



نصريح شرعي

خاص بالالتزام بقواعد النزاهة العلمية

(طبقاً لقرار الوزاري رقم 1028 المؤرخ في 27 ديسمبر 2020 الذي يحدد القواعد المتعلقة بأوقاف من السرقة العلمية ومكافحة الغش).

أنا المضي أسفله،

الطالب (ة):

231220142355

رقم التسجيل:

بلال راينا

ب. سليمان والصادرة بتاريخ: 2022/03/03 المحال (ة) لبطاقة التعرف الوطنية رقم: 401103888

المسجل بكلية الآداب واللغات / قسم اللغة الانجليزية

تخصص: تعليمية ولغات تطبيقية

والمكلف (ة) بإنجاز مذكرة ماستر الموسومة بـ:

Challenges in Teaching Literacy Skills Within Overcrowded Classrooms :
Case Study of First-Year Pupils at Mohamed Khider Middle School,
Bouira .
أصبح بشرى أن التزم بمراجعة المعايير العلمية والمنهجية والنزاهة الأكاديمية المطلوبة في إنجاز

البحث المذكور أعلاه، وفق ما ينص عليه القرار رقم 1082 المؤرخ في 27 ديسمبر 2020 م.

رأي الإدارة بعد التدقيق

نسبة الانتحال والتسابة: 8,1%

القرار:



غير مقبول



مقبول

مفوض القسم

جامعة البويرة
قسم اللغة
الانجليزية
عثمان الهام



نصير شرف

ماض بالالتزام بفراغ التحاق العلمية

(طبقا لقرار الترميم رقم 1028 المؤرخ في 27 ديسمبر 2020 الذي يحدد القواعد المتعلقة بالقبول في السنة الأولى من الدراسة العلمية ويحدد فيها)

أنا الممضي أسفله

الطالب (ة):

الموسوي زيارع جيتلين رقم التسجيل: 2307 2043949

الروية - الحزائر - والصادرة بتاريخ: 2022.04.16 الحامل (ة) لبطاقة التعرف الوطنية رقم: 401451633

المسجل بكلية الآداب واللغات / قسم اللغة الإنجليزية

تخصص: تعليمية وفات تطبيعية

والمكلفة (ة) بالتحايز مذكرة ماستر الموسومة ب: Challenges in Teaching Listening Skills within Overcrowded Classrooms - Case Study of First-Year Pupils at Mohamed Khider Middle School, Bouira.

أصبح بشري في أن الترميم بمراعاة المعايير العلمية والمنهجية والنزاهة الأكاديمية المطلوبة في التحايز

البحث المذكور أعلاه، وفق ما ينص عليه القرار رقم 1082 المؤرخ في 27 ديسمبر 2020 م.

رأي الإدارة بعد التدقيق

نسبة الانتعال والتسابة: 8,1%

القرار:

☐ غير مقبول

☒ مقبول

رئيس القسم

جامعة البويرة
قسم اللغة الإنجليزية
الانجليزية
كلية الآداب واللغات
د/ عثمانني إلهام

الجمهورية الجزائرية الديمقراطية الشعبية
République Algérienne Démocratique et Populaire

Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur
et de la Recherche Scientifique

Université Akli Mohand Oulhadj - Bouira -
X·OV·EX ·KIE Γ·X·IA ·IX·X - X·OE·O·t -

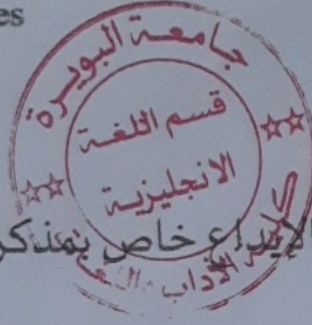


وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي
جامعة أكلي محمد أولحاج
- البويرة -

Faculté des Lettres et des Langues

البويرة في: 09/06/2025

كلية الآداب واللغات
قسم اللغة الانجليزية



إذن بالإيداع خاص بتمنكرة الماستر

أنا الممضي أسفله الأستاذ(ة) المشرف(ة) قاسمي الشدياء

أصرح بأنني قد منحت الإذن بالطبع للطالب(ة):

- 1- بلال رانيب
- 2- بوزيان حنان

عنوان المذكرة: Challenges in Teaching Listening Skills

within Overcrowded Classrooms: Case Study

of First-Year Pupils at Mohamed Khider Middle School,
Bouira

التخصص: تعليمات ولغات

اسم ولقب الأستاذ(ة) المشرف(ة)

قاسمي الشدياء



ID: lteaw5-194881

Rapport d'analyse de la similarité textuelle

- Nom du document: **BELAL Ranya and BOUZIANE Hani master thesis.pdf**
- Soumis par: **BOUDALIA Rachida** Enseignant
- Date de soumission: **2025-06-07**

8.1%

Taux global de similarité

- 8.1% Similarité Forte
- 0.0% Exclu manuellement

186

Nombre de sources

145 sources internet
41 sources Thèses-Algérie
0 sources dépôt privé

59

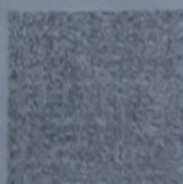
Passages surlignés

21020 mots
153317 caractères
1.2% de citations

Ce document est un rapport d'analyse et de détection de similarité textuelle qui peut fournir des preuves pour l'établissement d'un rapport de plagiat. Il revient à l'examineur, l'encadrant ou bien au comité déontologique de l'université ou de l'école d'émettre un avis quant au statut de plagiat du document analysé.

• Consultez l'arrêté N° 1082 du 27 Décembre 2020 fixant les règles relatives à la prévention et la lutte contre le plagiat pour en savoir plus concernant ce qui est considéré comme étant un acte de plagiat, les procédures ainsi que les sanctions.

Signature d'intégrité



Cachet et Signature



Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

University of Akli Mouhand Oulhadj, Bouira

Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages

Department of English Language and Literature



**Challenges in Teaching Listening Skills within
Overcrowded Classrooms: Case Study of First-Year Pupils
at Mohamed Khider Middle School, Bouira.**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature - University
of Bouira – in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirement of Master's Degree in Didactics
and Applied Languages**

Candidates

Ranya BELAL

Hanen BOUZIANE

Supervisor

Mrs. Chaima KACIMI

Board of Examiners

Mrs. Nadia MESSAOUDI	MAB	University of Bouira	President
Mrs. Chaima KACIMI	MAA	University of Bouira	Supervisor
Dr. Amel BOUAKAZ	MCB	University of Bouira	Examiner

Academic Year

2024/2025

Dedication

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.
I start by thanking the Almighty for giving me the strength, patience, and guidance to complete
this work.

To my beloved husband, Ahmed, whose unconditional support, patience, and belief in me
motivated each step of this journey. Without his constant encouragement, this achievement would
not have been possible.

To my angel, my sweet daughter Leen,
A precious light in my life and a constant source of inspiration.

To my dear parents,
For your unlimited love, prayers, and sacrifices—your strength and guidance have shaped who I
am today.

To my lovely sisters, brothers, and sister-in-law,
For your love, encouragement, and the comforting presence that lifted me through every stage of
this journey.

And, to my wonderful nieces and nephew,
For your love and joy that filled my heart.

To my in-laws,
For your kindness, encouragement, and warmth.

To my partner in this research journey.

To my dear friends and classmates,
For your support and the moments shared along the way.

With gratitude and love, I dedicate this work to all of you.

Ranya BELAL

Dedication

All the prayers are due to Allah alone, the Sustainer of the entire world.

This work is dedicated to all persons who have supported and guided me in my life.

To my mother who supported and continues supporting me for every step I take.

To my dad who was always the greatest source of my inspiration; I carry your lessons, strength and unshakable belief in me within my heart. You may not be here physically, but I feel your presence in every step I take and in every challenge I face. This achievement is for you, I hope I have made you proud.

To my husband and lovely kids: Djihane, Abdeldjallil, and Mohamed Amine, who are the light of my life and the driving force behind everything I do.

To my sisters: Souad, Fouzia, Fairouz, Kahina, and Bina; my brother and his wife: Ouaali and Asma.

To my father in-law: Benaissa, mother in-law: Fatima, sisters in-law: Zoulikha, Hamida, Lila and Sana; brother in-law: Samir and his wife Ouarda; Hamouda and his wife Hiba, and Khaled.

To all colleagues of Ouled Sidi Cheikh middle school, Rouiba- Algiers, whom I work with.

To my supervisor and my research partner.

Hanen BOUZIANE

Acknowledgements

We would like to show our deep gratitude to our supervisor Mrs. Chaima KACIMI for her guidance, precious advice, and persistent assistance throughout the completion of this research.

Thanks are further directed to the jury members: Mrs. Nadia MESSAOUDI as well as Dr. Amel BOUAKAZ for accepting to evaluate our work, and for their time, remarks, and professional suggestions which have contributed to improving the quality of our study.

Our thanks go to the administration of the English Department at Bouira University-Akli Mohand Oulhadj.

We want to express our appreciation to all teachers of both the first and second year of English Master's Degree without exception, for the motivation they have given us, the knowledge they have transmitted and shared, and the efforts they have made to help us grow both academically and personally.

We shall never forget the help of the English teachers at Mohamed Khider middle school- Bouira, who gave us the opportunity to complete the practical section of our study and take part in our research, giving us enough time to interview them.

We would also like to thank every person who helped, guided, or supported us in any way whether academically, emotionally, or morally.

Abstract

This study investigates challenges in teaching listening within overcrowded classrooms at Mohamed Khider middle school in Bouira- Algeria, offers practical suggested solutions to address this problem. It is hypothesized that Algerian English teachers at middle schools encounter difficulties and face numerous obstacles while teaching listening skills in their large-size classes. To test the validity of the hypotheses, an exploratory sequential mixed method design was used with both qualitative and quantitative analysis but the dominant one was qualitative. This detailed Thematic Analysis (TA) of semi-structured interviews conducted with six English teachers at Mohamed Khider Middle School in Bouira, aiming to explore the challenges of this problem. By using a frequency-based TA model, the data were organized into three main categories: teacher background, core challenges, and suggested strategies. The findings revealed a range of obstacles, including classroom noise, lack of individual attention, limited resources, time constraints, and student disengagement, which collectively hindered effective listening instruction. Despite these constraints, teachers demonstrated their adaptability through the use of collaborative learning, visual aids, multimodal strategies, and structured frameworks. A recurring theme was the institutional gap in support, with teachers calling for professional development, better infrastructure, and smaller class sizes. The study highlights the need for reform efforts that recognize and build upon teachers' resilience and classroom-based innovations, emphasizing that sustainable improvements in listening pedagogy must be informed by the lived realities of educators on the ground.

Keywords: Challenges; listening skills; overcrowded classrooms; solutions; strategies.

الملخص

تطُرقت هذه الدراسة إلى صعوبات تعليم فهم المنطوق في الأقسام المكتظة في متوسطة محمد خيدر بالبويرة، الجزائر، وذلك عن طريق إعطاء حلول مقترحة لحل هذه المشكلة. يُعْتَقَدُ أن أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية الجزائريين بالمتوسطات يواجهون ويعانون من صعوبات عند إلقاءهم دروس فهم المنطوق في أقسامهم المكتظة. ولاختبار صحة هذه الفرضيات، تم اعتماد تصميم بحث استكشافي تسلسلي ممزوج بين التحليل النوعي والكمي مع التركيز على التحليل النوعي. تم إجراء تحليل موضوعي مفصل لمقابلات ذات أسئلة مفتوحة مع ست أساتذة للغة الإنجليزية بالمتوسطة المذكورة أعلاه بهدف استكشاف صعوبات تدريس فهم المنطوق في الأقسام المكتظة. ومن خلال استخدام نموذج تحليل موضوعي قائم على التكرار، ارتأينا إلى تنظيم وتقسيم البيانات إلى ثلاث فئات: معطيات عن الأساتذة والصعوبات والإستراتيجيات المقترحة. تحتوي نتائج التحليل على مجموعة من العقبات، من بينها: صوت الضجيج في القسم ونقص المشاركة الفردية وقلة الوسائل والتقيد بالوقت وتراجع تحفيز التلاميذ، فكل هذه العوامل تعرقل عملية تدريس فهم المنطوق. وبالرغم من هذه العوائق، فقد أظهر الأساتذة قدرة على التأقلم والتكيف وذلك من خلال استعمال الوسائل المرئية، التعلم التعاوني، الإستراتيجيات متعددة الوسائط، والحرص المنظمة كنموذج. كما برزت مشكلة نقص الدعم المؤسسي، حيث دعا الأساتذة إلى التطوير المستمر وتحسين البنية التحتية وتقليص عدد التلاميذ في الأقسام. وتؤكد الدراسة على ضرورة القيام بإصلاحات تربوية، وذلك باستعمال الأساتذة للمرونة عند إبراز مهاراتهم داخل القسم، مشددة على أن تحقيق التحسينات المستدامة في تدريس فهم المنطوق يجب أن يستند إلى الواقع في الميدان.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العوائق؛ فهم المنطوق؛ الأقسام المكتظة؛ الحلول؛ الإستراتيجيات.

