teacher to select appropriate strategies for addressing challenges associated with writing and

then developing learners' writing skills. Instructing writing in smaller classes by selecting methods of group-work writing projects plays an important role in reinforcing learner's sense of collaborative learning. When it comes to developing writing skills in larger classes, the latter can also have positive effects on writing outcomes as learners are exposed to diverse learner's writing styles consequently their process of passive learning will increase and their writing skills will be developed.

The impact of CS on EFL teaching methods and learners' linguistic outcomes is a topic of academic interest and research for its multifaceted implications, in smaller classes, based on the feedback they provided from the individualized attention towards each learner, teachers are more likely to implement effective approaches to teaching and testing for addressing learners' needs and improving linguistic outcomes, particularly in areas of communicative skills enhancement such as listening and speaking. However, larger classes may engender challenges in terms of individualized attention ultimately affecting the quality of instruction. As a consequence, the need for providing optimal classroom size becomes widely demanded by instructors to enable achieving teaching objectives and enhanced learning outcomes.

1.6 Conclusion

The literature review revealed theoretically the importance of classroom education, the role of learners and teachers in the classroom, and the application of a variety of characteristics that lead to a successful educational process in the classroom. The first chapter emphasized the necessity of EFL education and discussed the major principles of EFL classroom education effectiveness and showed the importance of considering the classroom size as a significant factor affecting positively or negatively teachers' methods, learners' behavior, and linguistic outcomes.

Chapter Two: Research Methodology

2.1 Introduction

This chapter is considered the practical part of the study, it aims to investigate the impact of LCS on the teacher's teaching and testing methods and the learner's behavior, engagement, and learning process at Benyani Benouda Middle School. The study seeks to explore the impact of SCS on the EFL teaching and testing methods and their contribution to the learners' communicative skills development. The chapter encompasses two sections, the first one is concerned with the research design including the nature of the research, its approaches and instruments, and the sample population, while the second section deals with the analysis and discussion of the collected data from the classroom observation and teacher's interview. The researcher will analyze the overall findings to answer and examine the research questions and hypotheses and to make the research objectives persuasive.

2.2 Research Design

The purpose of the research design is to determine and organize the process of exploring the research problem by implementing research methods of data collection that are appropriate to the researcher's objectives behind the study.

The current study employs a qualitative research design to explore the effects of classroom size on EFL educational outcomes, the researcher decided to study the case of fourth-year middle school learners using a classroom observation, a teacher interview was utilized to investigate the impact of a smaller classroom size on teaching methods and learning development.

2.2.1 Nature of Research

Researchers usually conduct diverse types of research depending on their research purposes and objectives. The current research is an exploratory case study conducted to explore the influence of classroom size on EFL teaching and learning processes. This case study aims to analyze how teachers within a large classroom size teach the EFL, interact with their learners, and manage the classroom, and how learners engage, study, and achieve learning objectives.

The case study research seeks to unveil the influence of both small and large classroom sizes on the teacher's instructional methods and learners' behavior and communicative skills development, it also seeks to explore the debate on classroom size and its relationship with the educational processes.

2.2.2 Research Approach

Research approaches differ according to the researcher's thoughts, choices, and purposes behind the study, it is significant as it represents the basis of the whole research methodological process. There are commonly three research approaches qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method, when conducting the current research, the researcher relied on qualitative data collection methods, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the research topic from a qualitative perspective. The implemented approach allows for obtaining a full comprehension of the qualitative aspects of the effects of classroom size on EFL educational outcomes.

2.2.3 Sample Population

The exploration of the classroom size phenomenon drives the researcher to select two populations, teachers and learners within a large classroom size and private school teachers dealing with smaller classroom sizes.

2.2.3.1 Teachers' Profile

The middle school teacher who teaches in the large classroom is female and she was a participant in the teacher's process of classroom observation.

Based on the non-probability sampling method, five private school teachers were interviewed, four females and one male, the aim behind choosing private school teachers is to explore the impact of small classrooms accommodating a small number of learners on their teaching process and the learners' linguistic outcomes. Before interviewing, the researcher ensured that the participants were teaching a small number of learners.

2.2.3.2 Learners' Profile

Forty-four learners participated in the classroom observation, twenty-three females and twenty-one males, they studied the fourth level at "Benyani Benouda" Middle School in Ouled Mimoun Tlemcen, and they were selected purposefully by the researcher i.e. based on a non-probability sampling method to investigate the effect of large classroom sizes on their learning process.

2.2.4 Research Tools

Research tools are a set of methods and techniques utilized by the researcher not only to collect data but also to ensure the validity and reliability of the conducted research, research

instruments rely on two types of sources primary and secondary data sources. In this study, the researcher used two primary data sources, observation and interview.

2.2.4.1 Classroom Observation

Classroom observation is the process of observing, analyzing, and recording classroom activities, dynamics, or teachers' and learners' behaviors inside the classroom, it is a multifaceted instrument of data collection that has multiple types and the researcher uses the one that is appropriate with research aims, it can be formative, summative, structured, unstructured, participant, or non-participant observation, in the current study the researcher involved two types, structured and non-participant observation.

Structured observation involves the use of a checklist for assessing teachers' and learners' behaviors and interactions.

Non-participant observation is a qualitative data method where the observer does not participate in the educational process, rather, observes and analyzes behaviors and interactions that occur in the classroom.

