

TEACHING IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES – SUCCESSES, PROBLEMS, AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

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Is your context like this ...?



Or more like one of these ...?





Photo © Christopher Tribble, 2004



Photo © Christopher Tribble, 2004







Starting with success: Think of and share a successful teaching/learning experience in *your* situation? What made it successful / how could you reproduce this success?

TELC (Teaching English in Large Classes) Network

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TELC Home

Network rationale

Large class size is a challenge faced by many teachers and learners around the world and is a particular issue in many 'developing' countries where teacher recruitment has not kept pace with rapid increases in school enrolments. Investigations of large class size and other challenges involved in teaching in 'difficult circumstances' constitute the focus of our concern as a research network.

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***What
challenges
do teachers
face?***



<http://www.publicdomainpictures.net/view-image.php?image=7018&picture=primary-school-students>
Primary School Students by Peter Griffin

1. I have too much homework to mark. It is impossible to give effective feedback to everyone

2. Not all students participate due to being in a large class.

3. It is difficult to get students' attention to stop them working on a pair or group task.

4. The noise level in my class is too high.

5. Students in a large class often have mixed abilities. It is difficult to cater for students with such different levels and needs.

6. It is difficult to achieve rapport with the students

7. Students' individual responses are difficult to hear.

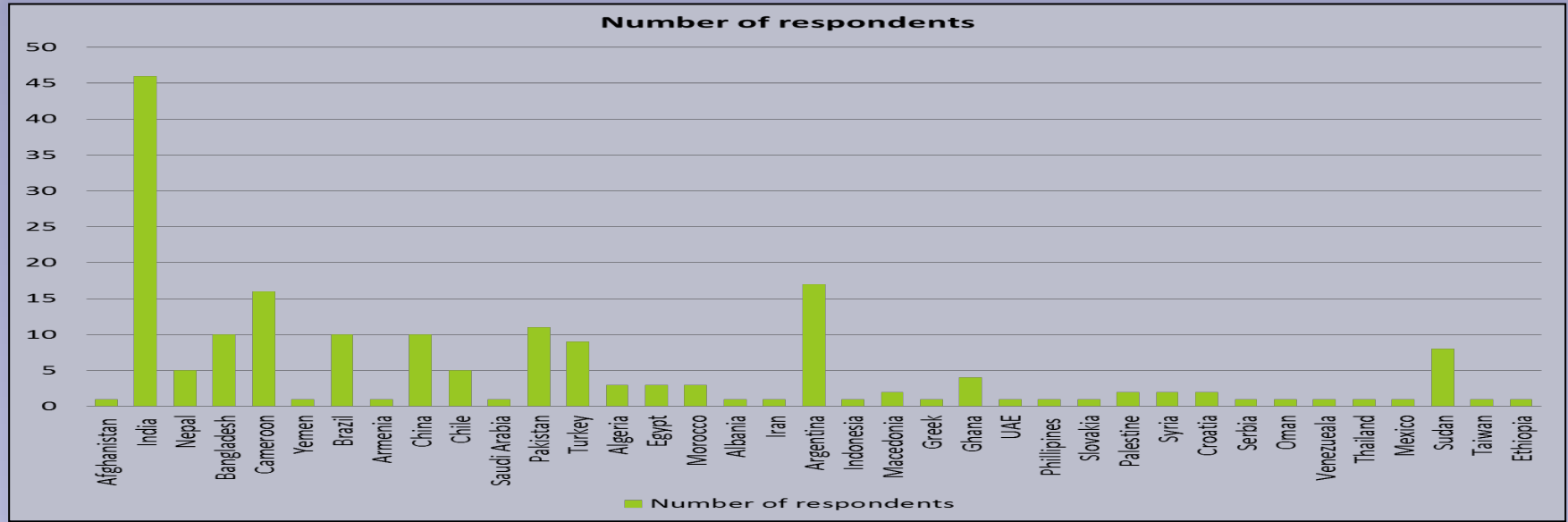
8. It is difficult to promote active learning in large classes when resources such as textbooks, flash cards are limited.

9. It is difficult to know/use students' names in a large class.

10. I am sometimes in despair at my inability to manage a large class.

Questionnaire findings

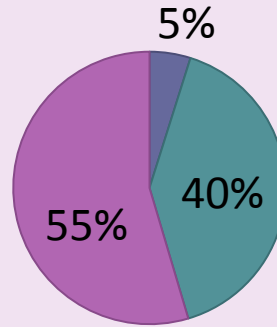
186 respondents in 37 different countries



- 1) India = 46 respondents
- 2) Argentina = 17 respondents
- 3) Cameroon = 16 respondents

Respondents teaching at different levels

■ Primary School ■ Secondary School ■ College/ University



- Primary school -- max. 55 students (Turkey)
- Secondary school – max. 120 students (Cameroon)
- College / University – max. 200 students (Algeria & Nepal)

Challenge #1

“I have too much homework to mark. It is impossible to give effective feedback to everyone.”

Please briefly describe anything you have done which helped to solve this problem.

“I have made buddy groups consisting of 5-6 students each. In each buddy group an ‘above average’ and an ‘average’ student comprises a part of the team . This has been done with the motive of peer learning as well as to have assistance from the team leader who checks the home assignment before it comes to me. It worked well with certain groups but still leaves much to be desired with regard to effective feedback.”

(India)

“I use bright students. They are regarded [as] mentors in the class. As they have well performance in the class and very quick to teachers response, the weak students feel free to take their help.”

(Bangladesh)

“Make students submit group assignments. Divide the students into mixed ability groups of 5-7 students, with one student (the brightest) as mentor. Give small tasks to individual members who can discuss their answers with one other student of their choice, who then submits their work to the mentor, who puts together their group assignment and submits it.”

(India)

Challenge # 3

“It is difficult to get students’ attention to stop them working on a pair or group task.”

Suggestion

Raising your hand – and training students to do the same.

What problems do *you* face, in your circumstances, and how can you seek solutions in other teachers' experience?

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Aims
The TELC research network (set up on the initiative of Dr Fauzia Shamim and Dr Richard Smith in 2008) has the following major aims:

- To share and disseminate good practice relating to teaching in large classes / teaching in otherwise 'under-

Teaching English in Large Classes (TELC)

78 members (2 new) · Invite by Email

Write something...

RECENT POSTS

Krishna Kalyan Dhot
Just a quick thought on large classes. I work in a university affiliated college in Central India. According to the government norms 120 is the limit for each class. Usually about 70+ students attend classes. Before, I came to know about the notion of large class I never noticed it. For me and my colleagues it was just taken for granted like air. Even today, most of my colleagues are not at all aware of large classes. In fact, when there are fewer students in class (on account of bad weather or some festival) we find it really difficult to teach.

Like · Comment · Follow Post · Yesterday at 5:35am

Seen by 11

View 3 more comments

Krishna Kalyan Dhot Thanks a lot Richard for your response. Not sure what my colleagues think but for me a class with fewer students doesn't look like a normal class. I have to talk less louder (which means I have to be consciousness all the time), can't do anything but... See More 9 hours ago · Like

Krishna Kalyan Dhot Just forgot to add a point related to question one. Small number changes the dynamics of classroom routine when one has to operate in traditional transmission mode. And the institutions expect the same from teachers. 9 hours ago · Like

Write a comment...

Find Your Groove · Hani
Pamper Dance Play Transform at the Luxurious Mahaseon Bringham, Discover your GROOVE!

Spicy Affair Restaurant
Like us and claim 20% Discount on your food bill. 428 people like Spicy Affair Restaurant & Bar.

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