



Creative Strategies for Effective English Language Teaching In Large Classes

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ABSTRACT:- Language acquisition requires the focused attention and application of both teachers and learners. This is achievable where contact between teachers and learners is adequate, that is, where the ratio of teachers to learners is appropriate, where effective teaching strategies are employed, and where learning resources are available. Among the many challenges found in the Nigerian educational system, of major concern are the large classes that are evident in all levels of education. The following examines the effect of large class sizes on undergraduate education, and in particular, how the phenomenon impacts on the English language that is a compulsory subject of study for all first year students as well as the medium of instruction. It posits that although certain difficulties are encountered in large classes, there are also opportunities for greater creativity in both teaching and learning. A number of strategies that will ensure students class attendance and attention, as well as other recommendations that will help boost teacher and learner performance are discussed.

I. INTRODUCTION

Large class sizes have become a universal problem found not only in the developing countries of Africa and Asia but also in first world countries such as the United States, Canada and China. It is a modern phenomenon that can be linked to two interrelated trends, firstly, global initiatives for universal education, and secondly, rapid growth in world population. Present worldwide educational initiatives emerged out previous country based ones which highlighted the advantages of an enlightened populace in the development and progress of nations. However, the 1991 Education for All (EFA) initiative that resulted from the World Conference held in Thailand had a more international coverage. In the main, it attempted to establish goals and strategies that will ensure education for everyone and particularly emphasized the importance of basic primary schooling as a major tool for fighting disease and poverty. This global initiative was followed by the World Education Forum in 2000, and more recently, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, the second of which aimed to achieve Universal Primary Education by the year of 2015. The past three or four decades has seen an unprecedented rise in school enrollment in many countries especially developing ones such as Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Pakistan and Nigeria to mention a few. This is because the education of the citizens of a country is commonly seen as being crucial for economic development, social and demographic progress, and for bringing about gender equality. Interestingly, while the initial focus was on ensuring that the next generation had a minimum of basic primary schooling, higher education in colleges of education, polytechnics and universities became the inevitable next step. But demographic pressures arising from the huge increase in school enrollment since the 1970s have exerted certain effects on institutions of higher learning.

A number of researchers (Simon and Pilarski, 1979; Meyer and Ramirez, 1980; Kapur and Crawley, 2008) are convinced that the population explosion that has been witnessed in many countries is severely impacting on the quality of education being received. According to them, as the world population continues to rise, there appears to be a direct correlation between that growth and the difficulties now being encountered in undergraduate education. It is becoming increasingly evident in certain developing countries that as more students choose university education, a huge strain is being placed on systems that are already overtaxed. Resources are stretched as budgets are squeezed and teachers become overburdened and overwhelmed by the demands of large class sizes. Certainly in the case of Nigeria, societal recognition of the impact formal education has on the quality of life as well government efforts to bring about mass education have contributed to

the phenomenon of large class sizes in all levels of education. However, the high demand for education without a corresponding provision of adequate resources such as sufficient numbers of qualified teachers, classroom spaces, and good teaching materials is impacting negatively on the quality of learning. Whereas South Africa can boast of world-class universities, the deficiencies in the Nigerian educational system are highlighted when year after year her institutions perform poorly in global rankings. For example, the Journals Consortium (2015) ranked the University of Ibadan as the best in Nigeria but 8th in Africa and the Federal University of Technology, Minna, (where the writers here teach) as 6th in the country but no Nigerian university made it onto the list of top 1000 world universities. Of course a number of criteria is used to score performance including research output, international collaborations, employment prospects of graduates, and so on, but the also the numbers and the capabilities of the academic staff as well as other faculty resources impact significantly on the quality of education and outputs emanating from it.

The problem of large undergraduate class sizes is especially urgent in a second language situation such as found in Nigeria where English is not only a taught subject but also the language of instruction. Here, class sizes of 80 to 150 learners that are found in most public primary and secondary schools eventually translate into large undergraduate classes. As a result in tertiary institutions where the Use of English course is a compulsory graduation requirement, classes can have 500 to 800 or more students in them. Such large numbers impact on the quality learning achieved and is of particular concern in English language instruction because it impinges directly on the overall educational experience of learners. Therefore, the aim here is to scrutinize the phenomenon depth and to search out possibilities and strategies for creative teaching and learning.