List of Abbreviations

CAP	Classroom Arrangement Problems
CPGW	Collaborative Pair and Group Work
CSR	Class Size Reduction
DLCS	Differentiated and Learner-Centered Strategies
EFL	English as Foreign Language
EMTA	Effective and Multimodal Teaching Aids
FA	Flexibility and Adaptability
H	Hypothesis
IPS	Institutional and Professional Support
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LE	Low Engagement
LIA	Lack of Individual Attention
LLS	Limited Listening Strategies
NDI	Noise and Discipline Issues
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PDP	Pre-listening During-listening Post-listening
Q	Question
SCC	Student Comprehension Challenges
TA	Thematic Analysis
TB	Teacher Burnout
TBI	Task-Based Instruction
TBL	Task-Based Learning
TLM	Time and Lesson Management
TMC	Time Management Constraints
TMS	Technical/Material Shortages
TPR	Total Physical Response
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UPDP	Use of Pre-During-Post Framework
UTAE	Use of Technology and Audio Equipment

List of figures

Figure 1: Frequency of challenges’ themes 34

Figure 2: Frequency of suggested Strategies’ themes 38

List of tables

Table 1: Background and demographics 31

Table 2: Challenges’ themes 34

Table 3: Suggested strategies’ themes 37

Table of contents

Dedication	i
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
List of Abbreviations	vi
List of figures	vii
List of tables	viii
General Introduction	2
1. Background of the study	2
2. Statement of the problem	3
3. Significance of the study	3
4. Aims of the study	3
5. Research questions	3
6. Research hypotheses	4
7. Structure of the dissertation	4
Chapter I: Teaching listening	6
Introduction	6
I.1. Definition of listening	6
I.2. Significance of listening	7
I.3. Teaching listening	7
I.3.1. Total Physical Response (TPR)	7
I.3.2. Task-Based Learning (TBL)	8
I.3.3. Bottom-up approach	8

I.3.4. Top-down approach	9
I.3.5. Interactive approach	9
I.3.6. The PDP framework	9
I.4. Challenges in teaching listening	10
I.4.1. Linguistic and discourse features	10
I.4.2. Listener-related factors	11
I.4.3. Speaker-related challenges	11
I.4.4. Environmental and pedagogical limitations	11
Conclusion	12
Chapter II: Overcrowdedness in classrooms	14
Introduction	14
II.1. Definition of overcrowded classrooms	14
II.2. Impacts of overcrowded classrooms	15
II.3. Challenges of overcrowded classrooms	15
II.3.1. Challenges in classroom organization and time management	16
II.3.2. Impact on student performance and teacher-student relationships	16
II.3.3. Specific challenges faced by teachers in large classes	16
II.4. Solutions and strategies to overcrowded classrooms	16
II.4.1. Cooperative learning framework	16
II.4.2. Large classroom pedagogy	17
II.4.3. Classroom management techniques	17
II.4.4. Integration of technology	17
II.4.5. Infrastructure improvement	18
Conclusion	18
Chapter III: Research methodology	20
Introduction	20
III.1. Research questions	20

III.2. Research hypotheses	20
III.3. Research design	21
III.4. Population	21
III.5. Sampling	22
III.6. Data collection tools	22
III.6.1. Semi-structured interview	23
III.6.2. Description of the interview	23
III.7. Data collection procedure	25
III.8. Data Analysis procedure	25
III.9. Limitations of the study	27
Conclusion	28
Chapter IV: Data analysis and discussion	30
Introduction	30
IV.1. Overview of analytical approach	30
IV.2. Ensuring Rigor: coherence, clarity, and distinction in themes	30
IV.3. Data analysis	31
IV.4. Discussion	38
IV.4.1. Theoretical implication of the research findings	38
IV.4.2. Research questions and hypotheses: An analytical review	42
IV.5. Recommendations	42
IV.5.1. Pedagogical and practical recommendations	42
IV.5.2. Academic recommendations for future research	44
Conclusion	45
General conclusion	48
Bibliography	52
Appendices	56

General introduction

General introduction

1. Background of the study

Listening is a fundamental language skill needed for communication and comprehension (Brown, 2007). It is a complex cognitive process which needs many steps to interpret the spoken input including processing the sound by relying on the background knowledge and experience, as well as on the surrounding context (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). It is an indispensable language skill that plays a crucial role in daily communication (Rost, 2011). Beyond its academic significance, listening is critical in building understanding and co-existence among learners and in promoting personal and social development (Goh, 2008). However, a proper listening instruction becomes a daily challenge for teachers when teaching in Algerian middle schools due to the overcrowding classrooms conditions. This issue limits teachers from providing personalized instruction and meaningful interaction, which are vital in the development of listening skills. In such environments, excessive noise and lack of individual attention disrupt learners' ability to process auditory input and learn the subtleties of language acquisition. Furthermore, English is often taught as a subject of grammar accuracy, rather than as a means of communication, making it more difficult to develop authentic listening competence.

Nevertheless, although previous studies have highlighted the difficulties in teaching listening (e.g., Hadjadj, 2020) as well as the general negative effects of overcrowded classrooms in English language instruction (e.g., Lacheheb & Abdessamad, 2023), these aspects have mostly been examined separately. Few studies have specifically addressed both dimensions together by investigating the teaching of listening comprehension under such conditions in Algerian middle schools.

This relative lack of targeted research on the intersection between overcrowding and listening instruction justifies the relevance of our study. Through a qualitative, teacher-centered approach, we aim to explore English teachers' practical experiences and to shed light on the pedagogical adjustments they make to teach listening skills effectively in overcrowded classroom settings.

It is hypothesized that Algerian English teachers at middle schools encounter difficulties and suffer from obstacles while teaching listening skills in their classrooms behind large classes. To test the validity of the hypotheses, a semi-structured interview was administered to EFL teachers at Mohamed Khider school in Bouira from the results obtained of the interview were analyzed by employing an exploratory sequential mixed methods design was employed, as described by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), whereby qualitative data collection and analysis form the first phase, followed by little quantitative analysis to explore the specific difficulties faced in overcrowded settings and to suggest practical strategies for improving teaching. The ultimate goal is to contribute to language teaching quality and to help teachers in creating more effective and inclusive learning environments.

2. Statement of the problem

Although Listening is a useful language learning skill, it is often given little attention in the teaching process—especially in contexts where teaching conditions are less than ideal. The fact that the Algerian middle school classrooms are overcrowded makes effective listening teaching difficult. Teachers find it difficult to monitor large numbers of learners, give them individual attention, and use interactive strategies that facilitate listening comprehension. These limitations often lead to weak performance of the learners and reduced language abilities. Some Algerian classroom environments make it challenging for teachers to teach listening effectively, regardless of whatever the learning objectives are. However, while previous studies have addressed either the difficulties of teaching listening or the impact of overcrowded classrooms separately, few have investigated how these two factors intersect, especially in the context of Algerian middle school. It is important to understand the specific challenges Algerian middle schools teachers face in such a context, particularly when teaching first-year pupils who are still learning basic language skills.

3. Significance of the study

This study is important because it tackles a common issue in Algerian middle schools: overcrowded classrooms and its effects on teaching listening skills. The study is based on the experiences of teachers at Mohamed Khider middle school, and sheds light on real-world difficulties in teaching listening effectively. Understanding these challenges can guide teacher training programs, improve classroom practice, and guide educational decision-making to improve language teaching in overcrowded conditions. By providing helpful information and suggestions based on actual classroom experiences, the research findings may also contribute to broader activities to enhance learning conditions and outcomes in Algerian schools.

4. Aims of the study

The aim of this study is to investigate common difficulties in teaching listening skills in overcrowded classrooms in Algerian middle school, with a focus on first-year pupils at Mohamed Khider Middle School. It seeks to identify these challenges for effective teaching; it also looks into practical strategies that teachers can utilize to overcome such challenges and enhance learning among learners.

5. Research questions

This study aims to establish the main challenges faced by teachers while teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms. In addition, the study will also explore strategies being utilized currently or may be utilized to improve their performance in teaching.

- **Q1:** What are the main challenges faced by teachers when teaching listening skills in over-

crowded classrooms?

- **Q2:** Which strategies can be utilized to improve the teaching of listening skills in such environments?
- **Q3:** How do these strategies impact learners' development of listening skills?

6. Research hypotheses

The following hypotheses guide the present research:

- **H1:** Overcrowded classrooms impede the effective instruction of listening skills by limiting individual attention, complicating classroom management, and reducing opportunities for learners' participation.
- **H2:** Applying adaptive teaching strategies; including peer collaboration and differentiated instruction, can enhance teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms.
- **H3:** When implemented effectively, these strategies can improve learners' listening skills and engagement, even in the challenging conditions of noisy and overcrowded classrooms.

7. Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is made up of four chapters. The first and second chapters are about the theoretical background, explaining the different views of listening, and the approaches and challenges of teaching it, as well as treating the phenomenon of overcrowded classrooms and its influence on the teaching process by exploring its effects, causes, and possible solutions. The third and fourth chapters present the practical part, by introducing the applied framework of the study, including the research approach, design, data collection method, and sampling, then moving to the data analysis and interpretation, where the key findings collected from the interview are presented in the light of research questions, and practical implications and recommendations are provided.

Chapter I : Teaching listening

Chapter I: Teaching listening

Introduction

Listening is a significant language learning skill, as it helps learners to understand speech and communicate efficiently. However, teachers may face many challenges while teaching listening. This chapter sheds light on some definitions of listening and emphasizes its importance in teaching. Then, it describes common approaches to teaching listening. Finally, it addresses the main challenges in teaching this skill, including linguistic and discourse features, listener-related factors, speaker-related challenges, and environmental as well as pedagogical limitations. Understanding these challenges will help us develop more effective strategies to support learners in acquiring listening skills.

I.1. Definition of listening

In the English teaching- learning process, the four core skills -listening, speaking, reading, and writing- are interconnected, and the very first skill that needs to be acquired is listening. Many scholars have different perceptions on defining the term "listening".

According to Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011), listening is a cognitive activity where learners interpret spoken language by processing the sounds they hear, drawing on their knowledge of the language, previous experiences, and the surrounding context to understand the intended message. In addition, Brown (2007), explains that listening is not only a process of passively consuming sounds, but a complex process in which sounds are transformed into cognitive texts that are processed in the brain. In order to understand the intended meaning, we usually rely on prior knowledge. Similarly, Rost (2011), highlights that the way listening is viewed varies from one researcher to another, but these researchers often fall into four main orientations presenting the understanding of how listening functions during communication differently:

- a) Receptive orientation: According to this view listening is fundamentally seen as receiving and decoding the speaker's message to understand their ideas and emotions.
- b) Constructive orientation: This perspective considers listening as building personal meaning by connecting spoken input with one's own experiences.
- c) Collaborative orientation: Listening in this case is seen as a shared process where both the speaker and listener co-construct meaning through interaction and engagement.
- d) Transformative orientation: This final scope views listening as a deep and emotional experience that fosters meaningful connection and personal insight.

The aforementioned perspectives all agree that listening goes beyond simple hearing. However, these scholars also vary in focus. While Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011) merely confirm that lis-

tening is a cognitive process that involves interpreting speech and determining meaning through context, background knowledge, and language ability, Brown (2007) delves deeper into the cognitive process. Rost (2011), on the other hand, introduces listening as an interpersonal and emotional component in his four orientations. It is necessary that teachers understand these orientations when designing their listening instruction.

I.2. Significance of listening

Listening is a significant part of daily communication and acquisition. Brown (2007) highlights its importance in language learning since it is the first skill through which learners are first exposed to a new language, having access to vocabulary, forms, and pronunciation. Listening is the most common in-class activity among learners and is important for language assessment. Listening is developed faster than speaking, indicating the crucial role of listening in language acquisition.

Rost (2011) highlights the importance of listening as a key of communicative competence because of its daily use. Similarly, Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011) underscore its central role in communication and academic success, noting that it serves as a primary medium of learning throughout education.

I.3. Teaching listening

Given that listening is a complex skill, teaching listening is a challenging step for teachers as well. In order to overcome those challenges, teachers need to apply different approaches according to their learners' different styles and classroom settings. To unfold listening instruction, we will discuss some common approaches:

I.3.1. Total Physical Response (TPR)

Total Physical Response (TPR), developed by James Asher in the 1960s, is a language teaching method that links between language and physical actions to improve retention based on how children learn their first language (Asher, 1968). Richards and Rodgers (2001) note that teachers often give commands like “stand up” or “pick up the book,” which learners respond to physically without being required to speak immediately. As learners gain confidence, they begin verbally and eventually to produce their own language. Although listening was often neglected in traditional teaching, it is key in language acquisition and involves active understanding.

Despite its importance, listening often receives less emphasis in curricula due to misconceptions about its passive nature and the need for special equipment. In fact, TPR offers an interactive, low-stress approach that reflects first language acquisition, making it suitable for young beginners (Brown, 2007).

TPR effectively teaches vocabulary and basic language structures, particularly for beginners

through physical movement (Asher, 1968; Sugiarti, 2013). According to Richards and Rodgers (2001), TPR is particularly suitable for novice learners due to its stress-reducing, kinaesthetic approach, which encourages learners to respond physically before producing language orally. However, it may be less suited for advanced, abstract language learning. Overall, TPR enhances listening comprehension, reduces learners' anxiety, and promotes natural language development.

1.3.2. Task-Based Learning (TBL)

According to Willis (1996), Task-Based Learning (TBL), or Task-Based Instruction (TBI), is a communicative approach to language teaching that focuses on completing useful tasks instead of explicit grammar rules teaching. The learners acquire language naturally as they are involved in real-world activities, such as presenting ideas, problem-solving, and analyzing spoken content. TBL lessons involve three stages: the pre-task, in which the topic and lexis are introduced; the task cycle, in which the learners complete the activity and share results; and the language focus, which focuses on language features that are presented during the task.

According to Brown (2007), TBL encourages learners' participation with real-world spoken input through tasks like note-taking or diagramming, and leads to different interpretations, focuses on achieving task objectives, and neglects full comprehension. TBL also encourages teachers to design lessons about communicative goals that are linked to curriculum objectives, shifting from isolated practice to support flexible teaching pedagogy. Several studies (e.g., Skehan, 1998a, 1998b; Skehan & Foster, 1999; Willis, 1996) have explored types of activities, learner differences, and the teacher's role that influence learning outcomes.

While many researchers support TBL because it fosters real-life communication, others question its complexity, time-consuming nature, and lack of teaching direct grammar (Swan, 2005).

1.3.3. Bottom-up approach

The Bottom-up approach is defined as a strategy of analysis where learners understand auditory information by analyzing its smallest components—starting with phonemes and moving toward full utterances (Richards & Renandya, 2002). This approach requires a strong understanding of lexis and syntax, allowing learners to recognize word boundaries, syntactic structures, and intonation patterns (Richards, 2008). Harmer (2007) compares this approach to analyzing individual parts of a whole, emphasizing that meaning is constructed step by step through individual words and phrases. According to Richards (2008), common classroom techniques supporting bottom-up development include dictation, fill-in-the-gap activities, multiple-choice questions, and tasks focused on identifying modals, sequence markers, or referents of pronouns. These exercises help learners to recall speech input, analyze sentence structure, and identify essential language features, supporting long term listening proficiency.

I.3.4. Top-down approach

Unlike the Bottom-up approach, the Top-down approach focuses on the role of a listener's prior knowledge, understanding of the context, and expectations to understand the overall meaning (Richards, 2008). Instead of focusing on word-by-word interpretation, listeners apply schemata — organized mental frameworks about topics or situations — to predict upcoming content and deduce meaning (Harmer, 2007). Richards (2008), illustrates with the following sentence “I’m going to the dentist” activates a mental script involving common settings, people, and procedures. Alongside, this cognitive shortcut helps listeners to grasp the speaker’s intent even with little linguistic detail. Tasks that enhance top-down skills include predicting what might be said, deducing meaning from news headlines, completing unfinished stories, or creating questions about a topic before listening.

I.3.5. Interactive approach

Although the Bottom-up and the Top-down approaches are often described independently, effective listening involves a mutual interaction. According to Harmer (2007), these approaches are not contradictory; in fact, listeners usually shift between decoding linguistic details and applying prior knowledge. Field (1998) highlights that the balance between the Top-down and the Bottom-up approaches depends on the listener’s prior knowledge of the topic, the complexity of the information, and the listening goal. For instance, an experienced cook may apply top-down knowledge to recognize and compare recipes, while a beginner may need detailed bottom-up decoding to understand every step. This combination is often reflected in listening instruction through a three-phase model: pre-listening, during-listening, and post-listening. This blended instructional model ensures that learners develop both language analysis skills and the ability to interpret meaning based on prior experience and context.

I.3.6. The PDP framework

Listening activities play a crucial role in language teaching, especially in EFL classrooms, where they are designed to enhance students’ aural comprehension through a structured, three-phase model: pre-listening, during-listening, and post-listening (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). This PDP mode reflects the integration of both the Bottom-up and the Top-down approaches.

I.3.6.1. Pre-listening

The pre-listening phase plays a foundational role by activating learners’ prior knowledge, stimulating predictions, and providing essential context to understand upcoming listening script — reflecting the Top-down approach (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Additionally, it introduces the context, such as the time, place, or topic, to make them curious about the content. Among the common pre-listening activities, we can find introducing key terms, discussing flash cards, deducing meaning from the titles, brainstorming ideas, and explaining contextual elements (Richards &

Renandya, 2002; Saha & Talukdar, 2008).

