



ENGLISH TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN MANAGING LARGE CLASSES: A CASE STUDY

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Article History

Submitted 15 July 2023

Revised 1 August 2023

Published 19 August 2023

Abstract.

In order to create an engaging teaching and learning environment, classroom management is crucial for teachers. In line with this, this study was to find out the teachers' way in managing large classes and to know what strategies that used by the teachers when teaching the large classes. The design of this study is qualitative method. This study involved two English teachers at MTsN 3 Banda Aceh. The data of this study were collected through observation and interview. To analyze the data, Miles and Huberman' concepts was applied. The finding of this study demonstrated that that the teachers of MTsN 3 Banda Aceh managed large class by applying the proper strategies to ease at teaching and controlling large number of students effectively. The implemented strategies by teachers included (1) planning the lesson plan; (2) creating the comfortable classroom; (3) grouping students and forcing discussion; and (4) making rules and providing learning media.

Keywords: *Strategy; Managing; Large Class*

INTRODUCTION

Class is a place where students learn to gain knowledge and information, and interact with friends and teachers. The learning activities must be interesting and could attract students to involve in the class. The involving of students in the class can be seen of how teachers use the learning methods, build social relationships, create discipline situation, and keep responsibility in the teaching and learning process. The teacher is the facilitator of students learning that take the variety of role within the classroom (Marzulina et al., 2021). To fulfill that role, teachers should pay attention to the students' social background, students' intellectual and the physical classes, so the teachers can carry out their role appropriately (Fitri, 2022). Also, a teacher must have the professional competence or skill as well as good moral in order to instill these values to students (Kaur, 2019). It is because a teacher will determine the effectiveness and the efficiency of the implementation of education.

In teaching the class, the teacher should be able to manage the class because the class is a learning environment and it is an aspect of the school environment regulated and supervised, so that learning activities are directed towards educational goals. Good classroom management will be a good teaching interaction as well. Learning objectives can be achieved with having comfort class and without finding any significant obstacle. Regard to this, teacher should be able to manage class and provide the nice atmosphere that enable students to learn in order to get the expected result (Pungki & Suwartono, 2019).

Managing classroom is not always being able to be maintained it is caused by obstacles that come unexpectedly and are beyond the ability of the teachers. These constraints occur since the uncontrollable condition in the classroom. The atmosphere of learning will be disrupted which is marked by the outbreak concentration of students (Simbolon & Simbolon, 2022). It usual happen since the class have large students that make teacher could not control the whole class. In line with this, the teacher should bring the situation of learning to normal with having various strategies so the intention of learning could be achieved.

A key problem in language studies is the huge class, which is also just in the minds of traditional teachers who are interested in learning how pupils learn a second language in overcrowded classes. Numerous difficulties arise while teaching a big class, both within and outside the classroom. According to Harmer (2007), large classes bring difficulties to the teaching and learning process in general and to teachers and students in particular as with number, teacher find it difficult to organize effective and creative activities. Large class sizes can encourage student disengagement and alienation in the classroom, which can undermine students' sense of responsibility and result in actions that both reflect and encourage lack of involvement. With 50 or more students in a class, big courses are normal. According to Bain (2004), teaching large classes presents some challenges for educators, such as how to address, navigate, and tackle the following effectively:"

- a) Classroom management
- b) Student engagement
- c) Knowledge comprehension
- d) Teaching approaches
- e) Assessment and grading strategies
- f) Students' feelings of isolation

Based on these reasons, this study was conducted to find out how teachers handle large class and what strategies used by teachers in controlling large number of students in the classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Large class is where the number of students exceeds the capacity. Minh Trang (2015) said large class is with too much number of students. The strategy that used in a large class must have a specific method to make teaching and learning process run effectively. The teacher must be able to make students understand the learning process in the class optimally. This condition is considered as a difficult situation to conduct the teaching process. Teaching in such classrooms may be similar to teaching in other contexts, but if so, teaching in these classes is more difficult, stressful, and much more demanding richard (Richards, 2006). However, to be a teacher, he supposed to handle all the situation happen in the class.

The strategy that used in teaching large class perhaps almost similar to the normal class, but there some ways that the teacher must pay attention more. Teaching large class poses many challenges, however teachers must promote the students to follow the class as the rule. If teachers do not push students follow the rule, the quality of teaching in the large classrooms will not up to the mark due to the excessive strength, lack of individual attention and time from teachers, lack of focus, concentration, seriousness and willingness to learn on the part of the learners (Sushma, 2017). In addition, Deborah J (2017) revealed some strategies in teaching large class as follows:

1. Class discussion

Having opportunities for students to speak in front of their peers becomes excellent practice. It becomes a great opportunity for the quietest students to be heard and for the frequently vocal participants to listen closely to their classmates. It is powerful when students hear their work being read aloud by others.

