

October 5th 2015 IATEFL TTEd SIG webinar:

Teacher Education for Difficult and 'Super-difficult' Circumstances

Amol Padwad, Prem Phyak and Richard Smith

You will find links to all the resources we mention via this page:

<http://telcnet.weebly.com/webinar-5-oct-2015.html>

Introductions

- Us (presenters) and you (participants)
 - Where are you based? (write the name of the country)
 - What do you do? (write '1' for English teacher; '2' for teacher educator; '3' for other)
 - * Our main topic: 'difficult circumstances'

Is your teaching context like this ...?



Photo © Christopher Tribble, 2004

Or is your teaching context more like one of these ...?











Photo © Christopher Tribble, 2004





18/02/2013

Teaching English in 'difficult circumstances'

'over 30 pupils (more usually 40 or even 50), congested on benches [...], accommodated in an unsuitably-shaped room, ill-graded, [...], working in a hot climate' (West 1960: 1)

Teaching in large classes

Teaching in a 'low-resource classroom'

= Teaching in *normal* circumstances for many (the majority of) English teachers around the world

But teacher education often assumes
this ...



Photo © Christopher Tribble, 2004

not this ...

***What
challenges do
teachers face
in large
classes?***



<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

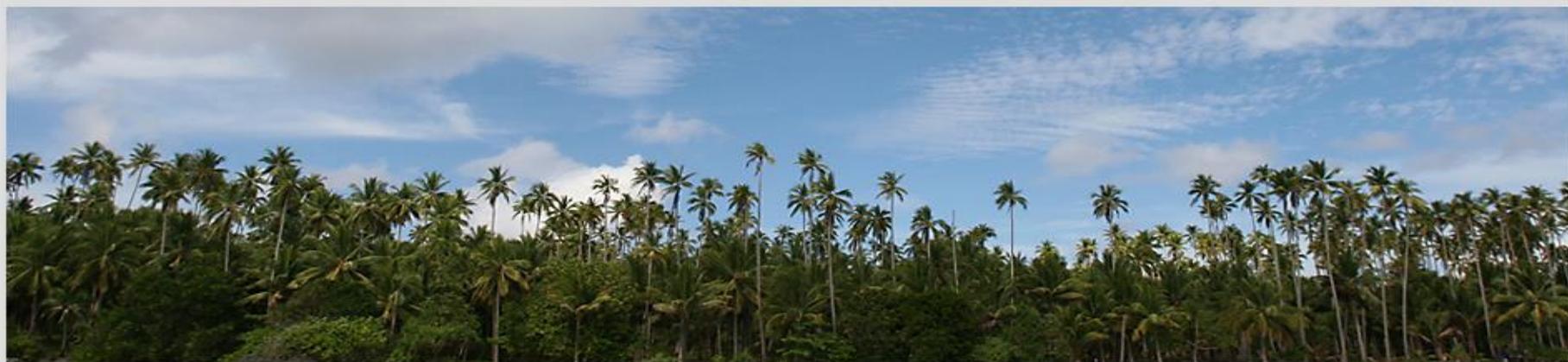
7. Students' individual responses are difficult to hear.

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.

TELC (Teaching English in Large Classes) Network

[HOME](#)[WHO WE ARE](#)[PRESENTATIONS](#)[PUBLICATIONS](#)[PARTICIPATE](#)[CONTACT US](#)[QUESTIONNAIRE](#)

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.

bit.ly/telcnet-home

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HOME WHO WE ARE PRESENTATIONS PUBLICATIONS RESOURCES NETWORKING QUESTIONNAIRE

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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 3:35am

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 Mahabou
Birmingham. Discover
your GROOVE!

Spicy Affair Restaurant
Like us and claim 20%
Discount on your food bill.

Utsource Fashion
The global
Chaii Zhong Xian
Chat (26)

facebook.com/groups/telcgroup/

Ideas for teacher educators

- In TELC we want to contribute to in-service and pre-service teacher education
- Ideas based on ‘bottom-up’ research
- For teacher *development*, not top-down teacher ‘training’
- Building on the experiences teachers bring, and the experiences they can share

Web-page of ideas for teacher educators: www2.warwick.ac.uk/llta/resources/telc/training

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Research Groups » LLTA » Resources » TELC publications » **Training Materials**

Training Materials - Teaching English in Large Classes

Most of the materials on this page were developed by Mais Ajjan, Harry Kuchah and Richard Smith for a group of Malaysian pre-service teacher trainees in January 2012 and by Richard Smith for subsequent workshops and webinars with in-service teachers, especially in Nepal. We are making them freely available here for use by other teacher educators but please let us know and give us feedback and suggestions if you do use them (to R.C.Smith@warwick.ac.uk).

We also encourage you to send in materials of your own for sharing here, to benefit other teacher educators and teacher trainees. Your contribution will be properly acknowledged.

You can access the main [TELC network website](#) and join the [TELC Facebook group](#) if you are interested more broadly in issues of large class teaching in developing/transitional country contexts.

Challenges of large class teaching (option 1.)