To observe both learners' behaviors and interactions and the teacher's methods of teaching and assessing, the researcher organized two observation sessions in a week each one took one hour and each session was concerned with a specific section, the first section was devoted to learners and the second to teachers.

The first section aimed to observe learners' engagement and learning process during the course, and the second section was about observing how a large and overcrowded classroom affects teacher's methods of instructing and assessing.

2.2.4.2 Teachers' Interview

A teacher's interview is a qualitative data method that aims to gather in-depth data, insights, and perspectives from teachers about diverse aspects, phenomena, or challenges in the context of teaching and learning. It can be structured or semi-structured, in this study the interview was semi-structured.

The semi-structured interview involves aspects of both structured and unstructured interviews, and the purpose behind this interview is to provide rich qualitative data by asking questions to the interviewees with the possibility to go further and ask more in-depth questions.

The semi-structured interview was addressed to private school teachers who deal with small classroom sizes and teach a small number of learners. The interviewer's objective here is to explore teachers' experiences and perceptions of teaching in a small classroom and its impact on their processes of teaching and assessing language skills in addition to investigating learners' communicative skills development within a smaller classroom.

2.3 Data Analysis

2.3.1 Classroom Observation

The classroom observation method was based on a checklist, the latter was divided into two sections, as mentioned before one focused on the learner while the second on the teacher, the two sections encompass thirteen items aimed to be observed in this large classroom size, seven items were dedicated to learners, from these items the observer attempted to observe learners' engagement and interactions with their teacher, it focused on learners' degree of curiosity, seriousness, and concentration inside the classroom, the observer sought to analyze learners' fluency, their ability to speak in EFL and to what extent they engage in the mother tongue, the researcher observed learners' level of disruptive behaviors and their listening skills abilities within a large classroom.

The second session of the observational process was dedicated to the teacher's teaching process and her ability to manage a large number of learners in the classroom, the six items were organized to observe to what extent the teacher could provide individualized attention to each of her forty-four learners and whether she could listen to all learners' participations and inquiries, one of the items was devoted to the analysis of the teacher's strategies for managing the classroom and learners' behaviors, at the end of the session, the teacher pretended to test learners to enable the observer to watch the process of tests distributions and whether there are any attempts for cheating.

2.3.1.1 Section One: Observation of Learners' Behaviors and Learning Process

Item One: learners interact with the teacher when she instructs the course

When entering the classroom, the first thing the researcher observed was the huge number of learners, the teacher began her process of teaching by first greeting her learners and asking them to write the date and the learning objectives on their copybooks, the teacher instructed a listening course, and after the first listening of the material the researcher observed that not all learners interacted with the teacher when she asked questions concerning the topic

listened to, the researcher remarked that some learners sitting at the front were actively interacting and trying to answer teacher's questions, however, the majority of learners sitting at the back did not participate and interact with the teacher effectively, in addition, they showed a lower level of engagement.

Item Two: learners are concentrated and follow the teacher

The researcher observed during the second stage of the listening lesson an uneven level of concentration in the course among the forty-four learners, some learners were processing their active learning effectively, and their level of focus was high as they could directly answer the teacher's questions about the subject, while other learners seemed distracted as the researcher observed them not following carefully, the teacher asked them questions related to the subject listened to and they could not provide clear answers.

Item Three: learners can carefully listen to the audio material

To effectively process the lesson of listening, the teacher integrated an audio recording as authentic material through the use of the school's audio speaker, the teacher tried to take the learners' attention and informed them that they had to listen attentively to the recorded passage then take notes because after she would ask them questions, after the first listening process, some learners sitting at the back claimed that they could not listen carefully to the passage, the teacher increased the sound's volume and turned on the audio recording again, the observer remarked some learners who were talking to each other and not listening very well to the passage, after repeating the audio three times some learners found difficulties when listening to such words.

Item Four: learners acquire effective speaking and communicative skills

After completing the process of listening, the teacher addressed her learners' listening comprehension and started asking the questions, the researcher observed from learners who were participating and responding to the questions that some of them produced spelling and grammatical mistakes, and the teacher corrected their mistakes then asked them to repeat their answers correctly.

Item Five: learners speak in English most of the time

During the observation of student-teacher interactions, it was noted that most learners communicate in their mother tongue, which is Arabic. One learner requested to erase the whiteboard in Arabic, another learner asked for the date to be written on the board in Arabic,

and another learner requested the teacher replay the recording in Arabic. However, the researcher also observed that a few learners made efforts to communicate in English.

Item Six: learners are motivated to learn

When observing the learners' learning process, the researcher attempted to know how a large number of learners inside the classroom can affect their level of excitement and willingness to learn, the observer concluded that the forty-four learners can be divided into two, learners who actively engage in the process, interact with the teacher and tried to understand the audio material, while the other learners appeared unmotivated to learn and showed no interest in comprehending, listening to the audio material, or developing their listening competencies.

Item Seven: learners are disruptive and show misbehavior

During one whole hour of observing learners' behaviors in the classroom, the researcher observed that some learners were disruptive, especially those who were seated at the back, some were talking to each other and some did not look serious about learning, on the other hand, the majority showed active and positive interactions, respect, seriousness, and willingness to learn. The researcher did not detect any kind of learners' misbehavior or disrespectful attitudes towards their teacher.