I.3.6.2. During-listening

During the while-listening stage, learners respond actively to the listening text by identifying the speaker's main ideas and analyzing both the general meaning and detailed vocabulary. This phase includes both the Top-down and the Bottom-up approaches, as learners listen for general meaning and particular details, according to the type of the task. It also emphasizes in-depth understanding, including focus on audio material structure and critical or personal responses (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011; Richards & Renandya, 2002). Teachers may replay the audio if needed and help students complete tasks aiming at both overall understanding and detailed language elements (Saha & Talukdar, 2008).

I.3.6.3. Post-listening

Post-listening activities are linked to previous stages. In this phase, learners have the opportunity to connect the aural input to their personal experiences and long-term learning goals. These tasks can be used for assessment of listening comprehension and support the integration of other language skills (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Post-listening activities give the chance to learners to check whether their pre-listening predictions are correct or not, creating practical communicative activities, and discussing the topic further to reinforce lexis and memory (Saha & Talukdar, 2008).

I.4. Challenges in teaching listening

Several scholars contend that listening is a complex skill to teach. Given its complexity, listening is often viewed as an ambiguous skill. As a result, many learners experience difficulties with listening in classroom settings. These challenges can be categorized into four main areas: linguistic and discourse features, listener-related factors, speaker-related challenges, and environmental and pedagogical limitations.

I.4.1. Linguistic and discourse features

Spoken language has distinctive features that are different from written language, making it difficult for learners to understand. Brown (2007) identifies various elements, including clustering, where speech is organized into smaller units; redundancy, such as fillers and repetitions that help listeners understand meaning; reduced forms, including slang words like “gonna” or “wanna”; and performance variables, such as hesitations and false starts. Learners must also recognize stress, rhythm, and intonation, which express attitude and emotion, and understand that listening often includes interaction, more than just passive reception.

In addition, phonological features like liaison and elision hinder recognizing words by hiding their boundaries (Ur, 1984). Colloquial language is a critical challenge for EFL learners due to its

nature that can combine slang and frequent topic shifts in real-world speech, which differs significantly from formal written English (Anderson & Lynch, 1988; Brown, 2007).

I.4.2. Listener-related factors

According to Blinova (2021), learner-related difficulties often arise from limited prior knowledge, which hinders prediction when facing unfamiliar topics. Additionally, a lack of L2 lexis hinders learners from connecting familiar L1 understanding to L2 listening. Learners may also be influenced by L1 interference that leads to false assumptions.

Other internal factors are lack of attention and motivation. Internal factors like lack of attention and motivation can hinder listening, especially during long or uninteresting tasks (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Also, limited use of listening strategies can reduce comprehension (Goh, 2008).

I.4.3. Speaker-related challenges

Learners often face difficulties in understanding fast and unstructured speech. It is hard for EFL learners to follow native speakers when they speak quickly and spontaneously with minimal pause (Brown, 2007). EFL learners prefer listening to slower speech because they can understand it and it gives them enough time to interact (Goh, 2008).

Additionally, accent variation and unfamiliar collocations or cultural references can hinder comprehension, especially when learners have limited contact with different speaking styles (Anderson & Lynch, 1988). Other aspects that create confusion is misunderstanding idiomatic expressions and facing sudden topic shifts (Rost, 2011).

I.4.4. Environmental and pedagogical limitations

Listening conditions can make comprehension more difficult. Learners struggle to engage fully with listening activities without the aid of visual cues. Background noise and poor audio quality also limit teaching listening (Anderson & Lynch, 1988).

From a pedagogical perspective, challenges may include a lack of adequate teaching tools, unsuitable listening materials, and teachers' difficulty in applying appropriate strategies to make listening lessons effective and engaging (Blinova, 2021).

Last but not least, the phenomenon of overcrowded classrooms is also considered as a major challenge to listening instruction, as noise, limited space, and lack of individual attention reduce learners' ability to focus and understand spoken input. According to Khan and Iqbal (2012), such classrooms exceed optimal capacity, leading to reduced teaching effectiveness and increased classroom management difficulties. These factors not only affect listening, but also compromise the broader teaching and learning process. Therefore, the impact of overcrowding on instructional quality and learner engagement will be examined in greater depth in the following chapter.

Conclusion

In conclusion, listening is a critical skill in language acquisition that plays a critical role in both academic and real-life communication. The chapter suggested some definitions of listening and highlighted its cognitive, social, and affective nature. It also emphasized the importance of listening in language learning. It also elaborated on some of the approaches to teaching listening such as Total Physical Response, Task-Based Learning, the Bottom-up approach, the Top-down approach, and the Interactive approach. All of these approaches help learners in comprehending spoken language. Understanding these theoretical foundations provides valuable insight into teaching listening effectively, especially in environments that pose teaching challenges.

Chapter II : Overcrowdedness in classrooms

Chapter II: Overcrowdedness in classrooms

Introduction

The classroom represents the outline of a structured teaching system, where numerous instructional elements are interconnected, forming complex relationships. The primary objective of classroom management is to harmonize, regulate, and integrate the elements and their interactions to create a cohesive environment that facilitates smooth and effective teaching.

In recent years, however, there has been a noticeable increase in classrooms size, particularly in English as Foreign Language. Large and even overcrowded classrooms have become common, posing significant challenges within the scope of classroom management. Consequently, this issue has emerged as a key topic of interest in EFL research. Teachers working within large EFL classes encounter numerous obstacles during the teaching process. These challenges include strained teacher-learner relationships, a restricted variety of teaching methods, teacher discomfort when managing large groups, and maintaining classroom discipline.

This chapter attempts to cover the complex issue of overcrowded classrooms by examining scholarly definitions, exploring its effects on teaching and learning, identifying the key challenges it presents, and discussing potential solutions to address the problem.

II.1. Definition of overcrowded classrooms

Overcrowded classrooms represent a significant challenge that hinders the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. Scholars have noted that there is no universally agreed-upon definition of what constitutes a large class, as it varies depending on the country, educational context, and institutional standards. According to Küçükler and Kodal (2018), a classroom is considered large when the number of students surpasses what the teacher deems manageable. Similarly, Khan and Iqbal (2012) define an overcrowded classroom as one in which student enrollment exceeds the optimal capacity, leading to numerous difficulties that negatively affect both teaching and learning.

Hayes (1997) pointed out that the distinction between large and small classes depends on the nature of the classroom context. Generally, a regular classroom is considered overcrowded when it has more than thirty students, while language learning classes are labeled large when they exceed twenty students. Similarly, Hess (2001) states that any class with more than thirty students falls under the category of a large class. In contrast, Murphy and Rosenberg (1998, as cited in Sangangula (2016)) describe a small class as one comprising between thirteen and seventeen students.

Although overcrowded classrooms are characterized by having more students than what is ideal, the key concern is how this overcrowding creates tangible challenges for both teaching and learning. The pressure on available resources and classroom management negatively influences the quality of

instruction, student involvement, and academic achievement. Therefore, it is important to examine how these conditions affect the overall effectiveness of teaching and the learning process.

II.2. Impacts of overcrowded classrooms

Overcrowded classrooms can have a considerable negative effect on both teaching and learning. As noted by Green and Doran (2000) and Burnett (1995), such environments often suffer from a lack of instructional materials, insufficient library resources, and limited space for storing educational tools.

For less experienced teachers, managing an overcrowded class can be particularly overwhelming compared to their more experienced counterparts, highlighting the need for more advanced and adaptable teaching strategies (Khan & Iqbal, 2012). Additionally, Hayes (1997) observed that disinterested students in these crowded settings are more likely to create disruptions, making it harder for the teacher to maintain order and deliver effective instruction. The researcher expresses feelings of frustration, exhaustion, and helplessness when faced with classrooms that are overcrowded and difficult to manage effectively. Overcrowding also contributes to physical health concerns, as cramped spaces increase the risk of spreading respiratory and other infectious diseases. DeCorby et al. (2005) highlight additional problems such as limited space, insufficient resources, and inadequate equipment. These factors collectively hinder both teaching and learning in overcrowded classrooms.

In overcrowded classrooms, it can be challenging for teachers to give personalized attention to every student, making it difficult to recognize and address individual learning needs, (Baines et al., 2006). Such environments often restrict meaningful interactions between teachers and students, as well as among students themselves, which limits opportunities for collaboration and classroom discussions (OECD, 2010). Additionally, these classrooms may suffer from a shortage of essential resources like learning materials, seating, and technology, all of which can negatively influence both teaching quality and student engagement (UNESCO, 2019).

As students' number increase, maintaining discipline and managing the classroom effectively become more challenging, which can negatively affect the overall learning environment (Smith, 2016). Studies have shown that overcrowded classrooms are linked to lower student performance and test scores, especially in subjects that demand active participation and critical thinking (Han, 2018).

II.3. Challenges of overcrowded classrooms

Overcrowded classrooms pose several challenges for both teachers and students, making the teaching and learning process less effective. Learners in overcrowded classrooms face difficulties and obstacles that can greatly reduce their ability to develop, ameliorate, and improve different skills, specially listening comprehension skills. The following challenges can be observed in vari-

ous aspects.

II.3.1. Challenges in classroom organization and time management

Large classrooms create significant difficulties in organizing space and managing time effectively. According to Hussain et al. (2017), teachers face challenges in arranging the classroom, leading to wasted time that could be spent on delivering lessons. This disruption negatively affects the overall educational process, as teachers struggle to manage the physical environment alongside teaching.

II.3.2. Impact on student performance and teacher-student relationships

The overcrowded classroom environment also leads to numerous challenges related to student performance. Sasikumar et al. (2013) identify issues like poor discipline, decreased student performance as significant drawbacks, and emphasize the difficulties teachers face in fostering positive teacher-student relationships and achieving educational goals. Overcrowded classrooms may also lead to poor relationships within the classroom, further complicating the teaching process.

II.3.3. Specific challenges faced by teachers in large classes

Hadi and Arante (2015) outlined seven specific challenges teachers encounter when teaching English in large classrooms. These challenges include difficulties in evaluating student performance, providing individual feedback, maintaining student engagement, and managing discipline. The authors also noted issues related to student motivation, the use of local language, and the overall effectiveness of teaching. Furthermore, teachers may experience physical exhaustion, making it difficult to maintain control and monitor student progress effectively. These struggles highlight the complexity of teaching in overcrowded classrooms and the limitations they impose on both student learning and teacher performance.

II.4. Solutions and strategies to overcrowded classrooms

Teaching in overcrowded classrooms poses major challenges, such as reduced student focus, difficulty maintaining engagement, and problems with managing the classroom. Despite these obstacles, educators can improve their teaching effectiveness by applying certain strategies. The following are suggested methods that teachers can use in such settings:

II.4.1. Cooperative learning framework

The Cooperative learning framework offers effective strategies for improving teaching in large classrooms by promoting collaboration among students. This approach encourages students to support one another's academic progress, fostering active participation and peer interaction (Seherrie, 2023). By combining cooperative learning with creative and blended teaching techniques, teachers

can enhance classroom management and maintain student engagement, even in crowded environments (Saud et al., 2020; Seherrie, 2023). Additionally, dividing the class into smaller groups not only boosts student participation but also provides more opportunities for personalized attention, leading to improved academic performance (Sijekula et al., 2023).

II.4.2. Large classroom pedagogy

In large classroom, pedagogy emphasizes the importance of fostering active student participation through collaborative learning strategies like group discussions and peer-supported activities. These methods not only improve comprehension but also cater to diverse learning styles, enabling students to engage better with the material (Basorun, 2013; Sijekula et al., 2023). Additionally, according to Basorun (2013), peer-learning techniques such as jigsaw activities and think-pair-share promote interaction and knowledge sharing, which have been shown to enhance both understanding and retention, particularly in large classrooms.

II.4.3. Classroom management techniques

According to Mohamed (2018), in overcrowded classrooms, effective classroom management techniques are important for maintaining a structured and productive learning environment. These techniques emphasize establishing clear expectations, consistent routine, and proactive strategies. One effective approach is involving students in creating classroom rules and behavior guidelines; this method encourages students to take responsibility for their actions and results helping minimize disruptions. Moreover, a well-managed classroom promotes mutual respect, enhances student engagement, and creates a more positive atmosphere that supports both teaching and learning.

Additionally, proactive management techniques such as providing clear instructions and ensuring smooth transitions between activities can reduce behavioral issues and maximize instructional time. These strategies are especially crucial in overcrowded classrooms, where maintaining structure is essential for effective teaching (Andrew et al., 2023).

II.4.4. Integration of technology

According to Sijekula et al. (2023), the integration of technology in the classroom plays an important role in enhancing interactions of students. In overcrowded classrooms, digital tools like: online quizzes, shared documents, educational apps, and multimedia projects offer practical solutions to bridge the gap to facilitate learning between teacher and learner. These tools push the student to react simultaneously, encourage participation, facilitate collaboration among peers and help manage large classrooms effectively. Technology becomes a valuable asset in managing large classes, making the learning environment more dynamic, inclusive, and student-centered.

II.4.5. Infrastructure improvement

According to Fernández et al. (2023), the physical limitations of learning spaces are necessary to ameliorate the quality of education. This investment allows for the extension of existing classrooms to prevent overcrowding, and makes classrooms enlarged permits for better seating arrangements, improved visibility; it allows teachers to use easily different methods to facilitate the interaction between the teacher and the learner.

Moreover, establishing new school buildings with modern architectural design can bring additional students without sacrificing instructional quality and can tailor to pedagogical needs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter explored the issue of overcrowded classrooms from multiple angles. It began by defining what an overcrowded classroom is. Then, it examined how overcrowding influences both teaching and learning, making it harder for teachers to manage their classrooms and for students to stay engaged. Despite these challenges, the chapter also presented a variety of practical solutions. These included using cooperative learning strategies, encouraging active participation, applying strong classroom management techniques, integrating technology, and improving infrastructure. Altogether, these approaches aim to create more supportive and effective learning environments, even in large or crowded classrooms. The following chapters will build upon this theoretical background by exploring the specific difficulties teachers face in real classroom settings, particularly in overcrowded middle school classrooms in Algeria.

Chapter III : Research methodology

Chapter III: Research methodology

Introduction

The previous chapters were intended generally to introduce the overall view of teaching listening in overcrowded environments. We also tackled in a considerable body of literature about what scholars have studied concerning this issue. Besides, we introduced the suggested solutions to overcome this particular problem. Though, this chapter is devoted to the methodology we consider better serving the aim of the study.

This chapter focuses on the practical side of the work. It outlines the research design and the specific methods employed in conducting the study. In addition, it provides a description of the research context, the target population, and the sampling strategy used. The chapter also justifies the choice of data collection methods and procedures. Moreover, it addresses the steps taken to ensure the reliability and validity of the instruments.

III.1. Research questions

The main research questions addressed are:

- **Q1:** What are the main challenges that face teachers when teaching listening skills in overcrowded classrooms?
- **Q2:** Which strategies can be used to improve the teaching of listening skills in such environments?
- **Q3:** How do these strategies influence the development of students' listening skills?

III.2. Research hypotheses

The research is guided by the following hypotheses:

- **H1:** Overcrowded classrooms hinder teaching listening due to lack of individual attention, difficulty to control the classroom, and low student participation.
- **H2:** Applying adapted teaching strategies, like peer interaction and the use of differentiated instruction, can enhance teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms.
- **H3:** These strategies, when applied correctly, can enhance the learners' listening skill and participation, even in noisy and crowded classroom conditions.