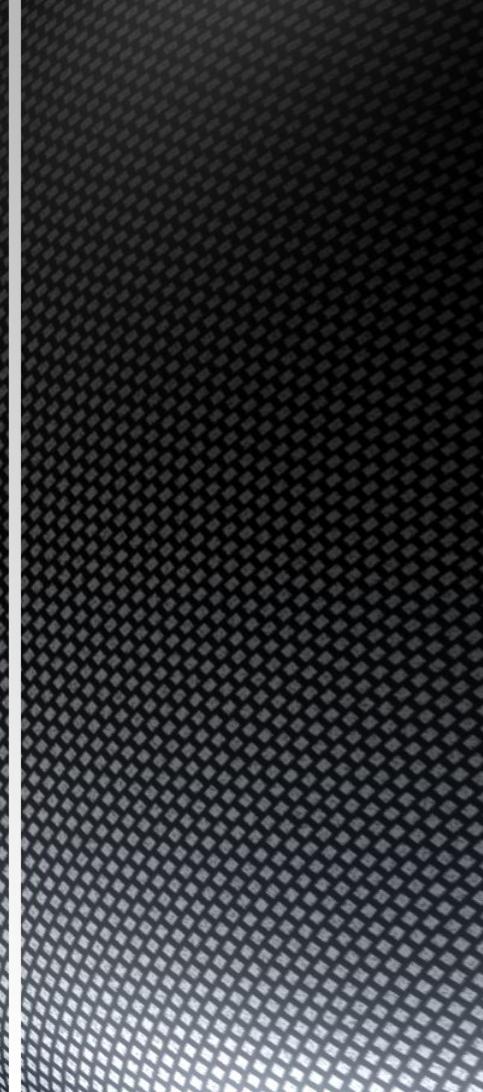
[Initial lecture notes](#) (powerpoint slides for one hour session)

[Challenges of large class teaching according to Hornby School participants \(Shamim et al. 2007\)](#) (handout)

[Challenges of large class teaching as summarized in Watson Todd's 2006 literature review](#) (handout)

Task: Compare the two lists of problems and see which ones are common / which ones are unique to one list. Do you agree with the inclusion of all these as problems? Are there any *advantages* of large class teaching?

Nepal Feb. 2013 NELTA conference (Kathmandu and Janakpur)



Story of Madhav Timilisina

(a teacher in a rural Nepalese secondary school)

“Now, I am a teacher and I have been teaching different subjects for more than a decade. I am facing similar problem as my teachers faced. I have to teach more than sixty students in the same class and I know that some of my friends are teaching more than a hundred.

Issues of multicultural education, quality education, sustainable education etc. are in the debate and World-class education has been a felt need but we have crowded classes with lack of resources. Although I am not satisfied with what I have done to solve my problem, the steps I have taken in the class have at least reduced dropout and repetition to some degree.

Nearly four different ethnic communities are in the catchment area of my school. Students from Newari community speak Newari language as their first language and Paharis, Tamangs and Magars have their own language (except Paharis) and culture. Using some aspects of their language and talking about their feasts and festival in the class, I address their linguistic as well as cultural identity.

As a result, they all feel welcome in the class even if it is crowded. They never feel that teachers do not care about them. It helps me make my students feel supported during my class. I find students working vigorously when I make groups mixing all ethnic identities. [...]

A few talented students generally dominate the large size classes. They can help the teacher to teach effectively. My way of mobilizing them helps me. I place them in different benches and assign them to help other weak students. Another way that I use is to administer Proficiency test before I start the course. According to the score they obtain, they are placed in such a way that the weak students will get helping hands.

It is, of course, a troublesome job for the teacher to have individual care in a large size class. A student hardly gets half a minute within a 40-45 minutes' class.[...] It is not possible to reach to each individual.

To solve this problem, I just go through the answers of one student per bench and ask him to help his friends. I have found peer correction and self-correction techniques useful in such classes.

Large size class is not only a problem or burden of teachers but also an opportunity to explore new techniques and tools.”

Reflection/Discussion question:

Madhav Timilisina says: 'A few talented students generally dominate the large size classes. They can help the teacher to teach effectively. My way of mobilizing them helps me. I place them in different benches and assign them to help other weak students'.

Have *you* found or heard of ways to mobilize the stronger students to help you overcome problems in large classes?'

Nepal (November 2013) – 5-day Hornby Regional School on ‘The Low-Resource Classroom’



Teachers sharing success stories



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?









Fehmina Qaiser's success story

- Q1: Fehmina created simple resources from recycled materials. Have you ever thought about using recycled and natural materials to make resources? What materials could you make and how could you use them?
- Q2: Do you have very poor and disadvantaged students in your classes? How do their needs differ? What additional support do they need to keep them motivated and help them achieve?



Teachers helping one another develop responses to challenges



Joya Senchowa and Babita Hapila: Handling several classes in one room

Q1: Do you work in a multi-class school? If so, how do you manage to maximize learning while maintaining discipline? If not, how do you think you would manage? Which of these tips would you use? Can you suggest any others?