2.3.1.2 Section Two: Observation of Teacher's Methods of Instruction

Item One: the teacher provides individualized attention to each learner

The researcher organized a second session dedicated to observing the teacher's processes of teaching, testing, classroom, and behavior management. When the teacher was instructing, the observer remarked that she was facing challenges in interacting effectively with all learners, it seemed that the classroom's large size presented a struggle for the teacher as she could not provide individualized attention to each of her forty-four learners. When processing instructional activities, the teacher's limited ability to interact individually with learners could impact their learning experiences.

Item Two: the teacher can answer to all learners' questions

When processing the instructional activities, lots of repeated questions were asked by learners, they were seeking clarifications from their teacher, and the researcher observed that the teacher looked stressed, it appeared that she faced a challenge when she was listening to all

their inquiries, however after listening to them she could clarify ambiguities and answer to their questions.

Item Three: the teacher effectively manages the classroom

The researcher aimed to observe the teacher's classroom management practices and to gain insights into the dynamics of managing a large class size. During the observation, it was apparent that the teacher encountered challenges in managing a substantial number of learners. Besides the difficulties of providing individualized attention, the researcher remarked that the teacher had limited management effectiveness on some learners who were sitting at the back as they performed less engagement level in the learning process and a poor interaction with their teacher.

Item Four: the teacher effectively manages learners' behavior

The observer remarked some behavioral actions from learners during the second session of the observation, these challenges included peer-to-peer discussions and the remarkable disengagement of certain learners from the instructional process, it was remarked that these behaviors negatively affected the learning environment, and the teacher sought to stop these challenges by employing pedagogical strategies, including the use of questions related to the subject matter and the encouragement of learner's participation through whiteboard interactions.

Item Five: The teacher takes time when distributing the test papers

Based on the researcher's investigative research purposes, the teacher pretended to test her learners' comprehension of the lesson at the end of the course, the researcher previously asked the teacher to prepare test papers to explore the effect of a substantial number of learners on the assessment process, it appeared that the teacher took considerable time when distributing test papers, in response, she asked one of her learners to help.

Item Six: the teacher prevents attempts for cheating

After the test distribution, the teacher controlled the classroom to ensure that tests were performed individually and without any attempts of cheating or information sharing, some learners tried to cheat and others wanted to share information, but the teacher could manage the process and avoid test insecurities.

2.3.1.3 Discussion of the Classroom Observation Results

The classroom observation unveiled a significant variation among the forty-four learners' level of engagement and interactions during the course, while some learners actively participate, interact with the teacher, and strive to understand the lesson material, a notable portion appears disinterested and lacks motivation. The teacher employs strategies to engage the learners, such as using authentic audio materials, but not all students respond equally to these efforts. The predominant language of communication among the learners is Arabic, only a few make efforts to communicate in English. The observation found that there were some weaknesses in listening comprehension as some learners struggled to grasp the audio material despite the repeated attempts. Disruptive behaviors including learners talking with each other existed more among learners who were sitting at the back while the majority performed positive interactions, respect, seriousness, and a willingness to learn. Although some active participants made spelling and grammatical errors, the teacher made efficient efforts to correct their errors. Overall, the data illustrates the challenges associated with teaching in a large classroom. Implementing effective classroom management and instructional strategies that address learners' needs and engagement levels within a large classroom size is indispensable.

Findings obtained from the second observation session indicate the existence of notable challenges faced by the teacher in the context of teaching, testing, classroom management, and behavior management within a large classroom setting. The primary research objective was to examine the difficulties encountered by the teacher at the level of engaging with the forty-four learners within the educational process, the large classroom size made individualized attention a challenge for the teacher. During instructional activities, learners' inquiries appeared which made the teacher stressed, the teacher, however, made efforts to answer all learners' questions. Classroom management presented another challenge, certain learners seated at the back were displaying lower engagement levels and reduced interaction with the teacher. Behavioral issues, such as peer-to-peer discussions and disengagement, negatively influenced the learning environment, the teacher dealt with this by using pedagogical strategies. During the assessment process, the teacher consumed time in distributing and organizing test papers due to the large class size therefore she asked for help from a learner to carry on the process. There were attempts for cheating and information sharing, however, the teacher successfully prevented these attempts. In all, the data showed disharmonious dynamics and difficulties in teaching and managing a large classroom, also it highlighted the teacher's resilience in addressing these challenges to ensure an effective teaching and testing process.

2.3.2 Teachers' Interview

A semi-structured online interview was decided to be processed by the researcher with teachers who instruct small classroom sizes and accommodate a smaller number of learners. Through an intensive search of private school teachers and ensuring that they teach a few learners, the researcher interviewed each teacher by using the social media platform "Facebook". The purpose of interviewing private school teachers was to gain insights into their methods of teaching and assessing learners in smaller classrooms, the researcher aims to explore the development of learners' language and communicative skills within a small classroom and understand the teachers' approaches and benefits of teaching these skills to a small number of learners. As previously mentioned, teachers were five, and the interviewer asked each teacher ten questions, these questions were divided into three sections for each section had an objective to be reached, the first section of questions concerned the teaching methods implemented in smaller classrooms, the second aimed to investigate the impact of smaller classes on assessment methods, and the third section of questions concerned the effect of teaching a few learners on their language and communicative development.

2.3.2.1 Section One: The Impact of Small Classrooms on Teaching Methods

Question 01: Can you briefly describe your experience as a teacher in a small classroom size?

Teacher one: "It was good since a small classroom is very suitable for teachers. In such a setting, I can easily hear students' answers and immediately identify those who may need additional help".