III.3. Research design

Clearly, any academic study demands research methodology which is essential in helping researchers answer their research questions and assess the validity of their hypotheses. In this sense, Paltridge and Starfield (2007) discuss:

Methodology refers to the theoretical paradigm or framework in which the student is working; to the stance he or she is taking as a researcher (e.g. choosing a quantitative or qualitative paradigm) and the argument that is built in the text to justify these assumptions, theoretical frameworks and/or approaches as well as the choice of research questions or hypotheses. (pp. 118–119)

Methodology also can refer to the specific steps and tools used in research. It guides how the researcher selects, identifies, and analyzes information concerning a particular subject.

To fulfill the aim of the study, an exploratory sequential mixed methods design was employed, as described by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), whereby qualitative data collection and analysis form the first phase, followed by little quantitative analysis to support and reinforce interpretation:

..the exploratory sequential design is a three-phase mixed methods design in which the researcher starts with the collection and analysis of qualitative data that is then followed by a development phase of translating the qualitative findings into an approach or tool that is tested quantitatively. (p. 84)

This type of design alongside with the qualitative-dominant mixed approach used in this research offer a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the research problem than relying on a single method alone (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). They are especially useful when little is known about a problem, making it appropriate for exploring classroom challenges through teachers' lived experiences.

III.4. Population

In qualitative research, the population refers to a group of individuals who have direct experience or knowledge related to the central phenomenon under investigation. According to Creswell (2013), qualitative researchers tend to identify participants who are “purposefully chosen” as they can offer “rich, detailed insights” regarding the study topic. Similarly, Paltridge and Starfield (2007) note that researchers must define and describe the population from which they are getting their data, especially when it is supposed to examine context-specific experiences or perceptions. For this study, the population consists of English language teachers who work in an Algerian middle school, i.e., teachers with experience in teaching first-year pupils in overcrowded classrooms. This population, placed within the specific context of Mohamed Khider Middle School in Bouira,

is best suited to provide in-depth information on challenges and teaching strategies for listening skills within such constrained classroom conditions.

III.5. Sampling

Sampling in qualitative research is the selection of participants that will help the researcher understand the research problem. As Creswell (2013) has pointed out, that qualitative sampling is purposeful, and is intended to select individuals who are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with the main phenomenon or concept being explored. This study utilized purposive sampling, a non-probability method used to intentionally select participants who have direct and relevant experience and could offer rich insights into the teaching of listening skills under challenging classroom conditions. Paltridge and Starfield (2007) describe purposive sampling as a method where the participants are chosen based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives.

In this study, participants were six English teachers from Mohamed Khider Middle School in Bouira. They selected based on two criteria:

- They must have experience teaching first-year pupils at the middle school, and
- They must have worked within overcrowded classroom environments.

The decision to select Mohamed Khider Middle School as the research site was deliberate and based on several factors. It is one of the oldest, biggest, and most prestigious middle schools in the city of Bouira, and it has a large number of teachers compared to other middle schools. It is known for academic excellence, and its learners achieve some of the highest results every year. The school also was chosen based to its proximity, which made regular visits and data collection more feasible. All of these were very important reasons why it was a highly relevant and interesting context for the study of the challenges of teaching listening skills in overcrowded classrooms.

This sampling method ensured that the data collected would be rich, relevant, and reflective of the specific challenges addressed by the research questions.

III.6. Data collection tools

Creswell (2013, p. 75) states that: "the data collection in case study research is typically extensive, drawing on multiple sources of information, such as observations, interviews, documents, and audiovisual materials." In order to gain comprehensive insights into teachers' experiences, perceptions, challenges, and strategies related to teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms, we chose to follow a semi-structured interview as the primary data collection tool in this study. "The interview is defined as the method of asking questions to gain both qualitative and quantitative

data [...] qualitative questions aim to obtain the interviewee's descriptions to a specific question" (Taherdoost, 2022, p. 39). Creswell (2013) also notes that interviews are a common method in qualitative research since they allow researchers to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and attitudes in depth. These interviews may be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured.

III.6.1. Semi-structured interview

Creswell (2013) explains that the semi-structured format combines a set of predetermined open-ended questions with the flexibility to explore themes and responses more deeply, based on the response of the interviewees. Semi-structured interviews involve guiding questions (an interview protocol) but allow for flexibility in the conversation so that participants can elaborate or add new ideas. The interview was conducted face to face and by telephone.

III.6.2. Description of the interview

In this study, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with six English teachers who have experience teaching first-year pupils in overcrowded classrooms. The semi-structured interview designed for this study consisted of fifteen open-ended questions categorized into three sections. The questions asked for information about the teachers' backgrounds, the specific challenges they face when teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms, and the strategies or support that they find effective. The open-ended questions allowed the teachers to elaborate freely.

Section 1: Background and demographics

This section aimed to gather contextual information about each participant's teaching experience and working environment:

- **Question 1:** It is about the participants' experience at the middle school level, to understand the teacher's level of expertise.
- **Question 2:** explored the range of grade levels taught, helping to determine whether the participant had a broad perspective across different year groups.
- **Question 3:** inquired about the average number of learners per class, which is significant in understanding the degree of classroom overcrowding.
- **Question 4:** asked how often the teachers teach listening, which gave insight into how frequently listening is practiced and emphasized.

Section 2: Challenges in teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms

This section focused on identifying practical, pedagogical, and logistical difficulties:

- **Question 5:** teachers are asked to identify the main difficulties they face when teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms, serving as a general starting point.
- **Question 6:** addressed whether and how class size impacts students' comprehension of listening tasks, eliciting views on the relationship between class size and learning effectiveness.
- **Question 7:** asked about the influence of noise and discipline issues, key concerns in large classes, especially during audio-based lessons.
- **Question 8:** focused on the difficulties in monitoring and assessing students' listening performance, especially when individual feedback becomes impractical in large groups.
- **Question 9:** explored technical and material challenges, such as the availability and quality of audio equipment, which are essential for effective listening instruction.
- **Question 10:** asked about how physical classroom arrangements and seating patterns affect listening activities, particularly when not all students can hear clearly or see necessary materials.

Section 3: Suggested strategies and support

This section explored teachers' professional insights and needs:

- **Question 11:** asked about effective methods or strategies teachers have used when teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms, aiming to highlight classroom-based solutions.
- **Question 12:** inquired about the use of group work or pair work techniques to improve student engagement and listening outcomes, as cooperative learning may ease challenges.
- **Question 13:** focused on the support or resources teachers need, including training, materials, or structural changes that could improve conditions.
- **Question 14:** asked what actions schools or the Ministry of Education could take to reduce the identified challenges, aiming to generate systemic suggestions.
- **Question 15:** was a closing, open-ended, question where participants could provide any further comments they felt important but had not been covered in previous questions.

This structure gave the interviewer freedom to collect comprehensive data and interviewees the freedom to express their thoughts freely and in a natural way. Dividing the interview into sections added sense in logical structure and coherent development, and was also in line with the qualitative exploratory aims of the study as questions were open-ended.

III.7. Data collection procedure

The data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with six English language teachers from Mohamed Khider Middle School in Bouira, Algeria, who have experience teaching first-year middle school pupils. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their teaching experience and relevance to the study's focus, as part of a qualitative case study approach.

In line with ethical guidelines for qualitative research, as outlined by Paltridge and Starfield (2007), transparency and respect for participants' rights were maintained at all stages of the study. Prior to the interviews, official permission was obtained from the school's administration. The selected teachers were contacted and informed and assured about the purpose and the voluntary nature of the study, the confidentiality of their responses, their right to withdraw at any time, and anonymity of their personal information.

A total of six interviews were conducted. Four interviews took place in the teachers' room at the middle school during the reception hour, in a quiet and private setting. Due to time constraints and scheduling difficulties, the remaining two interviews were conducted by phone, but followed the same set of the semi-structured interview's questions to ensure consistency across all responses.

Each interview lasted approximately one hour, during which we facilitated the conversation by using a flexible interview guide. Interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' permission so that we could undertake verbatim transcription and analysis. Additional field notes were also taken during and immediately after each session to capture relevant observations.

As it is common in semi-structured interviews, some participants responded to certain later questions earlier in the discussion. In such cases, their answers were not repeated during the relevant subsequent question but were organized thematically during data analysis to ensure alignment with the intended structure of the interview guide.

III.8. Data Analysis procedure

In qualitative research, data analysis involves the extraction of emerging patterns, themes and categories that emerge from participants' responses. Before presenting the findings, it is essential to describe the process where the data were securely analyzed. For this study, several models of thematic analysis were reviewed, including Braun and Clarke (2006) widely cited six-phase model and Miles and Huberman (1994) interactive model. However, this research utilized a systematic thematic coding and reduction process entitled by Namey et al. (2008), which is a step-by-step guide to coding and quantizing qualitative data, complementing the study's purpose of identifying and highlighting recurring themes across participant responses.

The collected data were analyzed using Thematic Analysis (TA) following the frequency-based model proposed by Namey et al. (2008). This approach combines traditional qualitative coding with basic frequency counts to enhance pattern recognition and improve transparency in the anal-

ysis process. It integrates qualitative thematic coding with frequency counting — an approach that allows for both descriptive richness and pattern recognition without compromising depth. This process of applying numerical summaries to qualitative categories is known as "quantitizing", as it was described by Sandelowski (2001), it refers to the assignment of numerical values (such as frequency counts) to qualitative data to allow researchers to highlight recurring patterns and the prominence of specific themes without undermining the richness of qualitative interpretation. It was particularly suited to the purpose of the study, which is to explore challenges in teaching listening in overcrowded middle school classrooms and to identify recurring themes among teachers' experiences.

To ensure a clear structure and focused interpretation, the semi-structured interview questions were organized into three thematic sections:

- **Section One:** General perceptions of teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms
- **Section Two:** Specific challenges and influencing factors
- **Section Three:** Strategies and suggestions for improvement

Each section was analyzed independently through TA and frequency-based summarization, allowing for detailed insights into each core area of inquiry. The analytical process followed these steps:

Step 1: Data preparation

All interviews were transcribed verbatim and reviewed for accuracy. Minor clarifications were made to simplify confusing expressions without changing the original text. To maintain confidentiality, identifying details such as names or locations were removed from the transcripts.

Step 2: Familiarization with the data

We read and re-read the transcripts carefully to gain a deep understanding of the content. Notes and reflective comments were written in the margins to inform the development of thematic codes.

Step 3: Code development

A coding framework was constructed using a combination of deductive codes (informed by interview questions and literature on listening instruction and overcrowded classrooms) and inductive codes (emerging directly from participant responses). These codes represented key concepts, repeated concerns, and lived experiences described by the teachers.

Step 4: Coding of transcripts

Each transcript was manually coded using the developed codebook. Each meaningful segment (sentence or paragraph) was assigned one or more relevant codes. Coding was conducted section by section, allowing the themes of each part to emerge independently.

Step 5: Frequency counting

After all the answers were coded, we counted how frequently each theme was mentioned (mention count) and how many participants mentioned it (participant count). For example, “noise” was cited as a challenge by all six participants, making it one of the most prevalent recurring themes.

Step 6: Theme development

Related codes were grouped into broader themes. For example, “lack of attention,” “difficulty hearing,” and “classroom disruption” were under a theme such as “Classroom management challenges.” Theme names and definitions were refined for consistency and clarity.

Step 7: Interpretation

Themes were interpreted using both descriptive analysis, by explaining what each theme represented about the experience of teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms, and comparative analysis, by identifying which themes were most frequent. Selected verbatim quotes from the interviewees’ answers were used to illustrate each theme, accompanied by frequency tables showing how many teachers expressed each idea. This balance between narrative explanation and numeric support helped ensure transparency while preserving the depth of qualitative insights.

By using this method, the study preserved the richness of the qualitative data while also enhancing its credibility through transparent, systematic pattern identification. As Namey et al. (2008) explain, the integration of frequency-based coding in thematic analysis improves the clarity, transparency, and reliability of qualitative findings without diminishing their depth and contextual meaning.

III.9. Limitations of the study

This study was faced with many limitations that have to be acknowledged. It was conducted within one school—Mohamed Khider Middle School in Bouira—which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other schools or regions in Algeria. The particular characteristics of this particular setting may possibly fail to capture the entire spectrum of experience and challenges found in other middle schools.

Second, data collection relied solely on semi-structured interviews with English teachers, which is not sufficiently representative of the perspectives of learners, school administrators, or parents.

Multiple opinions would have provided a clearer picture of the issue; however, considering time and accessibility constraints, the study focused only on teachers.

Third, the study did not include classroom observation as a supplementary data collection tool. Although as described by Creswell (2013), observation is often recommended in case study research for triangulating data and gaining real-time insights into classroom practices, it was not feasible in this context. The fieldwork coincided with a highly disrupted academic calendar. At the time of data collection, schools were concluding exam sessions, and the teachers had already completed the instructional sequences in which listening is typically taught at the beginning. This was followed by national holidays, delays caused by strike actions during the third semester, and a sudden ministerial decision to advance exam schedules. As a result, teachers shifted their focus toward completing the syllabus and skipped several lessons, including those related to listening. Consequently, classroom observations would not have provided relevant or accurate data on the teaching of listening skills.

In addition to these timing constraints, two key pedagogical factors also limited the possibility of conducting field observation. First, first-year pupils receive only two English sessions per week, which restricts both instructional time and opportunities for extended observation of listening activities. Second, the first-year English syllabus is densely structured, comprising five sequences that must be completed within a relatively short academic year. Each sequence covers distinct thematic units, vocabulary sets, grammar points, and skill-focused tasks, leaving teachers with limited flexibility to incorporate supplementary activities or adjust their pacing to focus on specific skills like listening.

Finally, time constraints and scheduling conflicts within the school environment may have affected the depth and timing of some interviews, possibly limiting the richness of the responses.

Conclusion

Finally, the chapter has outlined the methodology applied in investigating the challenges of teaching listening skills in overcrowded classrooms, and in particular focus on first-year middle school pupils at Mohamed Khider Middle School in Bouira, Algeria. The study applied a qualitative case study design supported with an exploratory sequential mixed methods design. Through purposive sampling, six experienced English teachers were selected to share their views by conducting semi-structured interviews. The data collection process was carefully organized to provide for ethical considerations, reliability, and contextual relevance. The chapter also presented the research questions, hypotheses, and justification for the chosen tools and procedures. This methodological foundation sets the stage for the next chapter, which will present and analyze the findings obtained from the participants' responses.

Chapter IV: Data analysis and discussion

Chapter IV: Data analysis and discussion

Introduction

This chapter presents and interprets the findings obtained from semi-structured interviews conducted with six English teachers at Mohamed Khider Middle School in Bouira. The aim of the study is to explore the challenges of teaching listening skills in overcrowded Algerian middle school classrooms. The findings are organized thematically to reflect recurring patterns in the teachers' responses and are supported by frequency counts to emphasize the prominence of each issue. Through this structure, the chapter highlights teachers' perceptions, classroom realities, and the practical strategies they use to address the difficulties of teaching listening under overcrowded conditions.