II. WHAT IS A LARGE CLASS?

As mentioned earlier, a worldwide consensus that sees knowledge as the main driver of growth has encouraged increased participation in higher education (Kapur and Crowley, 2008). In line with this, undergraduate education is considered a critical component because it enables individuals develop the capacity, analytical skills, and training necessary for the labour market. Consequently, in Nigeria, the demand for this level of education has led to efforts to provide more university places to the nearly two million students who annually seek admission into universities. But this has resulted in the creation of large classes with attendant problems regarding instructional quality.

Interestingly, according to Hayes (1997), there is no quantitative definition of what constitutes a large class as perceptions vary from context to context. Yet student numbers in a class are significant in the light of the land mark study by Glass and Smith (1998) which strongly endorsed class size as the most important reform likely to produce improvements in academic achievement. The research viewed 80 reports that focused on the relationship between class size and achievement and discovered that as class size decreases, achievement appears to increase. It therefore concluded that in primary school education, more benefits emerge as class size fall below 20 students. Similarly, the Tennessee Project STAR found that students in smaller classes did better than those in large classes throughout the K-3 grades. Whereas in countries like China and Nigeria, a class of 50-100 students or more is merely seen as a large class although it may appear as super large to others. However some researchers have also shown that small class sizes do not necessarily correlate to better student learning (Blatchford, 2003; Benbow et al, 2007). What appears to count is not the size of a class but rather the quality of teaching. Hence

Xu (2007) is of the view that teaching methodology rather than class size is what contributes best to the efficacy of learning. For many researchers the teachers' skill in classroom management is the primary ingredient for success in large classes. Consequently, they agree that teachers who lack the necessary skills and preparation for teaching large classes are a major part of the problem of poor student performance such classes. This is highlighted when a look at teacher training programmes in Nigeria reveal how little attention is given to managing large class sizes resulting in a pervasive sense of discomfort, low morale, motivation, and self esteem among teachers.

A closer look at the factors have contributed to the present phenomenon of large undergraduate classes in Nigeria will reveal that the period 1985-2002 saw a significant increase in student enrollment in sub-Saharan African universities. Figures for undergraduate courses rose from 0.8 to 3 million with Nigeria showing the greatest increase in the region. A populous country with a demographically young population where 63% fall under age of 24, the total enrollment in universities in Nigeria by 2013 stood at 1,252,913 out 1,503,931 who sat entrance examinations. This means that an average of 20, 0504 students were admitted into the 40 federal, 38 state, and 50 private universities approved by National Universities Commission. By 2015, 28 universities had higher student admissions than this average. The largest admission figures come from Lagos State University with a total number of 90,885 students; Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria with 89,760; and University of

Nigeria, Nsukka with 88,177 to mention a few (VNTI, 2013). When compared to average enrollment figures of 11,000 in universities in the United States (Yale - 12,336 in 2012, and Stanford University - 15877 in 2013), the Nigerian situation with a student /teacher ratio 1:363 is demonstrably one of the most severely impacted in terms least contact between teachers and learners.

The Use of English courses that are compulsory graduation requirements in all Nigerian universities provide a pertinent example of large undergraduate classes. With the population of first year students numbering anything from 3000 to 7000 depending on the university, class sizes of more than 300 are to be expected. Hence many English language teachers, especially those who recently joined the profession find handling such large classes a daunting experience. It is interesting that while the decline in the quality of undergraduate education is often blamed on high student population, attempts to manage student numbers are often met with resistance (Okoji, NUC). An example is the recent situation in Nigeria where the number of potential students who sat for the 2015 Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) entrance examinations into the University of Lagos far outstripped the carrying capacity of the institution. Consequently a decision was made to increase the required admission scores from 180 to 250 but a huge outcry and legal battles immediately followed this action (Vanguard Newspaper, 23/07/2015).

Yet most of the time overcrowded classes create negative feelings in the teachers who have to cope with the challenges of teaching large numbers because as Kennedy and Kennedy (1996) point out, it is difficult to control what happens when the size of a group passes a certain number. Similarly, Harmer (2000) observes that many teachers find it difficult to organize dynamic and creative learning sessions; to reach students sitting at the back of a large class; or to pay attention to the needs of individual learners. Ur (1996) puts it more succinctly when he says that a large class is simply one with more students than a university teacher would prefer to manage or that available resources can support. Whether something feels like a large class or not is mainly dependent on three factors, the perception of the teacher, his skills as a teacher, the attitudes of the students and the availability educational resources.