Teacher two: "My experience in a small classroom was very much more positive than a larger classroom, I could manage 20 students at a time, and they were all under my eye and my control".

Teacher three said that it was a highly rewarding experience.

Teacher four: "Being a teacher in a small classroom is a good thing. First, I can make sure that the students understand the lesson. Second, all of them can participate without feeling ashamed and can respond to me".

Teacher five: "Small classroom sizes are good if they are equipped with ICTs".

Based on the responses provided, there is a clear consensus among the teachers that they have had positive experiences concerning teaching in small class sizes. The overwhelming

majority of them shared positive experiences, and each teacher presented arguments highlighting the benefits of small classrooms. It is worth noting that one teacher specifically emphasized the impact of ICTs on the overall teaching experience.

Question 02: How does a smaller classroom size influence your ability to manage the classroom effectively?

Teacher one: "Small classroom size influences me positively since I find myself comfortable explaining the lesson in a calm environment".

Teacher two: "In a smaller classroom, teachers can give more individual attention and create a more interactive learning environment".

Teacher three stated that in small groups of learners, teachers can assume that everyone has learned effectively, resulting in a positive experience and increased teacher comfort. However, it should be noted that when classrooms are overcrowded and the class size is small, teachers may encounter challenges in achieving their objectives.

Teacher four: "I find it very easy to convey information to learners. When a student doesn't understand, I repeat to them several times. I give attention to each one and every student has the right to participate".

Teacher five: "A small class size with a small group of pupils is fine, but if the number exceeds 10 pupils, it may affect them because firstly they will not feel at ease and secondly the teacher will not be able to control them".

Both teachers one and three acknowledge that small classroom sizes can positively affect teachers by providing them with a comfortable teaching environment. Additionally, Teacher Two emphasizes the presence of individual attention in such settings, a viewpoint that corresponds to Teacher Four's perspective. Teacher four further emphasizes the seamless flow of information and the importance of every student's participation. However, it is worth noting that two teachers highlight a crucial aspect of small class sizes: if the class size is small while the number of pupils is high, challenges may arise in achieving learning goals and maintaining control. Consequently, in light of the aforementioned perspectives, it can be inferred that these teachers collectively recognize the influence of classroom size on classroom management.

Question 03: In your opinion, how does individualized attention toward each learner affect the teaching process?

Teacher one: "It positively affects the teaching process because I can provide a much more detailed explanation. So the learner will understand quickly and surely".

Teacher two: "Individualized attention can enhance learning by addressing each student's unique needs and fostering a deeper understanding of the material".

Teacher three believed that individualized attention can affect the teaching process by increasing engagement and motivation.

Teacher four: "It does not negatively affect the teaching process".

Teacher five: "It is time-consuming. Therefore, the teacher will not be able to reach the goal of each session".

Based on the teachers' viewpoints regarding the efficacy of personalized attention in the teaching process, it is evident that the majority of teachers recognize the favorable influence of individualized attention on pedagogical practices. One teacher admits that it enables to provision of thorough explanations, contributing to a greater level of comprehension among students. Another teacher stresses the significance of individualized attention in fostering motivation and engagement. Additionally, Teacher Two highlights the importance of meeting students' individual needs through personalized attention. However, it should be noted that one teacher expresses a contrasting viewpoint, suggesting that providing individualized attention can be time-consuming.

Question 04: Can you share examples of how you've tailored your teaching to suit individual students' needs?

Teacher one: "I adopt an eclectic approach, utilizing various materials and techniques to cater to various learning styles, ensuring that I can effectively convey information and facilitate comprehension for each learner".

Teacher two: "I tailored my teaching by breaking down the material into smaller steps and providing extra practice opportunities, enabling each student to grasp concepts and improve their understanding".

Teacher three: "In addition to providing emotional support to engage students, I employ alternative assessment methods such as projects and presentations".

Teacher four: "I use many methods that help the student understand. Sometimes I use games. I don't just focus on grammatical rules, I also try to focus on dialogues, terminology, and texts".

Teacher five: "Since I have got enough time, I may prepare extra activities and tasks".

Analyzing the answers to this question reveals a range of viewpoints and perspectives. The participants' responses shed light on the various ways in which teachers tailor their teaching to accommodate the individual needs of learners. One teacher exemplifies this by incorporating educational games into her lessons. Another teacher adopts a flexible approach by utilizing different materials and resources to cater to students' learning styles. Additionally, one teacher goes the extra mile by providing additional tasks and activities. Lastly, a teacher highlights the use of alternative assessment methods. Thus, it can be said that teachers with small class sizes possess the ability to customize their teaching according to the specific needs of their learners.

Question 05: How does the smaller class size affect the level of interaction between you and your learners?

Teacher one: "Smaller class sizes provide me with a more comfortable atmosphere to connect with and listen to each of my learners".

Teacher two: "A smaller class size can have a significant effect on the level of interaction between me and my pupils as it allows me to give more individualized attention, as well as it can permit each learner to be an active participant".

Teacher three "With fewer students to manage, the teacher can allocate more time and attention to each learner, particularly when they encounter problems in understanding the lesson or answering the exercises".

Teacher four: "The small class size makes teaching very enjoyable, allowing me to connect with each pupil".

Teacher five: "The level of interaction is the main issue because what if this small group of learners is quiet and calm, it will be difficult for the teacher to follow his lesson and hence the interaction is better in the larger classroom. In small class sizes, pupils will find it difficult to express themselves easily and freely, as they find themselves with only a small number of pupils and a teacher".