IV.1. Overview of analytical approach

The interview data were analyzed using a frequency-based Thematic Analysis (TA) approach. This method combines qualitative coding with frequency quantification to ensure both thematic depth and analytic transparency. The analysis is divided into three main thematic sections:

- Background and demographic context,
- Challenges and influencing factors, and
- Suggested strategies and support mechanisms.

This structured and systematic approach allowed the researcher to extract meaningful insights from the participants' responses while also identifying the most frequently cited concerns.

IV.2. Ensuring Rigor: coherence, clarity, and distinction in themes

To ensure the quality and transparency of the findings, the themes presented in this chapter were developed and refined following the systematic, frequency-based TA model proposed by Namey et al. (2008). Thematic coherence was achieved by grouping related codes that consistently represented shared ideas across participants, with frequency counts confirming their relevance. This approach allowed for both qualitative depth and analytic transparency. As Sandelowski (2001) explains, the incorporation of frequency-based coding—or quantitizing—supports the identification of recurring patterns while preserving the richness of qualitative interpretation.

Clarity was ensured by carefully labeling each theme and supporting it with representative quotations from teachers' responses, making each theme's meaning explicit and grounded in actual

data. To maintain distinction among themes, categories were reviewed and refined to avoid conceptual overlap and to ensure that each theme addressed a unique dimension of the participants' experiences.

In our study, we calculated percentages based on the frequency of each theme's occurrence rather than the number of participants or responses. This method was applied to both challenges and strategies to better capture the depth, emphasis, and recurrence of each theme throughout the interviews. Several teachers mentioned the same point multiple times across different questions, highlighting its practical importance. By using frequency, we aimed to provide a more nuanced and representative analysis that aligns with qualitative research standards, particularly in studies involving rich, multi-layered data.

IV.3. Data analysis

Section I: Background and demographics

Participant	Teaching Experience	Levels Taught	Average Class Size	Listening Sessions/ Sequence
Participant 1	9 years	All levels	40–45	3 to 4 sessions
Participant 2	3 years	1st, 2nd, 3rd	38–42	2 to 4 sessions
Participant 3	9 years	All levels	40–45	2 sessions
Participant 4	17 years	All levels	40–47	2 to 4 sessions
Participant 5	11 years	All levels	38–42	2 to 4 sessions
Participant 6	31 years	All levels	40–47	2 to 4 sessions

Table 1: Background and demographics

Table 1 outlines key background information of the six participating teachers. Their teaching experience ranges from 3 to 31 years. Most of them have taught all middle school levels, with the exception of one participant who has taught only first, second, and third years. The average class size reported by the participants falls between 38 and 47 pupils. In listening instruction, the number of sessions taught per sequence varies among the teachers, ranging from 2 to 4 sessions.

Section II: Challenges in Teaching Listening in Overcrowded Classrooms

This section presents the thematic analysis of interview responses to Questions 5–10. After systematically coding the data, 9 main themes emerged, each capturing a key recurring difficulty that teachers face in teaching listening within overcrowded Algerian middle school classrooms. The frequency of each theme was calculated based on how many times it was mentioned across all 36 responses, even if repeated by the same participant in different responses.

Theme: NDI – Noise and Discipline Issues

Noise and discipline problems were the most frequently cited challenges. Teachers repeatedly emphasized how excessive noise, interruptions, and difficulty maintaining order disrupted the flow of listening activities and impeded comprehension. This theme includes mentions of background noise, student talking, or the inability to focus during audio tasks.

Citations: *“The noise.” (Q5, Participant 5), “High noise levels can distract students and make it difficult for them to focus on the listening material.” (Q7, Participant 1), “Frequent interruptions disrupt the listening flow.” (Q7, Participant 3)*

Theme: LIA – Lack of Individual Attention

Numerous responses expressed concern over the inability to give personalized feedback or track individual progress. Teachers noted that with large numbers, it became difficult to recognize who was struggling or provide support for each learner’s listening development.

Citations: *“Difficulties in providing personalized attention.” (Q5, Participant 1), “Teachers can’t give each pupil the attention he needs.” (Q6, Participant 4)*

Theme: TMC – Time Management Constraints

Many teachers stressed that the limited time allocated for listening tasks was insufficient, especially in large classrooms. Overlapping tasks, classroom management, and repetition of listening activities consumed valuable time.

Citations: *“Time management is important to reach the objective of the lesson.” (Q5, Participant 5), “I need extra time... I cannot manage the time properly.” (Q8, Participant 2)*

Theme: LLS – Limited Listening Strategies

Several teachers pointed out that overcrowding limited their ability to implement effective listening strategies such as prediction, note-taking, or group discussions. In large classes, these strategies were either too chaotic or unmanageable.

Citation: *“Impossibility to apply sound listening strategies like note-taking and predicting.” (Q6, Participant 2)*

Theme: CAP – Classroom Arrangement Problems

Inflexible or poorly organized seating made it difficult for all students to hear clearly, interact with the audio source, or participate in group tasks. Teachers also noted that back-seat students often remained disengaged.

Citations: *“Most of the distracted elements are in the back.” (Q10, Participant 2), “It is impossible to arrange overcrowded classes on the shape U.” (Q10, Participant 5)*

Theme: TMS – Technical and Material Shortages

This theme covers the widespread lack of suitable listening tools, including outdated or faulty audio devices, lack of headphones, or insufficient printed scripts. Some teachers brought their own materials to overcome these obstacles.

Citations: *“No headphones and speakers (audio device).” (Q9, Participant 4), “The school-provided audio phones make a disturbing sound.” (Q9, Participant 2)*

Theme: SCC – Student Comprehension Challenges

Students’ limited language background, lack of familiarity with native speaker accents, and lexis gaps were noted as significant barriers to listening texts comprehension. Teachers also reported that there were learners who tried word-by-word translation, leading to confusion.

Citations: *“Too much unknown vocabulary.” (Q5, Participant 4), “They hate listening to native speakers... they don’t understand the pronunciation.” (Q5, Participant 2)*

Theme: TB – Teacher Burnout

Overcrowded classes contributed to emotional exhaustion, especially when teachers had to repeat listening activities, manage behavior, and maintain energy levels throughout the session.

Citation: *“Repetition of listening script makes teachers tired.” (Q5, Participant 5)*

Theme: LE – Low Engagement

Lack of interest, low motivation, and quick boredom—especially when learners failed to understand the listening content—led to passive behavior and minimal participation.

Citations: *“They get bored quickly.” (Q5, Participant 4), “Pupils... won’t understand and couldn’t do the tasks related to the scripts.” (Q7, Participant 4)*

Table 2 and Figure 1 present the thematic distribution of challenges related to teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms, based on a total of 81 coded references.

Code	Theme	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
NDI	Noise and Discipline Issues	16	19,75 %
LIA	Lack of Individual Attention	12	14,81 %
TMC	Time Management Constraints	9	11,11 %
LLS	Limited Listening Strategies	8	9,88 %
CAP	Classroom Arrangement Problems	7	8,64 %
TMS	Technical/Material Shortages	10	12,35 %
SCC	Student Comprehension Challenges	9	11,11 %
TB	Teacher Burnout	4	4,94 %
LE	Low Engagement	6	7,41 %
Total		81	100 %

Table 2: Challenges' themes

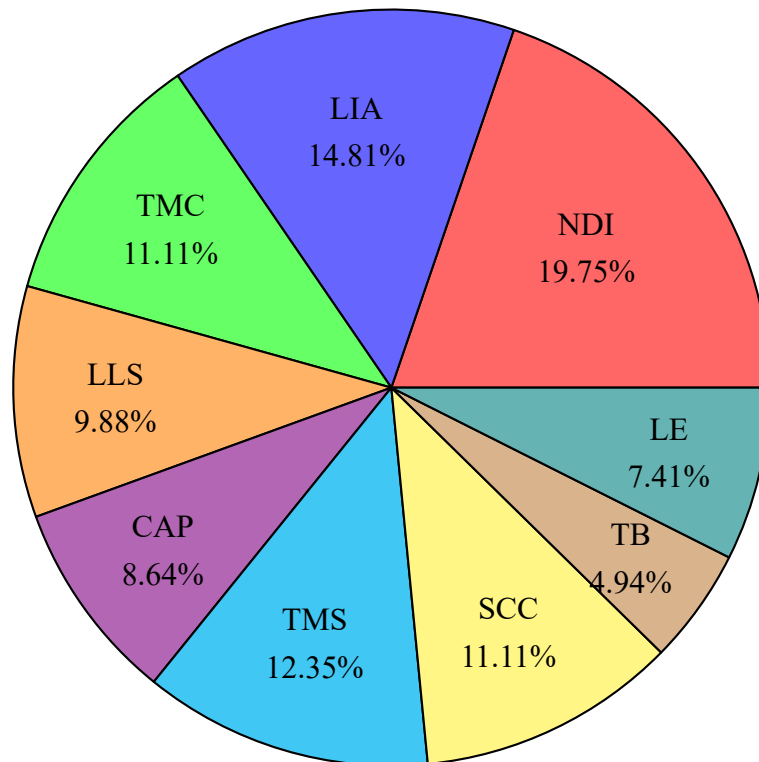


Figure 1: Frequency of challenges' themes

The most frequently cited challenge is *Noise and Discipline Issues* (NDI), which appeared 16 times, accounting for 19.75% of the total references. This is followed by *Lack of Individual Attention* (LIA) with 12 occurrences (14.81%), and *Technical/Material Shortages* (TMS) with 10 mentions, representing 12.35%. Two themes were reported with equal frequency: *Time Management Constraints* (TMC) and *Student Comprehension Challenges* (SCC), each cited 9 times and representing 11.11% of the coded data. The theme of *Limited Listening Strategies* (LLS) was referenced 8 times, amounting to 9.88%. *Classroom Arrangement Problems* (CAP) were noted in 7 instances (8.64%), while *Low Engagement* (LE) appeared 6 times, making up 7.41%. The least

frequently mentioned theme is *Teacher Burnout* (TB), which occurred 4 times, corresponding to 4.94% of the total references.

Section III: Suggested strategies and support This section presents the thematic analysis of teachers' responses to Questions 11–15. Through systematic coding of the data, 9 central themes were identified, each reflecting a commonly reported strategy or solution used to address the challenges of teaching listening in overcrowded Algerian middle school classrooms. The frequency of each theme was calculated based on its recurrence across all the 30 responses, including repeated mentions by the same participant in different answers.

Theme: CPGW – Collaborative Pair and Group Work

This theme includes strategies employing group and pair-based collaboration, such as jigsaw listening, think-pair-share, and group discussion. These strategies were designed to encourage participation, manage noise, and foster interactive listening activities. Teachers pointed out the benefit of allowing students to choose peers to help reduce stress and enhance productivity.

Citation: *“Using group work and pair activities helps manage large classes.” (Q11, Participant 6) “Think-Pair-Share... students listen to scripts, discuss with partners, then share with the class.” (Q12, Participant 1)*

Theme: DLCS – Differentiated and Learner-Centered Strategies

Teachers emphasized the necessity of adapting their instructions to match learners' learning styles and language proficiency. This included offering varied task types, assigning roles based on learners' strengths, and observing learners over time to understand their needs. This aligns with learner-centered pedagogy.

Citation: *“Mixing activities... so they can talk, write, move, and listen in a variety of ways.” (Q11, Participant 2)*

Theme: IPS – Institutional and Professional Support

This theme includes external support measures, such as teacher training, workshops, materials provision, and professional collaboration. Teachers expressed a strong need for ongoing development opportunities and support from school administrators or the Ministry to improve listening instruction conditions.

Citation: *“Offering training and workshops... to get other meaningful and useful strategies.” (Q14, Participant 1)*

Theme: EMTA – Effective and Multimodal Teaching Aids

Teachers frequently reported relying on visuals, gestures, printed tasks, posters, and scripts to compensate for large class size limitations and students' comprehension challenges. These aids were essential in making listening tasks more accessible and meaningful.

Citation: *“Using visual aids, repeating the audio multiple times, using subtitles, and giving pupils listening scripts.” (Q11, Participant 3)*

Theme: UPDP – Use of Pre-During-Post Framework

Some teachers described structured use of the PDP (Pre-, During-, Post-listening) framework to scaffold understanding and keep students engaged. Tasks were broken into stages to help learners process content incrementally and better retain information.

“PDP framework: pre-listening, during, post-listening... divide text into small sections.” (Q11, Participant 4)

Theme: UTAE – Use of Technology and Audio Equipment

This theme covers the use and access to sound devices, multimedia, and other technologies to enhance listening practice. While teachers praised its usefulness, they also implied challenges with availability and quality, reinforcing the connection to infrastructure.

“I raise the voice of the audio to make sure they can hear.” (Q11, Participant 2)

Theme: CSR – Class Size Reduction

This theme includes requests or suggestions for reducing pupil numbers per class, which teachers believe would lead to improved listening outcomes through better interaction, attention, and feedback.

“Smaller class sizes would allow for more personalized attention and instruction.” (Q14, Participant 1)

Theme: TLM – Time and Lesson Management

Teachers mentioned difficulties with managing time efficiently within large classrooms, noting how classroom management or extended tasks could consume listening time or delay lesson progression.

“In my beginnings as a teacher I had a problem in managing the time.” (Q13, Participant 2)

Theme: FA – Flexibility and Adaptability

Some teachers emphasized that in overcrowded settings, they must show a high level of flexibility, innovativeness, and responsiveness to new strategies to adapt to learners' needs and classroom settings.

“Being open to trying new strategies... can help create a more effective and engaging environment.” (Q15, Participant 1)

Table 3 and Figure 2 present the thematic distribution of suggested strategies and forms of support for improving listening instruction in overcrowded classrooms, based on a total of 79 coded references.

Code	Theme	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
CPGW	Collaborative Pair and Group Work	22	27,85 %
DLCS	Differentiated and Learner-Centered Strategies	6	7,59 %
IPS	Institutional and Professional Support	13	16,46 %
EMTA	Effective and Multimodal Teaching Aids	17	21,52 %
UPDP	Use of Pre-During-Post framework	2	2,53 %
UTAE	Use of Technology and Audio Equipment	6	7,59 %
CSR	Class Size Reduction	9	11,39 %
TLM	Time and Lesson Management	2	2,53 %
FA	Flexibility and Adaptability	2	2,53 %
Total		79	100 %

Table 3: Suggested strategies' themes

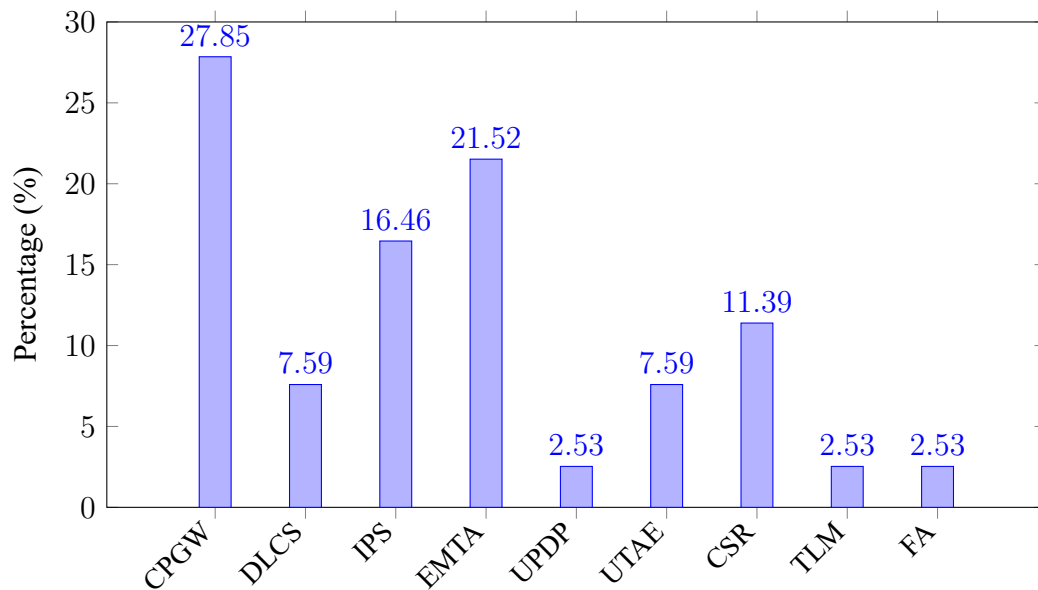


Figure 2: Frequency of suggested Strategies' themes

The most frequently cited strategy is Collaborative Pair and Group Work (CPGW), which was referenced 22 times, accounting for 27.85% of the total. This is followed by Effective and Multi-modal Teaching Aids (EMTA), cited 17 times (21.52%), and Institutional and Professional Support (IPS), which appeared 13 times, representing 16.46%.