While many universities in the West have similarly large classes of 300-500 undergraduates, they are better equipped to handle the demands of large class sizes because of the resources they have at their disposal. For example, in 2005, Yale University, USA was in the enviable position of being able to utilize 1.04 billion dollars for 10,618 students, meaning an expenditure of 97,947 dollars per student. It is therefore hardly surprising that it is able to retain its status as one of the premier institutions of learning in the world. In comparison, expenditure per student in Nigeria falls far below UNICEF recommended 15-20 percent of government budgetary allocation. In Nigeria, education is severely under-financed with only about 5-7 percent of the national budget reserved for education in recent years.

Perhaps because in China large classes are the rule rather than the exception, researchers from there have written more positively about it than those from other parts of the world. Hence Zhichang (2001) is of the opinion that more students actually mean more ideas and more possibilities and that the more the students, the more lively, more unified and motivated the class. Qi and Wang (2009) similarly claim that large classes encourage creativity, innovation, and provide more opportunities for co-students' interaction and cooperation. In the same vein, Nolasco and Arthur (1991), Ur (1996) and Hess (2001) argue that large classes provide richer human resources and greater opportunities for creativity than smaller classes. Thus knowing how to take advantage of the possibilities offered by a large diverse group is an important task for the teacher.

However based on the views and complaints of many teachers, Hayes (1997) classifies the problems of teaching large classes into five categories: 1) discomfort caused by physical constraints; 2) control problems (discipline aspects); 3) lack of individual attention; 4) difficulty in evaluation; 5) problems of learning effectiveness. On the other hand, based on experience of the challenges in China, Zhang (2002) lists the problems as 1) Discipline problems; 2) Effective learning; and 3) Weariness, observations which agree with those made by Yu (2004) who identifies the problems in similar terms. All of these views are summarized by Locastro (2001) who broadly categorizes the problems of teaching large classes into those that pedagogical, those that are affective in nature, and those that are management related. This latter categorization is adopted here to explore in more detail adaptive strategies that will enable teachers to cope with the challenges that accompany large class sizes.

III. PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES

Ideally it is expected that English as Second Language classes would be fairly small but this is far from the case in the undergraduate English language course in Nigeria. Aimed at improving students' competence in the use of English, priority is given to mastering reading and writing skills that are useful for critical thinking

and that enhance high level problem solving capabilities. But the general perception of both students and teachers is that large class sizes offer less than satisfactory learning experience and this is further heightened because the instruction is in a second language. However, while large language classes certainly demand more effort from the teacher than smaller ones, they are not always a pedagogical disaster especially if teachers adopt strategies that help them organize and teach more effectively and efficiently. Thus Wang (2000) suggests that to manage the challenges of teaching English reading to a large class, efforts should focus on strengthening communication and cooperation between teachers and learners, enhancing creative teaching, organizing learner-centered activities, improving the management of students sitting at the back, and applying multimedia instruction efficiently.

In order to achieve teaching effectiveness, it is important to adopt a number of practical measures (Pasigna, 1997). The first is establish rules of acceptable group behavior such as how to speak in a large group, how to take turns, and how to work together Routine activities such as how to enter and leave the classroom; when classes start and end; how to assist in handing out papers and other materials; how to pass materials to the front to the teacher; and how to keep the classroom tidy will need to be agreed at the start of a class. When such basic tasks are performed efficiently, more time can then be spent on instruction and assignments. Another important factor to take into account is the relationship between the teacher and the students as this can either facilitate or hinder learning. As large groups can be intimidating the teacher will need to win students' respect by projecting confidence and a good knowledge of his subject. A competent teacher will get to know the students by collecting information from personal portfolios, making an effort to learn a few names or simply ask students to introduce themselves when answering questions in class. The aim should be to handle a class so that it does not resemble a mob but rather a group with a common cause. Creating a small-class atmosphere in a large class setting will help overcome issues of anonymity and distance that can arise in such a situation. This can be achieved when the teacher endeavors to find ways of getting closer to the students such as by moving around in the space available, walking toward students while speaking and randomly making eye contact with individual students. The class atmosphere should be one of warmth, trust, cooperation, mutual support and respect (Xu, 2007). A good rapport will be established if the teacher creates an unthreatening learning environment by communicating well, obtaining and giving regular feedback (Pu, 2008). As a large class structure imposes some constraints on accessibility to students, the teacher will need to be enthusiastic and expressive when lecturing in order to connect with a class of 300 or more students. Done effectively, large classes can have an energy not found elsewhere.