According to the answers provided above, two teachers acknowledge that having a small classroom size enables them to effectively listen to and connect with each pupil individually. Another teacher emphasizes that small class sizes greatly enhance interaction between the teacher and pupils, as individual attention is easily accessible. Another teacher shares a similar viewpoint, highlighting the positive impact of small class sizes on teacher

student interaction. However, it is important to note that one teacher holds a contrasting perspective, stating that small classes that are quiet may hinder teachers from achieving their goals and negatively affect learners' behavior. Despite this difference of opinion, there is an overall consensus among the teachers that smaller class sizes positively affect the level of interaction between the teacher and learners.

2.3.2.2 Section Two: The Impact of Small Classrooms on Assessment Methods

Question 06: How does teaching in a small classroom setting impact the quality of assessment you can provide?

Teacher one: "Teaching in small a classroom impact my assessment methods positively, for example in assessing speaking, I integrate conversational audio materials, I make my learners listen, then I assess them orally by asking them questions related to the conversation".

Teacher two: "I could have assessments that are more personalized and focused, allowing me to provide detailed feedback and identify areas for improvements".

Teacher three: "It helps me to recognize easier the comprehension level of each of my learners and their learning style".

Teacher four: "I could easily manage the classroom so the testing process will be effective".

Teacher five: "It strongly impacts it, in smaller classes, I can provide my learners with some difficult tasks and extra activities".

The responses from the teachers highlight the advantages of teaching in a small classroom setting in their assessment methods. Teacher one emphasized the benefits of using conversational audio materials to assess speaking skills. According to teacher two, the personalized and focused assessments that small classes provide help in learning enhancement. Teacher three noted the advantage of recognizing learners' comprehension levels and learning styles more easily when assessing in a small class. Teacher four underscored the practical aspect of an easier classroom management in small classes that can enhance the assessment process, teacher five emphasized that challenging learners with more tasks and extra activities in the small number of learners can strongly impact the quality of assessment.

Question 07: Do you find that your assessment methods can differ in larger classes? How?

Teacher one: "In larger classes, I try to implement more methods that manage the learners' behaviors to keep the environment calm".

Teacher two: "Yes my assessment methods can vary between small and larger classrooms. In smaller classrooms, I possess more chances to use flexible assessment strategies such as individual presentations or discussions".

Teacher three: "Yes because in a large classroom, I can ask learners to make assay writings, exams, or multiple-choice questions and I can encourage learners for collaborative learning through group projects".

Teacher four: "No, I do not change my methods of assessment".

Teacher five: "Yes it does in terms of the number of assessments, in smaller classes I often prepare intensive tasks for my learners which I can find inappropriate for a large number of learners".

The majority of teachers' responses agree that assessment methods may differ when teaching larger classes. Teacher one highlighted that implementing methods to manage learner behavior in larger classes can indirectly affect the assessment process. Teacher two acknowledged that in smaller classrooms, there are more opportunities to employ flexible assessment strategies, such as individual presentations or discussions, which may be challenging to implement effectively in larger classrooms. Teacher three mentioned that the use of written assessments and the promotion of collaborative learning through group projects can be more feasible with a large number of learners. Teacher four, on the other hand, preferred following the same assessment approaches in all classroom sizes. According to Teacher five, smaller classes support task intensity which may not be suitable for a larger number of learners.

Question 08: Can you discuss how the classroom size affects your ability to provide timely feedback on tests?

 Teacher one: "It is easy for me to provide a suitable time for assessment".

Teacher two: "I can provide more timely feedback on tests because I will assess fewer students, this allows me to review and grade tests quickly giving students timely feedback to guide their learning".

Teacher three: "The quality of the feedback would differ, smaller classrooms allow the teacher to provide instant feedback to fewer learners unlike in large classes which is going to take time".

Teacher four: "Providing feedback to each learner would not be restricted by time, as a result, the teacher can assess learners using different methods of testing".

Teacher five: "When I distribute tests and then grade them it doesn't take much time".

Teacher one indicated that classroom size does not present a significant challenge in terms of providing suitable timing for assessments. Teacher two highlighted an advantage of teaching in smaller classrooms, as it allows them to provide more timely feedback on tests, with fewer learners to assess, they can review and grade tests quickly. Teacher three pointed out that smaller classrooms enable the teacher to provide instant feedback to fewer learners, whereas larger classes require more time to deliver feedback. Teacher four emphasized the flexibility of the testing methods used with few learners and the fifth teacher mentioned that distributing and grading tests in smaller classrooms does not consume much time.

2.3.2.3 Section Three: The Impact of Small Classrooms on Learners' Communicative Skills Development

Question 09: Does a small classroom influence learners' speaking and communicative skills?

Teacher one: "Yes, even in large classes, if the teacher possesses strong methods of teaching speaking, learners will acquire an effective communicative skill".

Teacher two: "Students can engage in more interactive discussions and receive more individualized attention from me, I could pay attention to each one, so yes I believe that this allows them to gain confidence in speaking".

Teacher three: "Yes, when teaching a small number of learners I can have more chances to address learners' pronunciation and grammatical mistakes".

Teacher four: "They can interact comfortably without feeling shy".

Teacher five: "If there is an effective student-teacher interaction, yes it does".