The theme of Class Size Reduction (CSR) was mentioned 9 times, making up 11.39% of the references. Two strategies—Differentiated and Learner-Centered Strategies (DLCS) and Use of Technology and Audio Equipment (UTAE)—were each mentioned 6 times, comprising 7.59% each of the total coded responses.

Three themes were reported with equal frequency: Use of Pre-During-Post framework (UPDP), Time and Lesson Management (TLM), and Flexibility and Adaptability (FA). Each of these appeared twice, contributing 2.53% respectively to the overall dataset.

IV.4. Discussion

In this study, we have divided the discussion section into two main parts. The first one sheds light only on the relation between the findings and the theoretical background provided in this research. While the second part is dedicated to explain whether the findings have answered our research questions or not, as well as whether the hypotheses are confirmed or denied.

IV.4.1. Theoretical implication of the research findings

Section I: Background and demographics

The demographic information gathered from the participants offers a strong foundation for the

current study and confirms its relevance. The range of teaching experience of 3 to 31 years provides a rich diversity of perspectives, from new teachers to highly experienced ones, which allows for a deeper exploration of how different teaching backgrounds can influence their perceptions and coping mechanisms in overcrowded classrooms. In addition, all participants have taught first-year middle school pupils, which directly relates to the topic of the study. The class sizes, ranging from 38 to 47 pupils, as indicated, clearly fall into the definition of overcrowded classrooms, referred to in the literature as above 30 students per class. This confirms that the participants work under conditions that maximally reflect the phenomenon under investigation. Furthermore, their responses regarding the frequency of listening instruction (mostly 2 to 4 sessions per sequence) indicate that listening is a regularly practiced component in their teaching routines, which underscores its importance and supports the study's focus on listening skill challenges. Overall, this background information validates that the selected participants are appropriate and their teaching context fits the objectives of this research.

Section II: Challenges in teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms

The results highlight Noise and Discipline Issues (ND) as the most pressing challenge in overcrowded Algerian classrooms. This echoes what Blinova (2021) and Anderson and Lynch (1988) emphasize about environmental and pedagogical limitations. These overcrowded environments make it hard for learners to concentrate or even hear the script—testifying to noise control as being pivotal to effective listening comprehension. The second most prominent obstacle is the Lack of Individual Attention (IA), which is supported by Baines et al. (2006) and OECD (2010), who explain that large classrooms restrict the capacity of teachers to provide individualized feedback and identify struggling learners.

Time Management (TM) and Limited Listening Strategies (LS) issues also underscore how overcrowding not only increases the teacher's cognitive and physical demands but also limits instructional efficacy and pedagogical flexibility. According to Hussain et al. (2017), difficulties in managing the physical arrangement of overcrowded classrooms result in wasted teaching time, hindering the flow of lessons. Moreover, as Goh (2008) notes, the limited use of structured listening strategies in such contexts can severely limit the cognitive processing learners need for successful comprehension.

In addition, another major challenge identified is Student Comprehension Challenges (SC), which refers to learners' limited ability to process and decode spoken English in overcrowded classrooms. As noted by Blinova (2021), these difficulties often stem from a lack of prior knowledge, which prevents learners anticipating and making sense of new topics—a problem regularly experienced in such environments. Additionally, as stated by Goh (2008), learners may be overwhelmed by the speed of spoken input, even when it would otherwise be well received as slow, comprehensible speech with room to think and respond. This is due to limited linguistic proficiency, lack of prior exposure, or inadequate background knowledge, all of which are increased by

classroom overcrowding.

Further, the data illustrates that Technical and Material Shortages (TE) and Classroom Arrangement (CA) are not merely logistic issues but have direct implications for pedagogical quality. This resonates with the environmental and infrastructural concerns suggested by Hayes (1997) and UNESCO (2019).

Interestingly, the less frequently mentioned but still critical themes—Teacher Burnout (TB) and Low Engagement (LE)—suggest psychological effects on both teachers and students. As Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011) state, attention and motivation are important internal factors of listening; they are clearly compromised in noisy, stressful, and inadequately resourced contexts.

Together, these findings suggest the complex interaction of environmental, pedagogical, and psychological factors that make effective listening teaching in overcrowded classrooms a serious problem. Far from being individual barriers, they represent a compounding challenge that educators must manage with on a daily basis—often under extreme limits of time and resources, as well as intense pressure. This is a picture of teachers struggling to offer meaningful listening instruction despite the structural limitations of their teaching environments.

Section III: Suggested strategies and support

The most common theme across responses was Collaborative Pair and Group Work (CPGW), representing more than a quarter of all strategy-related responses. Teachers emphasized its utility for promoting participation, reducing classroom tension, and enhancing comprehension in listening activities. This finding is aligned with Sijekula et al. (2023) and Basorun (2013), noting the role of peer interaction, group discussions, and cooperative approaches like think-pair-share and jigsaw activities in enabling learners' language comprehension and participation—especially in crowded settings where one-on-one teaching is difficult.

Effective and Multimodal Teaching Aids (EMTA) were second in frequency, demonstrating how teachers compensate for overcrowding by employing visual, auditory, and printed materials to support learners' comprehension. These aids serve as essential scaffolds, especially in cases where learners lack a sufficient language background or where classroom discipline is difficult to maintain. This is in keeping with observations in your literature review where UNESCO (2019) remarks that “classrooms may lack basic resources such as learning materials, seating, and technology, all of which can negatively affect teaching quality and student engagement.” Additionally, Saha and Talukdar (2008) emphasize the importance of visual and contextual materials in both the pre- and during-listening phases to enable learners to anticipate and decode the listening input more effectively.

The theme of Institutional and Professional Support (IPS) prioritizes teachers' direct need for support across the system to manage the stress of teaching in overcrowded classrooms. These involve administrative support, access to teaching assistants, and ongoing professional development

aimed at managing large classes effectively. The study confirms that overcrowded environments impose significant physical, emotional, and professional stress to teachers (Hayes, 1997; Khan & Iqbal, 2012), with insufficient support leading to poor instructional quality and teacher burnout (Hadi & Arante, 2015). The findings underscore the necessity for institutional intervention, as emphasized in the literature review: without adequate training, resources, and structural support, teachers are left overwhelmed, and student learning inevitably suffers. Sustainable reform in overcrowded classrooms must therefore prioritize equipping teachers—not just restructuring numbers. Although not explicitly addressed in the literature, differentiated and learner-centered approaches emerged strongly in participants' responses, highlighting teachers' efforts to adapt tasks to diverse learner needs despite institutional constraints. Regarding technological integration, such practices align with recent observations by Sijekula et al. (2023), who noted that digital tools—such as online quizzes, shared documents, and multimedia resources—can enhance classroom interaction and bridge communication gaps between teacher and learner.

The remaining themes—Class Size Reduction (CSR), Time and Lesson Management (TLM), Pre-During-Post Framework (UPDP), and Flexibility and Adaptability (FA)—represent deeper contextual and pedagogical concerns. Their lower frequency does not diminish their importance; rather, it reflects that while teachers may find these harder to implement consistently, they remain part of a broader, ideal framework for effective listening instruction.

Class Size Reduction (CSR) was also a recurrent wish among participants, who argued that smaller class sizes would allow for improved attention, participation, and tailored feedback. This echoes research by Khan and Iqbal (2012), who define overcrowding as exceeding 30 pupils and argue that it hinders meaningful student-teacher interaction and the effectiveness of skill-specific instruction like listening.

The final themes—Time and Lesson Management (TLM), Use of the Pre-During-Post Framework (UPDP), and Flexibility and Adaptability (FA)—although each mentioned only twice, suggest deeper pedagogical awareness. Teachers spoke of the need to structure lessons carefully using PDP stages, manage listening time wisely, and remain adaptable to varying classroom conditions. These findings are in agreement with studies by Hussain et al. (2017), who observed that poor classroom arrangements have the effect of losing instructional time. In the same view, Hayes (1997) and Khan and Iqbal (2012) emphasized that overcrowded environments impose an extra burden on teachers, negatively affecting the quality of their instruction. The reference to the PDP framework, though less frequent, reflects an understanding of structured listening pedagogy. As highlighted by Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011), breaking listening tasks into pre-, during-, and post-listening stages can reduce cognitive overload and support learners' comprehension.

Overall, the findings suggest that teachers are not passive victims of overcrowding

IV.4.2. Research questions and hypotheses: An analytical review

The findings of the study respond directly to the three research questions. For Q1, the data based the major challenges faced by teachers when teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms, such as noise, discipline issues, lack of individual attention, time constraints, and insufficient resources. These challenges correspond directly with the literature review and confirm the validity of the first research hypothesis (H1).

Regarding Q2, the study offers a diverse set of adaptive strategies utilized by teachers, including collaborative group work, using multimodal teaching materials, and differentiated instruction. These responses directly support the second hypothesis (H2) that adaptive teaching strategies can improve listening instruction in overcrowded settings.

Finally, Q3 is addressed in connection with participants' remarks about how such strategies have impacted learners, noting enhanced learner participation and improved comprehension where such strategies are applied effectively. This affirms the third hypothesis (H3), confirming that these strategies—despite challenging conditions—can positively impact learners' listening skills and participation.

To conclude, the findings not only answer the research questions but also strongly support all three hypotheses, indicating both the seriousness of the challenges and the proactive efforts of teachers to overcome them.

IV.5. Recommendations

According to the results obtained in this study, and given the nature and extent of the present study as it relates to the teaching of listening skill in overcrowded Algerian middle school classrooms, the following recommendations are proposed. These fall into two categories: practical-pedagogical recommendations, directed towards teachers, school administrators, and education authorities; and academic recommendations, directed towards guiding further research into this unexplored area. Each recommendation is grounded in the evidence raised in the findings and supported by the challenges and strategies identified in the literature review. This approach ensures both immediate applicability and relevance for long-term development within similar educational contexts.

IV.5.1. Pedagogical and practical recommendations

- **Encouraging listening practice at home:** Given the limited in-class time (only 2–4 listening sessions per sequence as reported by teachers) and the frequent disruption caused by noise and discipline issues, assigning listening tasks for home practice can help reinforce learners' exposure to spoken English. As the findings showed, overcrowded classrooms often limit individual attention and hinder learners' ability to process audio material effectively;

thus, using accessible resources such as WhatsApp voice messages, YouTube links, or CDs can offer additional opportunities for practice without placing further strain on classroom conditions.

- **Diversifying listening tasks:** The findings confirmed that limited listening strategies were a common problem in overcrowded classrooms. To address this, teachers should incorporate a broader variety of tasks—such as global listening, selective listening, note-taking, or role-plays—within their sessions. These methods can support comprehension without the need for extra resources and allow learners to engage in cognitive processing tailored to their proficiency levels, as emphasized in the literature.
- **Fostering peer collaboration among teachers:** Many teachers described using collaborative group work and sharing strategies informally to cope with their teaching constraints. Institutionalizing this peer support through regular reflection meetings or school-based professional learning communities can promote resource exchange and pedagogical development. This aligns with the study's finding that collaboration is one of the most effective strategies in managing overcrowded environments.
- **Implementing formative listening assessment:** The lack of individual attention and time management difficulties can be mitigated through simple, ongoing assessment methods. Teachers can use mini oral quizzes, checklists, or quick comprehension questions to evaluate listening progress. This practice was reflected in the findings as both feasible and effective in real-time classroom conditions without requiring curriculum modifications.
- **Integrating appropriate digital and technological tools:** A recurring theme in the findings was the positive impact of visual and auditory aids on learner engagement and understanding. Teachers reported using pictures, videos, and printed materials to scaffold comprehension. Expanding this to include subtitled videos, podcasts, or interactive content (when internet access permits) can support varied learning preferences and reduce cognitive overload, particularly in contexts with mixed proficiency levels.
- **Providing continuous teacher training:** As demonstrated in the findings, teachers face high levels of stress and burnout due to overcrowding. Targeted professional development—specifically classroom management, listening instruction skills, and technology use—can improve teaching effectiveness. This recommendation is also consistent with the literature, which identifies teacher preparation as an influence on responding to contextual challenges.
- **Adapting curricula to contextual constraints:** Several teachers demanded more realistic curricula that reflect the nature of overcrowded class conditions. Revising curricular goals and expectations to accommodate large group dynamics and limited resources would better align teaching objectives with what is realistically achievable. This requires collaboration between educational authorities and curriculum developers.

- **Reduce group size during listening activities:** While class size reduction overall may be difficult to achieve due to structural constraints, smaller group formations during listening tasks were suggested as beneficial by participants. This supports focused engagement and increases learner participation, even within a large classroom. However, implementation requires scheduling flexibility and possibly additional support staff or space.
- **Raise awareness among educational authorities:** Many teachers indicated that inspectors and school leaders are often unaware of the extent of the challenges they face. Advocacy for better classroom conditions, more time allocation for listening, and investment in resources must be channeled through official avenues to improve institutional understanding and support.
- **Establish based language laboratories:** Although resource-intensive, establishing even minimally equipped language labs—with headphones, audio devices, or basic computer access—was highlighted as a long-term solution. Teachers reported that better audio quality and focused listening environments would significantly enhance listening instruction outcomes. This reflects infrastructural needs also cited in the literature.

IV.5.2. Academic recommendations for future research

- **Expand the scope of research to other contexts:** As this research was directed exclusively to first-year middle school pupils in Bouira, future studies could apply the same design across different Algerian regions and school levels. This would allow for comparative analysis and greater generalizable understanding of the challenges and strategies associated with the teaching of listening in overcrowded classrooms.
- **Incorporating learners' perspectives:** Having learners' perspectives included in future qualitative research examine how they perceive and respond to listening activities within overcrowded environments. This would develop more learner-centered teaching practices.
- **Analyzing the impact of overcrowding on other language skills:** The current study was focused on identifying challenges of teaching listening skills within overcrowded classrooms. However, findings revealed that the negative impact of large class sizes—such as limited individual attention, reduced interaction time, and increased classroom noise—may be equally harmful to the development of other language abilities. Future studies could examine ways in which these same overcrowding-related constraints affect the teaching of speaking, reading, and writing. Such investigations would provide a full understanding of the overall impact of overcrowded settings on language acquisition.
- **Investigate the impact of specific strategies on listening outcomes:** While this study identified some strategies like collaborative group work and multimodal materials as frequently

used, further research would be needed to measure their short-term influence on learners' comprehension, motivation, and long-term language development in overcrowded settings.