Q2: The difficulties of a multi-class context for teachers are clear but what about the students? Do you think there are any benefits from learning in a multi-class environment?





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ALL INDIA NETWORK OF ENGLISH TEACHERS

An Associate of International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL), UK

AINET Teacher Research Project

"Improving Learning and Learning of English"

Supported by British Council and the Research Centre for English Language Learning (CEL), UK

ORIENTAL COLLEGE





Chilean Champion Teachers

- [Background](#)
- [Our progress](#)
- [FAQs](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Links](#)
- [Final reports](#)



A two-day workshop in January 2013 launched the British Council Chile 'Champion Teachers - Action Research Project',

Here are Photos from this two-day workshop for Chilean secondary school teachers, further information in Spanish, and a video about the project in English.

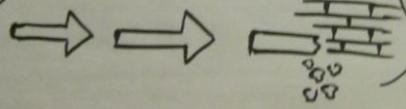
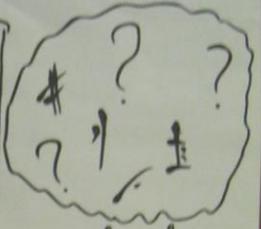
This first iteration of the project ended in January 2014 with another two-day workshop in Santiago. Congratulations to all participating Champion Teachers! Here's a photo



Did you get it?



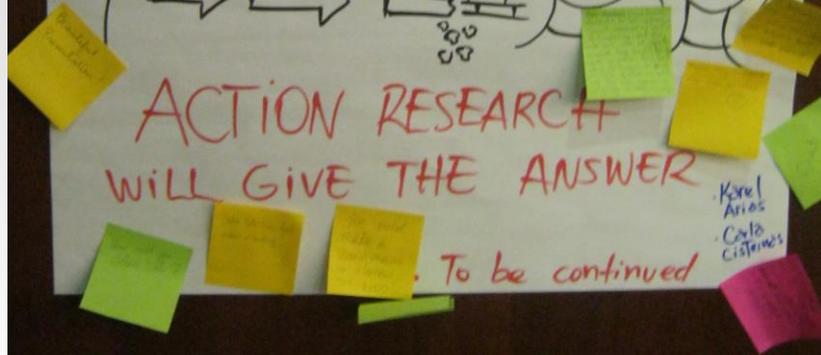
What makes it difficult for our students to understand & speak English?



ACTION RESEARCH
WILL GIVE THE ANSWER

To be continued

Korel
Arias
Carla
Cisternas



How CAN we involve Parents into the English Learning Process of their CHILDREN?

• they don't invest in resources for the English Subject. (to keep a record) [#] at the end of MARCH

• they don't spend time with their kids to do homeworks. (we will survey our students in Spanish)

• Parents don't go to school, when the English teacher ask them to go. (a check list in parents' intern)

at the end of April ☺

Lily Carr
Elizabeth
Rodriguez

‘Super-difficult’ circumstances

Example: post-earthquake Nepal

All photos by Sunil Sharma









Chetan Kumar Timilsena's story



In the devastating earthquake and its aftershocks which struck Nepal at the end of April 2015 thousands of public and private schools collapsed or were damaged. A large number of children became orphans, homeless and also schoolless.

Chetan is an English teacher at Shree Ratna Rajya Higher Secondary School, a large public school in Kathmandu Valley which was heavily damaged in the earthquake and aftershocks. His school was closed for more than a month and finally, when classes could resume, there were many challenges confronting the teachers

Qu 1. What challenges faced the teachers, do you think?

The major challenges included how to manage the classes when so many classrooms were damaged, and how to deal with students' as well as teachers' own fears and other psychological effects. Both teachers and students were still in a state of psychological trauma after the earthquake and its aftershocks. Despite the challenges, the teachers knew it was important for them to seek solutions and find strength to re-establish daily school routines.

Qu. 2 What would you plan to do on the first day back at school, in such a situation?

Chetan himself had an idea that he would share some of his experiences and try to create some fun and friendly activities.

The first day, the school seemed to be like a railway station. Students were at school with parents or guardians and there were not enough classrooms even though only a quarter of the school population was present. There was silence despite the big crowd. To break the silence, the teachers started to share some of their own feelings and experiences with everybody. Chetan shared what he had done during the rescue and relief process. After that, some of the students also started sharing their experiences. This broke the ice due to the similarity between teacher and students' experiences. However, students were so sad that they frequently cried as they spoke.

The teachers did not teach the students' course books or even refer to them but they did engage the students in different activities such as telling stories and jokes, reciting poems, singing songs and leading different games. Everyone was happier after these activities. There was also some teaching in separate groups. Students seemed happy that multiple teachers were teaching at the same time. The teachers ended classes at 1 PM. Then, they had a staff meeting, sharing experiences and discussing how to deal with the students the next day in such a traumatized situation. They decided to try to create an optimistic atmosphere by playing games and sharing jokes.

Qu. 3: How do you think the teachers modified their behaviour or activities for the second day, if at all?

Final words and Q & A

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