The responses from the teachers indicate that a small classroom can have a positive influence on learners' speaking and communicative skills, Teacher one emphasized that strong teaching methods for speaking can be effective even in larger classes. Teacher two highlighted the advantages of a small classroom in providing interactive discussions and individualized attention. These factors contribute to learners to gain confidence in speaking. Teacher three points out that teaching a smaller number of learners provides more chances to address pronunciation and grammatical mistakes, which are essential aspects of improving speaking and communication. Teacher four notes that learners can interact more comfortably in a small

classroom, the reduced shyness can help achieve effective communication. Teacher five underscores the importance of interactions in smaller classroom sizes in improving speaking and communicative skills.

Question 10: In your opinion, does a smaller classroom size have a positive impact on your teaching methods and your learners' linguistic development?

Teacher one: "Yes, but I think it is good for the teacher to experience the challenge of teaching in larger classes".

Teacher two: "Yes it does with no doubt".

Teacher three: "Yes, it is a huge difference when teaching in a smaller classroom as it provides more teacher-student interaction".

Teacher four: "Absolutely yes, it does".

Teacher five: "Yes, I think that my methods of teaching the language skills work much more for fewer learners".

Teacher one stated that experiencing the challenge of teaching in larger classes is important. Teacher two believed that smaller classes have a positive impact on their teaching methods and learners' linguistic outcomes. Teacher three also emphasized the positive impact of smaller classes on both teaching methods and linguistic development because according to him it increases teacher-student interaction. Teacher four said that smaller classroom sizes have a positive impact. The fifth teacher agrees that with a smaller number of learners, she acquires more opportunities to enhance teaching methods and linguistic development.

2.3.2.4 Discussion of the Teachers' Interview Results

Findings from the first section highlight teachers' perspectives on the Impact of small classrooms on their Teaching Methods, The majority of teachers emphasized the benefits of small classrooms, including a comfortable teaching environment, individual attention, and the ability to use technology effectively. These teachers' experiences showed the positivity of smaller classrooms in their teaching methods. Teachers admitted the impact of classroom size on classroom management. Smaller classrooms create a positive teaching environment, however, some teachers noted that challenges may arise if the class size is small while the number of learners is high. The second section aimed to explore the effect of small classrooms on assessment methods, results from responses highlighted the benefits of testing in small

classrooms. The teachers' assessment approaches were successful because of the personalized attention and effective classroom management associated with small classrooms, these advantages enabled teachers to provide high-quality assessments. Teachers also acknowledged that assessment methods may differ in larger classes, with an emphasis on behavior management and the use of different assessment strategies to accommodate larger numbers of students. In section three, which investigates the impact of small classrooms on learners' communicative skills development, the teachers agreed that small classroom sizes have a positive influence on learners' speaking and communicative skills. The individualized attention, reduced shyness, and increased teacher-student interaction made these small classrooms a positive educational environment for engagement in discussions and the development of learners' communication skills according to teachers.

2.4 Interpretation and Discussion of the Main Findings

The primary focus of this research was to explore the impact of classroom size on teaching methods and learners' behavior and language outcomes, research findings obtained from the observation and interview emphasized considering the classroom size as a major factor influencing the effectiveness of EFL teaching and learning outcomes either positively or negatively.

In line with the researcher's hypothesis that classroom size can affect the learners' behavior, linguistic development, and the teacher's methods of teaching and testing, the interpretation of the two classroom observation sessions highlights the challenges faced by both learners and the teacher in large classroom size, learners' engagement and learning process varies from some who actively interact with the teacher and others who struggle to interact, some behavioral issues appeared such like peer-to-peer discussions and disinterest for learning which negatively affected the learning environment. The teacher dealing with disruptive behaviors especially with learners sitting at the back represents one significant strategy of large classroom management. One other challenge the teacher encountered when instructing was the inability to provide individualized attention to each of her learners. While observing some learners inquiring and asking multiple questions to their teacher showed their interest and motivation for learning, it also represented a challenge for the teacher as she could not manage and answer all questions. During testing, the large class size revealed some problems in terms of test paper distribution and organization. The teacher sought assistance from a learner to expedite the process and maintain test integrity despite attempts at cheating and information

sharing. Findings concerning the impact of small classrooms on teaching methods from the teacher's interview demonstrated the positive influence of small classrooms on teachers' instructional experiences, the majority agreed on the effectiveness of classroom management and individualized attention to provide more opportunities to tailor more effective teaching methods. Additionally, four teachers agreed on the difference between methods of assessment in large and small classes, and all teachers agreed on one point which is the timely feedback on learners' needs. Finally, teachers agreed that smaller classrooms have a positive impact on teaching and improving their learners' speaking skills, while they emphasized the important role of student-teacher interaction in developing the learners' communicative skills, challenges related to class size and learning goals were also acknowledged.

Overall, the research findings from the classroom observation and the teacher's interview unveiled the strong impact of classroom size on the EFL educational processes.

2.5 Limitations of the Study

Since no research is perfectly conducted and uncriticizable, the researcher acknowledges that some challenges hindered the research process.

- A challenge when processing the classroom observation was observing, analyzing, and taking notes synchronously.
- Another difficulty that appeared when preparing the interview was the inaccessibility of small classroom teachers, therefore the researcher opted for private school teachers.

2.6 Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the research findings and their limitations, the researcher can provide suggestions for gaining insights and searching further concerning this subject matter.

- Future researchers can go further by studying the case of learners' and teachers' processes in small classroom sizes.
- Researchers can implement quantitative or mixed-method approaches to integrate statistical analysis on learners' behaviors or learning developments.
- The researcher can study the impact of classroom size on boosting or reducing learner motivation.
- The researcher can utilize a qualitative approach to acquire an in-depth understanding of effective classroom management in large classroom sizes.