From the onset, it is vital that students' engagement with the material is facilitated within the first fifteen to twenty minutes of a class, hence the need to segment lectures and to organize topics in a sequence that makes sense to students. Clear verbal and written signals need to be used when introducing important information, key concepts, for emphasis, or when the topic is changed. Non-stop lecturing should be avoided, instead there is need to vary the style of delivery in order to sustain learners' interest. The teacher's instructional methodology can lecture based as since students tend to listen to teachers and wait to be asked to speak. After some practice, each teacher develops a personal style of imparting information. Discussing and sharing of classroom management techniques with other teachers can also enhance a teacher's methodology (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

While time and resources may be limited, the teacher can nonetheless endeavor to practice lessons, patterns, or new vocabulary thoroughly to ensure that the whole class really understands what is going on. The active participation of students during the course of a lecture can be encouraged by letting them work out information and answer questions that are inserted periodically. Questioning during the lesson is important device to keep learners involved and busy but they should be asked before a student is appointed to answer so that everyone listens and is at alert for the answer. Questions that have multiple or personal answers also encourage students to practice their language skills. The language teacher should avoid general questions such as "Is everything clear?" And instead, be more specific and ask "Can anyone tell me the main ideas that we have talked about today?" Similarly "educated guess" questions or occasions when students can give group responses, for example, "hands up if you think the answer is x or y" are other ways of inviting students' participation. Group work is a useful class room strategy especially for the peer interaction it provides. It may take little organization but it helps the teacher ensure that all the students are engaged in the tasks set. The groups could discuss the answer(s) and then present them to the class. If hand outs or course packs are available, then lecture hours should not be spent simply going over all the derivations or explanations. Rather, the time could be used to go over difficult points, to provide additional examples, fill in some of the information gaps or answer questions. Also, the teacher needs to be mindful of students' abilities and limitations because in any classroom, there are different ability levels however these can be accommodated through remediation and/or

enrichment activities. Such activities can be done outside the class hour especially if the teacher can provide individual feedback by means of electronic communication devices such as email or through a web page.

It is also important to establish a clear connection between lecture materials and the assessment process. Undoubtedly it is difficult and time consuming to grade the work of 300 or more students, so instead of accumulating a huge bundle of assignments, a combination of easy- to- grade multiple choice assignments that test basic knowledge could be given. The important task is to ensure that learners are given regular feedback on their performance instead of delaying to do so indefinitely. Labour intensive assessments such as essays or project writing which demonstrate students' technical writing abilities are best spread over the course of a semester. Knowing how to take advantage of the possibilities offered by a large diverse group is an important skill that teachers have to learn but in doing so, it is imperative that students' views and attitudes which influence how they approach learning are also taken into consideration when planning to teach a large class.

IV. AFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

Dornyei (2001) and Rossiter (2003) both assert that language learning is enhanced when attention is paid to affective teaching and learning strategies especially those that endeavor to increase students' linguistic self-confidence and improve their self-efficacy, that is, their ability to cope with specific tasks. Students' attitudes and ways of thinking can deeply influence language acquisition because internal barriers are erected when learners are poorly motivated, bored, or anxious. Hence Stevick (1980) posits that "...language learning success depends less on materials, techniques, and linguistic analyses, and more on what goes on inside and between people in the classroom" (p4). For instance, anxiety about their academic work may make some students strive harder but in other cases it could lead less confident students to avoid classes altogether. Attention therefore needs to be given to the thoughts and behaviors both positive and negative that learners demonstrate when they acquire knowledge.

For Maslow (1971), cognitive and aesthetic goals cannot be achieved unless human requirements such as the need for belonging, the need for self esteem as well as the need for safety and security are satisfied. A pertinent example is the pastoral care required by first year university students who have to deal with personal lifestyle changes that often accompany higher education. The impersonal atmosphere of large classes often gives this group of students the impression that no one cares how they perform. These concerns are further highlighted in the case of Nigerian students whose sense of security in recent times has been severely threatened by the violent actions of the Boko Haram insurgents against educational institutions. In such a situation, the quality of learning is compromised when there are no assurances of support or even of basic safety.