- **Evaluating the use of technological tools in overcrowded classrooms:** There were some teachers interviewed in this study who mentioned the lack of technology equipment as a barrier for providing effective listening instruction. However, others indicated interest in employing audio materials and technology to increase learner motivation. Based on this, further research might examine how current technological supports—such as mobile applications or pre-recorded listening exercises—are possibly utilized and tested in overcrowded classrooms to support both teachers and learners.
- **Investigating the Role of Teacher Training:** The findings indicated that a number of teachers did not feel they had been properly trained to teach listening competently, especially in large classrooms where greater management and facilitative skills are required. Research about how teacher training programs address the teaching of listening, particularly in difficult classroom conditions, would give some indication of both pre-service and in-service development priorities. This would help us to know whether current training is enough to prepare teachers for real-world classroom challenges.
- **Conducting comparative studies between overcrowded and small class sizes:** the teachers consistently pointed out during the interviews that when there are large class sizes, it is not feasible for them to implement interactive and learner-centered listening activities. A comparative study of listening teaching in overcrowded class sizes compared to smaller class sizes would allow researchers to observe the differences in the learners' engagement, teacher strategies, and learning achievements. This would also shed light on the direct effect of class size on the effectiveness of teaching listening.
- **Adopting a longitudinal research design to listening development:** This study provided a snapshot of the current challenges in teaching listening at the first-year middle school level. However, many of the difficulties identified—such as lack of attention, poor listening habits, and minimal student participation—suggest long-term implications for language development. Future research might adopt a longitudinal design to track students' progress in listening over several academic years in overcrowded settings. This would provide a deeper understanding of how such conditions affect learners' listening growth over time and how teaching practices evolve in response.

Conclusion

This chapter presented a comprehensive thematic analysis of semi-structured interview data collected from six English teachers, shedding light on the challenges of teaching listening in overcrowded Algerian middle school classrooms and the strategies teachers use to overcome the challenges.

The findings provide a combination of environmental, instructional, and psychological issues—most notably noise and discipline issues, lack of individual attention, time constraints, and material or technical shortcomings. These were also added to by students’ comprehension challenges, teacher burnout, and low student engagement—all of which directly hinder the effectiveness of listening instruction in such settings.

However, the responses also demonstrate the creativity and adaptability of teachers, many of whom implemented collaborative and group learning activities, visual and multimodal aids, and differentiated approaches to facilitate deeper engagement and comprehension. They also demonstrated a strong sense of pedagogical frameworks, such as the pre-during-post model, even though its application was sometimes constrained by classroom conditions. Themes of the need for continued professional development, improved infrastructure, and reduced class sizes repeated consistently across the data, revealing greater institutional gaps that hinder progress.

What is shown strongly by these findings is an image of teachers actively negotiating the demands of a difficult teaching environment. The strategies they described reflect not only pedagogical intent but also emotional investment and professional commitment. Rather than being passive recipients of policy constraints, these teachers are already generating practical, classroom-based solutions—sometimes at personal cost.

Notably, the theme of teacher burnout—though less frequently discussed—emerged as a deeply significant concern, reminding us that educational reform must address not only student outcomes but also teacher well-being. These results, instead of being abstract data points, are the daily realities experienced by professionals who are striving under difficult conditions.

This type of sustainable improvement in listening pedagogy cannot rely solely on top-down reforms; it must be grounded in the resilience, creativity, and first-hand knowledge of those working directly in the classroom. In this context, meaningful progress will depend on the willingness of the educational authorities to recognize such challenges and invest in support systems for reinforcing the commitment already present within classrooms.

General conclusion

General conclusion

Teaching listening skills is a fundamental process in the learning process in middle schools, but owing to overcrowdedness, it becomes difficult. This study consists of four chapters; the first two ones concern the theoretical parts dealing with the previous studies about teaching listening and overcrowded classrooms, and the other two chapters, which cover the practical parts are about data analysis and discussion. It includes challenges perceived in teaching listening skills in overcrowded classrooms. The research aimed to understand a lived experience of first-year English teachers at Mohamed Khider Middle School in Bouira, Algeria. These teachers are facing obstacles and difficulties in the learning process of listening skills of managing large and noisy classrooms while striving to deliver effective instruction in listening comprehension.

The study applied a qualitative case study design supported with an exploratory sequential mixed methods design. Through purposive sampling, six experienced English teachers were selected to share their views by conducting semi-structured interviews. The data collection process was carefully organized to provide for ethical considerations, reliability, and contextual relevance. In this research, we utilized the systematic thematic coding and reduction process, which is a step-by-step guide to coding and quantizing qualitative data, complementing the study's purpose of identifying and highlighting recurring themes across participant responses. It became clear that the challenge of teaching listening skills in overcrowded environments is not only about the quantity of students in a room but also about the quality of support teachers receive or fail to receive from the educational system. Overcrowding interacts with other barriers, such as inadequate resources, outdated teaching materials, and limited training, creating a compounding effect that ultimately affects both teaching quality and learner outcomes.

In this research, we highlighted the deep impact that overcrowding has on the efficacy of listening instruction. In such environments, excessive noise is not just an occasional annoyance but a constant and unavoidable feature of daily classroom life. It makes it difficult for students to hear, process, and respond to spoken English, and for teachers to maintain their intended pace and structure of lessons. Classroom discipline becomes more difficult to manage as the number of learners increase, making it harder to maintain order and concentration. Moreover, the lack of individual attention is an essential component in the development of language skills, further disadvantages struggling students who might otherwise benefit from one-on-one guidance. Teachers often find themselves sacrificing interaction for classroom control, turning their role into that of a crowded manager rather than a language facilitator.

These conditions not only hinder learners' acquisition of listening skills but also contribute to the mental and emotional exhaustion of teachers. With too many pupils and too few resources, many educators report feeling stressed, demoralized and helpless. The inability to reach all students effectively leads to feelings of professional inadequacy, especially for young or newly trained teachers.

Emotional fatigue, job dissatisfaction, and burnout are commonly reported. These psychological effects are rarely visible in academic performance data but are crucial for understanding the full scope of this issue.

Through these challenges, the study revealed a powerful narrative of resilience and adaptability among the teachers interviewed. These educators did not simply endure the difficulties—they responded to them with creativity, flexibility, and a deep sense of responsibility toward their students. One of the most effective strategies reported was the use of group-based activities. By placing students in small groups, teachers were able to promote collaboration, manage noise levels more effectively, and distribute their attention more effectively. This approach not only improved student engagement but also helped maintain focus during listening tasks.

In addition, many teachers used multimodal resources such as visual aids, real-life audio recordings, and gestures to supplement spoken English. These materials served to reinforce comprehension and address the varied learning preferences among students. In some cases, teachers implemented different instructions, adapting listening tasks and follow-up questions based on students' language levels. These methods illustrate a profound understanding of pedagogical principles and a readiness to experiment and adapt in the face of structural limitations.

Moreover, the effectiveness of these teachers' strategies has limits. While such approaches can temporarily reduce some obstacles, they cannot replace the foundational need for institutional support. Teachers should not have to rely solely on their own initiative and creativity to overcome systemic shortcomings. Therefore, the study calls for urgent educational reforms at the policy and administrative levels. These include reducing class sizes, updating and expanding access to instructional materials and technological tools, and providing ongoing professional development focused specifically on managing large classrooms and teaching listening comprehension effectively.

Education authorities must actively engage with teachers when developing and implementing reforms. When the voices of educators—those who work directly with pupils everyday—are excluded from discussions, the resulting decisions often fail to address the most pressing challenges on the ground. Teachers possess practical insights that are invaluable for shaping realistic and stable interventions which can improve morale and build a more collaborative educational environment.

It is also important to acknowledge the emotional dimension of teaching in overcrowded settings. Many participants in this study described feelings of isolation and emotional fatigue. Despite these feelings, they continued to show up for their pupils, often going beyond their contractual obligations. Their perseverance reflects a deep sense of vocational calling and ethical responsibility. However, such dedication should not be exploited as a substitute for proper support. Teachers deserve working in good conditions that enable them to professional growth and emotional well-being.

Improving listening instruction in overcrowded classrooms is not only a technical challenge, it

is also a question of educational equity and professional dignity. It involves asking fundamental questions about what kind of educational experience we want to provide for pupils and what kind of support system we are hoping to build for teachers. It also involves acknowledging that listening is often overlooked in favor of reading and writing but it is a foundational language skill that requires focused attention and specialized strategies, especially in foreign language contexts.

To sum up, we can say that this study provides strong evidence that overcrowded classrooms significantly hinder both teaching effectiveness and pupil learning, particularly in the context of listening instruction. However, the findings also highlight the possibility of significant improvement. Through teachers' dedication, innovation, and resilience which are already planting the seeds for improvement to sustain and amplify these efforts, educational institutions must provide structural support and recognize the essential role of teachers in shaping the learning environment. By valuing teachers' experiences, providing the resources they need, and reforming policy in meaningful ways, we can transform even the most challenging educational environments into spaces of growth, connection, and hope for both students and those who teach them.

Bibliography

Bibliography

- Anderson, A., & Lynch, T. (1988). *Listening*. Oxford University Press.
- Andrew, M., Goodman, R., McBain, Y., Ye, W., Sun, W., & Bampen, M. (2023). Classroom management document research: What are effective, proactive and workable techniques for maximizing learning and minimizing disruption in the classroom? *International Journal of Sociologies and Anthropologies Science Reviews*, 3(4), 13–20. <https://doi.org/10.60027/ijssr.2023.2944>
- Asher, J. (1968). *The total physical response method for second language learning*. San Jose State College.
- Baines, E., Blatchford, P., & Kutnick, P. (2006). Changes in grouping practices over primary and secondary school transitions: What do pupils and teachers think? *Educational Studies*, 32(3), 259–271.
- Basorun, J. O. (2013). Quality learning in large classes. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 1(3), 1–6.
- Blinova, O. A. (2021). The challenges of developing listening comprehension: Evidence from popular efl course books. *INTED2021 Proceedings*, 317–323. <https://www.academia.edu/45586752>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Teaching by principles: An interactive approach to language pedagogy* (3rd ed.). Pearson Education.
- Burnett, G. (1995). Overcrowding in urban classrooms.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (2nd). SAGE Publications.
- DeCorby, K., Halas, J., Dixon, S., Wintrup, L., & Janzen, H. (2005). Classroom teachers and the challenges of delivering quality physical education. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 98(4), 208–221.
- Fernández, R., Correal, J. F., D'Ayala, D., & Medaglia, A. L. (2023). A decision-making framework for school infrastructure improvement programs [Advance online publication]. *Structure and Infrastructure Engineering*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15732479.2023.2199361>
- Field, J. (1998). The changing face of listening. *English Teaching Professional*, 6, 12–14.
- Gilakjani, A. P., & Ahmadi, M. H. (2011). A study of factors affecting efl learners' english listening comprehension and the strategies for improvement. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 2(5), 977–988. <https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.2.5.977-988>

- Goh, C. (2008). Metacognitive instruction for second language listening development: Theory, practice, and research implications. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 20(1), 1–26.
- Green, M., & Doran, H. (2000). Still no room to learn.
- Hadi, J. M., & Arante, T. L. (2015). Barriers in teaching english in large classes: Voice of an indonesian english language teacher. *Nahdlatul Wathan Mataram University*, 1–7.
- Hadjadj, A. (2020). *Enhancing efl learners' listening skills through repetition techniques using short stories: The case of first-year middle school students in algeria* [Master's thesis]. University of Amar Telidji Laghouat [Unpublished].
- Han, S. (2018). Effects of class size on student achievement in elementary and secondary education: A systematic review. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 88, 48–62.
- Harmer, J. (2007). *The practice of english language teaching* (4th ed.). Pearson Longman.
- Hayes, D. (1997). Helping teachers to cope with large classes. *ELT Journal*, 51(2), 106–116.
- Hess, N. (2001). *Teaching large multilevel classes*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hussain, H., Ahmad, N., Asma, & Hakim, F. (2017). An investigation of teaching methodologies and disciplinary problems in overcrowded classrooms. *Haripur Journal of Educational Research*, 1, 53–61.
- Khan, P., & Iqbal, M. (2012). Overcrowded classroom: A serious problem for teachers. *Elixir International Journal*, 49, 10162–10165.
- Küçükler, H., & Kodall, A. (2018). Foreign language teaching in over-crowded classes. *English Language Teaching*, 12(1), 165–175. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v12n1p169>
- Lacheheb, S., & Abdessamad, Y. (2023). *The impact of overcrowded classrooms on efl teachers' performance and student assimilation: The case of fourth year middle school, m'sila* [Master's thesis]. University of Mohamed Boudiaf, M'sila [Unpublished].
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd). SAGE Publications.
- Mohamed, O. (2018). Classroom management and supervision. <https://fji.oer4pacific.org/id/eprint/113/1/Classroom%20Management%20and%20Supervision.pdf>
- Namey, E., Guest, G., Thairu, L., & Johnson, L. (2008). Data reduction techniques for large qualitative data sets. In G. Guest & K. M. MacQueen (Eds.), *Handbook for team-based qualitative research* (pp. 137–161). Altamira Press.
- OECD. (2010). *Overcrowded classrooms: The views of teachers and students*.
- Paltridge, B., & Starfield, S. (2007). *Thesis and dissertation writing in a second language: A handbook for supervisors*. Routledge.
- Richards, J. C. (2008). *Teaching listening and speaking: From theory to practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*. Cambridge University Press.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

- Rost, M. (2011). *Teaching and researching listening* (2nd ed.). Longman.
- Saha, M., & Talukdar, M. A. R. (2008). Teaching listening as an english language skill.
- Sandelowski, M. (2001). Real qualitative researchers do not count: The use of numbers in qualitative research. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 24(3), 230–240. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.1025>
- Sangangula, A. L. (2016). The effects of large class size on effective efl teaching and learning: A study of grade 10 teachers and pupils at instituto médio politécnico do namibe, angola.
- Sasikumar, N., Fathima, M. P., & Roja, M. P. (2013). Managerial problems faced by teachers in overcrowded classrooms at secondary level. *Review of Research*, 2, 1–6.
- Saud, S., Masood, S., Afridi, S., Masood, R., & Afridi, F. (2020). Impact of overcrowded classroom on teaching-learning process at the elementary level in public sector schools of quetta city. *European Academic Research*, 8(2), 414–427.
- Seherrie, A. C. (2023). Toward an innovative cooperative learning framework to counterbalance the effects of overcrowded classrooms. In *Axiom academic publishers* (pp. 119–150, Vol. 1). <https://doi.org/10.62869/001c.123561>
- Sijekula, L., Larrington, M., & Mbanga, T. (2023). Enhancing a quality teaching and learning environment in large classes in south african universities: A theoretical exposition. *Annals of Social Sciences and Management Studies*, 9(5), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.19080/asm.2023.09.555773>
- Skehan, P. (1998a). *A cognitive approach to language learning*. Oxford University Press.
- Skehan, P. (1998b). Task-based instruction. In W. Grabe (Ed.), *Annual review of applied linguistics*.
- Skehan, P., & Foster, P. (1999). The influence of task structure and processing conditions on narrative retellings. *Language Learning*, 49(1), 93–120.
- Smith, T. M. (2016). Reflections on classroom management: A conversation with classroom management scholars. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and Ideas*, 89(3), 76–80.
- Sugiarti, A. (2013). *Improving the teaching and learning process of listening through total physical response (tpr) to the fourth grade students of sd negeri sidoarum in the academic year of 2012/2013* [Unpublished thesis].
- Swan, M. (2005). Legislation by hypothesis: The case of task-based instruction. *Applied Linguistics*, 26(3), 376–401.
- Taherdoost, H. (2022). How to conduct an effective interview: A guide to interview design in research study. *International Journal of Academic Research in Management (IJARM)*, 11(1), 39–51. <https://hal.science/hal-03741838>
- UNESCO. (2019). Behind the numbers: Ending school violence and bullying. global education monitoring report 2019. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000366483>
- Ur, P. (1984). *Teaching listening comprehension*. Cambridge University Press.
- Willis, D. (1996). *A framework for task-based learning*. Longman.