- The researcher can conduct a descriptive case study aimed at researching the role of integrating technological tools in managing overcrowded classrooms.

2.7 Conclusion

This practical part of the study aimed to reveal the methodologies followed by the researcher when utilizing the data-gathering instruments of classroom observation and teacher interviews.

Findings showed that the classroom size is considered a significant determiner of EFL education effectiveness, results from the classroom observation revealed the negative impact of the large classroom size on the learners' behavior and learning outcomes. It showed the challenges encountered by the teacher when maintaining classroom, behavior, and testing management. In contrast, the teachers' interview results illustrated the positive reflection of smaller classroom sizes on teachers' methods of teaching and testing their learners' speaking and communicative competencies.

General Conclusion

EFL education in the classroom is a multifaceted aspect of education that requires a qualified teacher who maintains effective approaches to teaching and testing language development, and a learner who actively interacts and engages in the educational environment, this latter should be positively nurturing teachers and learners as it plays an important role in increasing the motivation to teach and learn. However, one significant factor that strongly impacts the effectiveness of EFL classroom education is the classroom size. The size of classrooms continues to be a topic of debate among researchers. The majority believe that larger classroom sizes hinder the educational process. The current research aimed to explore the effects of classroom sizes on EFL teaching processes, learners' behaviors, and the development of their communicative competencies, therefore, the researcher attempted to exploratively study the case of large-class learners in Benyani Benouda Middle School Ouled Mimoune Tlemcen.

This research work encompasses two chapters, the first part is theoretical and the second is practical. The theoretical part is divided into two sections, the first section is devoted to providing a literature review on the concept of classroom education, and it highlights the characteristics that lead to an effective classroom education including the roles of both the teacher and the learner in the classroom in fostering the teaching and learning outcomes, the second section of the chapter holds the theoretical aspects of EFL education noting EFL in Algeria, in the classroom, it emphasized on the disciplines of EFL education including the teaching and testing approaches and the effective development of the language skills speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The second section highlights the concept of classroom sizes defining the large and small classroom sizes, it cites the advantages and disadvantages associated with each size. The second section places a strong emphasis on the impact of classroom sizes on the teaching and testing methods as well as on the learner's development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The second chapter i.e. the practical part was dedicated to the research methodology conducted in this research, the researcher mentioned the nature and design of the research including the sample population and the data-gathering research instruments. The latter encompasses the classroom observation and the teacher interview conducted by the research for testing the hypothesis made and answering the research questions. The researcher described, analyzed, and interpreted the data obtained from the classroom observation to explore the impact of large classroom size on the teacher's teaching, testing, classroom, and behavior-managing strategies as the learners' interactions, engagement in the educational process, and development of their language skills.

The teacher's interview was dedicated to private school teachers to explore the effect of smaller classrooms on their instructional processes and their learners' communicative skill development.

After analyses and interpretations of findings gathered from both the observation and the interview, the researcher's first-mentioned hypothesis was confirmed. The results obtained from the classroom observation showed that learners in the classroom perform uneven levels of engagement and interactions within the educational process, although some learners showed motivation and interest to learn, others exposed disruptive behavior which the teacher attempted to manage. Although she could prevent cheating and sharing of information, assessment in the large classroom represented a challenge for the teacher as she couldn't distribute test papers and manage time simultaneously. Providing individualized attention to each of the forty-four learners and listening to all their participation and inquiries was another significant challenge for the teacher.

Research results gained from the teacher's interview data indicate that teachers' methods of teaching and assessing learners' communicative competencies in smaller classrooms were efficient, the predominant responses emphasized the fact that a small number of learners represents a benefit in terms of providing individualized attention to each one, however, one teacher confessed that despite the effectiveness of the individualized attention in small classes, it remains time-consuming, teachers agree on the benefits that smaller classes offer, according to their responses, a smaller size enables them to tailor approaches to teaching that address the individual needs, in addition, it allows for more teacher-student interaction inside the class, one teacher in opposite claims that smaller classes cannot provide greater interaction as fewer learners cause a calm environment, according to her response, larger classes allow for more teacher-student interaction. Regarding assessment methods, all teachers agreed on the benefits of smaller classes in processing and managing assessments, they mentioned that it provides them with timely feedback on their learners' needs, and one teacher pointed out that testing and grading will not become time-consuming. All teachers shared the same point about the difference between methods of teaching in smaller and larger settings except one teacher who claimed that her methodology of testing won't change. Touching on communicative skills development in their classes, all teachers shared the same opinion about the positive effect of smaller classes on their learners' speaking skill improvement, they agree that the interaction occurring in the class is the key to succeeding in instructing communicative skills, one teacher claimed that this can be succeeding in teaching such skill can also work in larger classes.

As a consequence, the research results emphasized the significant effects of classroom size on the overall educational process and learners' behaviors inside the classroom. The researcher's argument of exploring the positive and negative effects associated with each classroom size on the teachers' methods of instructing the EFL language and on their assessment methods, as well as learners' language skills development, would probably help administrators and policymakers to rethink about the classroom size to improve the quality of education, it may provide large classroom size teachers with insights for further teacher training for effective methods of classroom and behavior management that seek to optimize the educational environment.