However, students are more motivated when they are made to feel part of a learning community. That is, when they see learning as a team effort rather than as a competitive solo race they are engaged in. Therefore, classes that employ informal or formal collaborative groups to answer in-class assignments or to discuss materials covered in class are more likely to foster motivation. They also bring with them diverse talents and ways of learning that can be utilized to achieve learning goals. Indeed, active learning does not involve students simply listening to a teacher holding forth or memorizing set answers but occurs when they are given opportunities to talk about a topic, to interpret it, relate it to past experiences or apply it to their own lives. Sharing ideas and responding to the reactions of others serves to improve their thinking and deepen their understanding. The use of supplemental illustrations or examples relevant to students' lives particularly those they may not be exposed to outside the class will similarly enhance the learning experience (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

While asking questions in class may mean less information is covered in the duration, it is in fact more likely to result in better understanding. A step in the right direction is for teachers to ask questions that require higher level thinking skills as they encourage students to think more deeply. But a few minutes should be allowed for the process to take place before individual students are invited to share their conclusions with the class. When questions are directed at those who show a lack of interest or engaged in other things, it draws them back into the lesson. Alternatively, students could be asked to summarize in a few minutes the main points of a lecture or to note points that need elaboration. Scaffolding strategies that build complex knowledge upon a foundation of basic information serves to ease students into new or more demanding areas of learning. Variety, creativity, even controversy in lessons will also help to retain students' interest. Indeed the teacher who has a flare of the theatrical as well as the ability to employ appropriate humour is often appreciated by students. Further learning outside the classroom can be encouraged by giving students a topic to think about for the next class. In addition, visual aids such as films, overheads, computer graphics, pictures and even guest lecturers can help enhance the learning experience (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

Much of the effort that is required to ensure that effective learning takes place rests with the teacher but it is not always possible to satisfy the needs of all the students who may have different interests, personalities, capabilities, or indeed to provide equal opportunities for them to participate and practice. As Yu (2004) points out, sometimes the students are themselves part of the problem because of poor preparation, lack of motivation, or a lack of accountability in their class performance. They therefore need to be encouraged to set their own learning goals, develop specific study objectives, and keep weekly study dairies that enable them track how they use their study time. Reinforcement and review of topics as well as prompt feedback from the teacher helps students focus on their individual performance and to trace what they do or do not know. Test- taking tips can be reviewed in class by making use of old question papers and students could be urged to seek help. Similarly, regular reminders that peers have achieved success on similar assignments will hopefully encourage most students to do their best.

Certainly a large class size makes it easier for students to challenge the teacher's authority which they do in subtle, and sometimes, obvious ways because of the anonymity it affords (Nolasco and Albert, 1991). However, employing positive discipline such as praising good behavior and ignoring negative ones when possible can help develop students conduct along more appropriate lines. Establishing a code of behaviour such as instituting a ban on phone usage while in class and insisting that students attract attention by raising their hands once the lesson is in progress can further enable the teacher minimize interruptions and maintain discipline. Another affective strategy is to make class attendance count towards the students' final grade by convincing them that their examination success depends on attendance and that grades will be lowered according to the number of lectures missed. Most important off all is never to underestimate students' potential, but to set high expectations for all whether those who are bright and motivated or those who are unwilling to exert themselves.

V. EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

It is generally agreed that education is an investment for the future but in many developing countries like Nigeria, funding for undergraduate study is low leading to extreme pressures being exerted on human capital as well as on other educational resources. Yet if the goal is to achieve world class standards in the academic performance then there is need to substantially improve institutional conditions for both teachers and students in large classes. Hence the urgency of having well trained teachers, adequate structures, curricular alignment, improved instructional materials and innovative technologies that enhance teaching and learning cannot be overemphasized when planning education management strategies.