Appendices

Appendix A — Interview with Participant 1

Section 1: Background and Demographics

Question 1: *How long have you been teaching at middle school?*

Answer: *I have been teaching English for 9 years, since 2016.*

Question 2: *What levels have you taught so far?*

Answer: *I have taught the four levels so far.*

Question 3: *On average, how many students are in each of your classes?*

Answer: *They are around 40 to 45 students in each class.*

Question 4: *How often do you teach listening?*

Answer: *I teach listening three to four sessions per sequence.*

Section 2: Challenges in Teaching Listening in Overcrowded Classrooms

Question 5: *What are the main difficulties you face when teaching listening in overcrowded classes?*

Answer: *One of the main difficulties I face when teaching listening in overcrowded classes is ensuring that each student gets sufficient practice and feedback. With too many students, it can be hard to monitor individual progress, provide them personalized attention, and manage classroom noise levels which can be a source of distraction in the listening activities. It can also be difficult to engage participation with limited opportunities for one-on-one interaction. It can be difficult to have the intended result during the listening lesson in such conditions.*

Question 6: *Do you think class size affects how well students understand listening tasks? Why?*

Answer: *In large classes, students may have limited opportunities to ask questions, receive individual feedback, or engage in personalized discussions. This can make it harder for them to clarify doubts and fully grasp the listening material. Additionally, larger classes can be noisier, which may distract students and reduce their ability to focus on the listening tasks. However, in small classes, teachers can provide more tailored support, monitor students' progress more effectively, and create a more interactive learning environment. This leads to better student engagement, improved understanding, and more effective learning outcomes.*

Question 7: *How do noise levels or classroom discipline issues affect your listening lessons?*

Answer: *Noise levels and classroom discipline issues can significantly impact listening lessons. High noise levels can distract students and make it difficult for them to focus on the listening material, while discipline issues can disrupt the flow of the lesson and reduce student engagement.*

Question 8: *Do you find it difficult to monitor and assess students' listening performance in large classes?*

Answer: *Monitoring and assessing students' listening performance in large classes can be challenging. With many students, it can be difficult to provide individualized feedback and support, and conduct regular assessments and evaluations. To address this, teachers try to use strategies like peer assessment and self-assessment activities, group work, and discussion. These approaches help us get a better sense of students' listening abilities.*

Question 9: *Are there any technical or material-related challenges you encounter (e.g., lack of audio devices, poor sound quality)?*

Answer: *Yes, technical and material-related challenges can arise. Some common issues encountered include limited access to audio devices or technologies such as headphones or sound systems, and poor sound quality, which can make it difficult for students to clearly hear and understand the listening materials.*

Question 10: *How does the classroom arrangement or seating affect listening activities in your experience?*

Answer: *The classroom arrangement or seating can significantly impact listening activities. For example, traditional rows can make group discussion challenging, while a circular or U-shaped arrangement can facilitate interaction. Seating students in pairs or small groups can encourage collaboration and peer discussion during listening tasks.*

Section 3: Suggested Strategies and Support

Question 11: *What methods or strategies have you found useful when teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms?*

Answer: *Some strategies or methods that can be useful when teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms include group work and discussion, jigsaw listening (which means focusing on different aspects of a listening text, then regrouping to share information), Think-Pair-Share (discussing with a partner before sharing with the group), and scaffolding (providing support and guidance). To better teach listening in overcrowded classrooms, I would benefit from training in effective classroom management strategies to maintain a productive learning environment. Access to high-quality listening materials and resources, as well as peer support and collaboration to share ideas and strategies with colleagues, would also be helpful.*

Question 12: *Are there any group-based or pair-work techniques you use to improve listening outcomes in large classes?*

Answer: *Some group-based or paired work techniques that can improve listening outcomes in large classes include Think-Pair-Share, where students listen to scripts, discuss with partners,*

then share with the class. Jigsaw Listening divides students into groups, each focusing on different aspects of a listening phase, then regrouping to share information. Another strategy is group discussion, where students discuss a topic or questions related to the listening material in small groups. These strategies are often used in the tutorial sessions because those have fewer students and are task-focused.

Question 13: *What kind of support would help you better teach listening in such conditions (e.g., training, materials, class size reduction)?*

Answer: *Quality listening materials and engaging audio and video resources would help achieve better listening outcomes. Collaboration and peer support, sharing ideas and strategies with colleagues, and professional development in managing large classes effectively are also needed. Reducing class size would be a significant improvement.*

Question 14: *What do you believe schools or the Ministry of Education could do to reduce the challenges you mentioned?*

Answer: *I believe schools or the Ministry of Education could take several steps, such as reducing class sizes to allow for more personalized instruction. Providing professional development—offering training and workshops on strategies for teaching listening in large classes—would be very beneficial. Also, reviewing and updating the syllabus to incorporate more listening activities that meet diverse learners' needs, and equipping schools with advanced and reliable devices for listening activities would be important. Language laboratories would also help, although it may be difficult to provide them in every Algerian school.*

Question 15: *Do you have anything else you'd like to add regarding this topic?*

Answer: *Flexibility and adaptability are key when teaching in overcrowded classrooms. Being open to trying new strategies, methods, and techniques tailored to students' needs can help create a more effective and engaging learning environment and improve results. We hope to create more strategies and techniques to improve listening sessions, especially in overcrowded classes. Based on my experience, it's difficult to teach listening to first-year pupils, even though they are more interested than older students. They face English for the first time and struggle to understand it. However, for future generations, teaching English will be easier since they will have already been exposed to the language in primary school.*

Appendix B — Interview with Participant 2

Section 1: Background and Demographics **Question 1:** *How long have you been teaching at middle school?*

Answer: *I have been teaching at middle school for 3 years.*

Question 2: *What levels have you taught so far?*

Answer: *I have taught 3rd, 2nd, and 3rd grade.*

Question 3: *On average, how many students are in each of your classes?*

Answer: *On average, there are 40 students in each class.*

Question 4: *How often do you teach listening?*

Answer: *I teach listening two sessions per sequence. In some sequences, it can be 4 sessions, depends on the theme needed.*

Section 2: Challenges in Teaching Listening in Overcrowded Classrooms

Question 5: *What are the main difficulties you face when teaching listening in overcrowded classes?*

Answer: *The main difficulties I face when teaching listening in overcrowded classes are problem of noise (especially when we have disrupted elements) which leads to: Time management and the TTT (Teacher Talking Time). When we have a lot of TTT, learners will not receive enough information. Lots of students lead to lots of instructions and transforming few information. Disruptive behaviors and conflicts among students. This leads to interrupting classmates, even the excellent elements, so they are not concentrating (lack of concentration as result of noise and their age). Weak or non-ability to perceive or differentiate sounds or words (homonyms as an example). Average and weak students will struggle more to advance in a full class. Problems of understanding or hearing words: Most of the students, from my experience, hate listening to native speakers. As EFL learners, they don't understand the pronunciation and feel distracted as soon as the audio starts- even the excellent elements. They usually ask me to read the script, saying, "No Misses we want to hear your voice". They feel uncomfortable and think they won't grasp anything. As some have told me, when I speak it sounds like English, but native speakers sound like Chinese*

Question 6: *Do you think class size affects how well students understand listening tasks? Why?*

Answer: *Yes, class size affects understanding listening tasks, such as: Strategy application difficulties: Impossibility to apply sound listening strategies like note-taking and predicting. During the warm up, I use flash cards to introduce the topic, then start writing the tasks so they will not be interrupted. Students need strategies of listening such as note taking, because they already know the questions and can better focus. Task delivery and attentiveness: Tasks are chosen according to the*

class size. In smaller classes: I can write true/false or w/h questions without wasting time- students are more attentive and quiet. In overcrowded classes (40- 45 students) I have to change my strategy, e.g., I give true/false questions orally because writing them on the board causes distraction. Group work limitations: Impossibility of dividing into groups in the course session. Sometimes I divide them into groups in the tutorial sessions (TD) using specific techniques, but for games or tasks of “I learn to integrate” that aim to produce a written piece. With large and noisy classes, if they sit or turn to the board, students start talking. Keeping them facing me helps maintain their attention. Sequencing constraints: Before starting a sequence we need to draw the sequence map to know approximately how many sessions are needed. This is done by: dividing the lessons according to the learning objectives and the framework (PDP with listening and reading, PPU with practice like grammar). We mobilize the lessons by creating relationships between them—for example, the practice lesson often builds on the listening lesson by taking examples from it. Some sequences deal with new topics that learners have no background knowledge about, so we sometimes need up to four sessions to give students the opportunity to grasp as much information as possible. In overcrowded classes, this becomes even more necessary due to the slower pace and extra effort needed for comprehension.

Question 7: *How do noise levels or classroom discipline issues affect your listening lessons?*

Answer: *Noise levels affect my classroom listening lessons by: Creating a negative atmosphere: listening needs a positive atmosphere, in noise environment there are many people who are speaking at the same time, so it became a noisy session rather than a listening session In some classes problem of hearing: sometimes they don't hear the questions or answers of each other, they don't even hear the script. So, they don't have any information about the topic and they will not give you back output. As a result there is a problem of interpreting message.*

Question 8: *Do you find it difficult to monitor and assess students' listening performance in large classes?*

Answer: *Yes, I do. sometimes I need extra time. Because for 1st year, only 2 sessions per-week are insufficient. Due to the large number of students and noise, sometimes I need another half hour from the next session to finish my listening lesson because I cannot manage the time properly.*

Question 9: *Are there any technical or material-related challenges you encounter (e.g., lack of audio devices, poor sound quality)?*

Answer: *Yes, there are technical and material-related challenges, including: lack of audio devices: The teacher often brings her audio phones, pc, scripts, flashcards and even worksheets. The school-provided audio phones make a disturbing sound, so pupils cannot hear clearly. Perceptive style differences: Learners grasp information differently: visual, audiovisual, verbal, kinesthetic, etc. Syllabus and material issues: No update for the information in the school book. For example, teaching technology by presenting the computer parts like “mouse” and “central unit”, while learners now they use smartphones and iPads. Teachers spend their own money to bring updated*

flashcards and worksheets Time constraints: Two sessions per week are not sufficient for first year syllabus of (to complete five sequences) At least, an extra session is needed to reach the objectives.

Question 10: *How does the classroom arrangement or seating affect listening activities in your experience?*

Answer: *Yes, classroom arrangement and seating affect listening activities in several ways: Back seat distraction: Most of the distracted elements are in the back. I raise the voice of the audio in order to make sure they can hear. Grouping strategy: We should divide them into groups and it is better to give them the choice (to reduce noise) This help understand each student's level and character (e.g., putting a weak, and shy student with talkative learner to impact him). Teacher movement and engagement: When reading the script, I go to the back and move around the classroom to ensure all students can hear it and to not be noisy (they feel shy to talk in front of the teacher directly). This helps me to asses them fairly, and prevents them from saying they didn't hear anything. I also use big flashcards. For students at the back, I ask them to come to the board and see what the flashcards are about when they are in small size.*

Section 3: Suggested Strategies and Support

Question 11: *What methods or strategies have you found useful when teaching listening in overcrowded classrooms?*

Answer: *Teaching in groups, dividing in small groups (pair work is better in overcrowded classes, so we will avoid the noise coming from all groups. Pair work is better, especially when they have to produce at the end for example interview, or conversation, applying playing roles is a good kind of motivation), giving students an opportunity to speak, the GEV (get everyone's voice in the room) it means you should hear the voice of every learner depending of the difference types of learning (shy, isolated, talkative, the one who makes noise but he is concentrating sometimes) so I need to hear different voices/ elements not always the same. When you students opportunity to speak "No hands up" technique which means any students may be expected to answer or explain a concept because the teacher who chose the ones who answer, so by saying I have the list and I will chose from it and no hands up, all of them are quite and follow with the lesson. Mixing activities, it depends of the perceptive style of learners (visuals, audiovisuals, verbal ...) it depends of the type, so they can talk, write, move, listen in variety ways. Therefore, each student will have the opportunity to answer. For example, the one who can produce spoken output and grasp more information will answer the oral tasks, and the one who is better in writing will come to the board and answer in a written way. So teacher have to differentiate the type of tasks, strategies and techniques in order to tackle the objectives. Differentiating the types of learners depends on the experience of the teacher and time, it takes time by providing the whole first term (one or two months) just to observe and make differences to know what learning style for each learner. I can notice their differences better in the tutorial session, since they have only tasks and with the half number of students I can notice them better.*

Question 12: *Are there any group-based or pair-work techniques you use to improve listening outcomes in large classes?*

Answer: *Techniques, giving them the choice to be in a group or pair work. Choose your partner, by giving them the chance to choose their partners they feel free and comfortable and they can produce more.*

Question 13: *What kind of support would help you better teach listening in such conditions (e.g., training, materials, class size reduction)?*

Answer: *Different kind of support helped me to teach listening better in such conditions, such as: Training: In my experience, training was good, especially how to manage time. in my beginnings as a teacher I had a problem in managing the time, Materials, Audio scripts, Class reduction.*

Question 14: *What do you believe schools or the Ministry of Education could do to reduce the challenges you mentioned?*

Answer: *The Ministry of Education could: Give more importance for teaching English as a foreign language, extra sessions especially for first year (2 sessions per week with 5 sequences to accomplish are not enough) The coefficient is not enough to be only one, so pupils are not interested because they can replace the mark of English with only Sport exam, so they became less interested and noisier, and make English sessions as entertainment sessions compared with other modules that have more coefficients. Providing school materials, like flashcards, worksheets, technical materials, etc. Update the school books to facilitate presenting the topic before starting the listening lesson. Provide laboratories, if they have their headphones they became more interested.*

Question 15: *Do you have anything else you'd like to add regarding this topic?*

Answer: *Listening is very important and indispensable skill in teaching English language. It is the first step and the basic part for the coming stages in learning. We start sequence theme by it. It is an indispensable skill in each sequence, we should start with it and even we should use it in accordance with our aim for the upcoming practice lessons like grammar.*