This research remains a humble work as it encountered some challenges when processing the collection of data, the researcher found difficulties in providing careful observation for the classroom, especially during the first session, challenges were in terms of watching learners' and the teacher's behaviors then noting them at the same time. Some obstacles also faced the researcher when attempting to reach smaller classroom-size teachers.

The current research study used a qualitative approach by implementing qualitative research instruments which are the classroom observation and teacher's interview, a future researcher can go further by studying a case of university students utilizing a quantitative approach. As the researcher did not make use of learners' opinions on the positive and negative aspects of large and smaller classroom sizes, another researcher has the opportunity to explore higher school students' perspectives about the diverse implications of classroom size.

To summarise all that has been said, the current research aimed to explore the multifaceted impacts of large and small classroom sizes on the EFL teaching processes and learning development, based on the obtained research findings, the large classroom size can negatively affect the instructional processes and language learning, while smaller classes cause more effective communicative skills development due to the flexible teaching and testing processes that smaller classrooms allow for.

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Appendices

Appendix One:

Classroom Observation Checklist

Observer's Name:

Class Observed:

Session:

Date:

Rating System:

A: Always   B: Sometimes   C: Rarely   D: Never

Section One: Learners' Behavior and Learning Process During the Course	A	B	C	D
1. Learners interact with the teacher when she instructs the course.				
2. Learners are concentrated and follow the teacher.				
3. Learners can carefully listen to the audio material.				
4. Learners acquire effective speaking and communicative skills.				
5. Learners speak in English most of the time.				
6. Learners are motivated to learn.				
7. Learners are disruptive and show misbehavior.				

Comments:

Section Two: Observation of Teacher's Methods of Instruction	A	B	C	D
1. The teacher provides individualized attention to each learner.				
2. The teacher can answer all learners' questions.				
3. The teacher manages effectively the classroom.				
4. The teacher manages learners' behavior effectively.				
5. The teacher takes time when distributing the test papers.				
6. The teacher prevents any attempts of cheating.				

Comments:

Appendix Two:

Teachers' Interview

Dear teachers you are kindly asked to answer the following questions related to research concerning the impact of classroom size on EFL teaching and learning processes, your time and willingness to participate in this interview are truly appreciated.

Q01: Can you briefly describe your experience as a teacher in a small classroom size?

Q02: How does a smaller classroom size influence your ability to manage the classroom effectively?

Q03: In your opinion, how does individualized attention toward each learner affect the teaching process?

Q04: Can you share examples of how you've tailored your teaching to suit individual students' needs?

Q05: How does the smaller class size affect the level of interaction between you and your learners?

Q06: How does teaching in a small classroom setting impact the quality of assessment you can provide?

Q07: Do you find that your assessment methods can differ in larger classes? How?

Q08: Can you discuss how the classroom size affects your ability to provide timely feedback on tests?

Q09: Does a small classroom influence learners' speaking and communicative skills?

Q10: In your opinion, does a smaller classroom size have a positive impact on your teaching methods and your learners' linguistic development?

Summary:

This study aims at exploring the impact of classroom size on EFL teaching and learning processes, based on this, a qualitative approach was implemented by using an exploratory case study was dedicated to Fourth year pupils at benyani Benouda middle school to investigate the effect of teaching and learning in large classroom size, a teacher interview was conducted to gain in depth analysis of the effect of smaller classroom size on the EFL educational process, qualitative findings revealed the negative impact of large classroom size on decreasing the learner's learning outcomes and hindering the teacher's methods of instructions, results showed the positive effect of smaller classrooms on facilitating the process for teachers and enhancing the learner's communicative competencies.

Key Words: EFL, classroom size, teaching methods, learning process.

Résumé

Cette étude vise à explorer l'impact de la taille de classe sur les processus d'enseignement et d'apprentissage de l'anglais en tant que langue étrangère. En utilisant une approche qualitative, une étude de cas exploratoire a été menée impliquant des élèves de quatrième année à l'école moyenne Benyani Benouda. L'étude examine l'impact de la taille de classe sur l'enseignement de l'EFL. Les résultats mettent en évidence les effets néfastes des classes plus grandes, notamment une diminution des résultats des élèves et des limitations dans les méthodes d'enseignement. En revanche, à travers des entretiens avec les enseignants et une analyse qualitative, les classes plus petites sont montrées comme favorisant des processus d'enseignement plus efficaces et améliorant les compétences communicatives des élèves.

Mots Clés : l'anglais en tant que langue étrangère, taille de classe, méthodes d'enseignement, processus d'apprentissage.

الملخص

هذه الدراسة تهدف إلى استكشاف تأثير حجم الفصل الدراسي على عمليات تدريس وتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية باستخدام منهج نوعي، أجريت دراسة حالة استكشافية تضم تلاميذ الصف الرابع في متوسطة بن ياني بن عودة . تناولت الدراسة تقييم تأثير حجم الفصل الدراسي على تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية، نتيجة على هذا، أظهرت النتائج تأثيرات سلبية للفصول الدراسية الأكبر حجمًا، بما في ذلك تقليل نتائج الطلاب وتقييد أساليب التدريس للأستاذ. وعلى الجانب الآخر، من خلال مقابلات مع المعلمين أشارت النتائج إلى التأثير الإيجابي للفصول الأصغر حجمًا في تيسير عمليات التدريس وتعزيز مهارات الاتصال لدى الطلاب.

كلمات مفتاحية: الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية حجم الصف أساليب التدريس عملية التعلم