The classroom is the most fundamental infrastructure of any educational institution but as Hanushek (1995) observes, the biggest problem posed by high population in less developed countries is the effect additional persons appear place on their physical capital. Certainly in most universities in Nigeria, the physical context in which learning takes place is severely inadequate. Instead of classrooms or lecture halls that are properly furnished and that facilitate innovative technology-aided teaching, classes are frequently held in improvised open air arenas, school cafeterias, and uncompleted buildings. Oribor (2008) further highlights the conditions when he states that fewer than half of universities use public address systems in overcrowded lecture halls and when available the epileptic power supply makes them redundant. Both in terms of the quality and quantity, a lot needs to be done to tackle the problem of inadequate learning resources such as classroom space, desks, textbooks and other materials.

Indeed any attempt to improve learning will have to first take into account the availability of well trained teachers. In Nigeria, the rapid expansion in the demand for undergraduate studies has led to a considerable shortage of teachers who are the first resource in a classroom. A Needs Assessment Committee set up in 2012 by the Nigerian government found a worrying disparity in the ratio of teaching staff to student ranging from 1:100 to 1: 144 depending on university. For the Use of English courses, the ratio can rise up to 1:500 or more in some universities. Okojie (2013) and Oribor (2008), agree that the recruitment of enough academics to teach a rapidly growing student population has become a perennial problem in Nigerian universities. In many institutions this staffing crisis has led to a heavy reliance on part-time and under qualified teachers. However research has demonstrated the impact of teacher effectiveness on student achievement pointing to the necessity of recruiting teachers with the highest competencies in both knowledge and skills (Heneman and Milaowski, 2007). Education management strategies therefore need to focus on the recruitment, retention, development, and proper remuneration of talented teachers in adequate numbers to meet demand.

After the recruitment of talented teaching staff, next important step is to manage them in such ways as to support quality learning because effective undergraduate education cannot simply rely on the high

expectations of those charged with managing higher education nor on sporadic acts of good practice by some teachers. Rather, the selection and placement of well trained teachers who are given opportunities for further professional development especially in curriculum and classroom practice is necessary for improving standards in academic performance (Barret, 2007). Teaching needs to be professionally managed around a well-designed educational improvement strategy so that those concerned can turn their attention to instructional practices that boost student learning (Odden and Kelly, 2008). Unfortunately, in Nigeria, recruitment and training systems appear to have broken down and often money is spent professional trainings with no traceable impact on class instruction or student learning.

Furthermore, the shortage of teaching talent in a core subject like English is exacerbated by a low salary system, one that does not allow pay to vary depending on work load nor that is linked to the gains made in student learning. In Nigeria as in other countries, there is no policy in place to ensure high quality teaching in large classes. In spite of the challenges of large class sizes, there is no reward structure associated with such an important task. Twenty five years of teaching large classes of over 300 is measured using the same scale developed for those teaching a few dozen majors yet not many teachers can cope well with the demands of large numbers in a learning situation. A recent attempt in Nigeria to address what became known as the “excess work load allowances” was poorly managed and ended up causing widespread resentment among academic staff. Yet it is important for the sake of quality education that those who bring creative and innovative ideas to bear, who have learnt to personalize classes of 500 students, who manage student behavior well and who strive to make their classes active should be adequately remunerated for their efforts before the system lose them to other sectors of employment or through brain drain to other countries.

VI. CONCLUSION

In the past century, university education around the world has transformed from being the preserve of the wealthiest and privileged groups into a huge industry enrolling millions of students. The rising demand for this level of education has become a challenge for countries like Nigeria where even a high unemployment rate does not appear to undermine the desire for higher education. Consequently, making provision for adequate human and infrastructural resources that are commensurate with the people’s desire for and the government’s intention to provide education has become a matter of urgency.

While a large class is a relative concept, such class sizes raise questions concerning issues of quantity and quality that do not lend themselves to easy solutions. But certain steps can be taken to manage the learning process more effectively. For one, in Nigeria, resources that are often diverted to other things need to be re-allocated to education because more than anything else this is the best investment for the country’s future. Then there is the urgent need to find creative and innovative ways of handling large classes which point to the necessity of scrutinizing the teacher training that is provided. Most of the teaching methods presently in use have not come out of deliberate efforts designed to address the needs of large classes but rather have been stumbled upon by those confronted by such classes. Hence as long as the English language remains the language of instruction as well as a compulsory subject for all students, appropriate organizational and teaching strategies that can impact positively on the learning experience need to be designed and embraced by those who managed institutions and those who teach because the phenomenon of large classes is not likely to go away any time soon.

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