2. Atmosphere of connection

When coming into class, all students had various struggles and obstacles that they had experienced, and teachers were unaware of what students were going through. So, teachers must build good interaction with students to create good situation in the teaching and learning process. It is because the learning environment play an important role in growing motivation for students in classroom (Simbolon & Simbolon, 2022).

3. Group project

The group project that teacher assign has also led to student involvement on who speak in the class. Applying group work in teaching and learning speaking will give advantage both teachers and students. For example, working in group could increase the opportunity for students to speak with their partners (Harmer, 2007).

Pungki & Suwartono (2019), on their research proposed ten strategies that are: Arranging students' seat position; Grouping students; Using media; Controlling the students; Using humor; Being interactive; Managing the time; Giving punishment; Giving penalty; Telling the story and singing. Those strategies were based on the finding of their observation and interview of their research. By doing this, teacher could manage the large class properly, make students understand material well, getting students interest and attention in learning process.

Another strategy confirmed by Pertiwi et al (2021), in their research were working in group, peer tutoring, visual imagery, and translation. This strategy was very helpful in large class both language class or non-language class. By using this strategy, it eases teacher convey the message from their material to students and student become easier to receive the information of the material that teacher explained. All in one, all this strategy could be done by providing guidance, motivation and attention more to students.

Based on some experiences, handling large class was surely not similar with normal class for teacher, and teachers lost to explain some materials to the students due to the class feel ended quickly, and also sometimes teachers had to repeat the material many times to make all students understand. The noisy class, the discomfort atmosphere and the less attention of students were the other problem in controlling large class. If teacher could not find the proper strategy to manage this situation in the classroom, this situation becomes an insuperable problem. It is the major way for teachers to realize that teacher must use kinds of strategy to be able to handle the large class optimally. Therefore, this study was conducted to find out how teachers handle large class and the strategies used by teachers in controlling large number of students in the classroom.

METHODOLOGY

This current study used qualitative research design to observe how teachers manage large class and to find out the teachers' strategies of facing large number students in a class. This study conducted at Secondary School level MTsN 3 Banda Aceh. The two English teachers were chosen to be the participant in this study. The participants were chosen based on purposive sampling since those teachers had experience in facing large number students in the class. Purposive sampling is a non-random sampling technique where the researcher

determines sampling by determining specific characteristics that are appropriate to the purpose of the study so that it is expected to answer the research problem (Crossman, 2020).

The interview and observation checklist as the instrument for this study. First, the writers used observation list. It was done to know how the situation or the process of teaching and learning in large class. Observation is a technique or method used to collect data by observing ongoing activities and we want to see a case that will be observed in the research (Sukmadinata, 2005). Second, the interview activity was done after observation to find the information what strategies the teachers apply in managing a large class. Interview is an activity carried out to obtain information directly by expressing questions to the respondents (Sugiyono, 2018).

This current study analyzed the data of instrument by using Miles and Huberman's concept that consist of three steps (Miles & Huberman, 1994). First, data reduction in which the data was selected and transformed to the transcriptions. Second, data display in which the data was organized and assembled to permit the conclusion. Last, conclusion drawing and verification in which the collected data was verified to revisit the data, then interpreted to gain the conclusion. Moreover, after the data collected, the writers processed the data by rechecking all of the data. This was conducted to guarantee that all data was accurate and complete.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This current research was specifically concerned on how teachers manage large class and what strategies used by teachers in managing large class. The data was obtained from two classes' observation and two English teachers' interview at MTsN 3 Banda Aceh. The result of data was categorized within four sub-categories to ease in analyzing and understanding the

No.	Teachers	Sub-categories	Observation time	
			1 st	2 nd
1.	A	1. Planning the lesson	√	√
		2. Classroom atmosphere	√	√
		3. Classroom communication and interaction	√	√
		4. Controlling the students	√	√
2.	B	1. Planning the lesson	√	√
		2. Classroom atmosphere	√	√
		3. Classroom communication and interaction	√	√
		4. Controlling the students	√	√

Table 1. Teachers' Strategies in Classroom

Based on observation, the checkmark (√) in the table above indicates that the result of observation was good. Based on twice observation, the process of teaching learning in large classes done by teacher A and teacher B was the same in which they conduct the

teaching and learning process professionally. From four sub-categories, both teacher A and B showed the perfect teaching learning process in their classroom. In the teaching process, both teacher applied their role in English classroom by delivering material in the class systematically according to the lesson plan. As the example, teachers given the material for students by observing the situation in the class in order to make students interested in learning activities, attract students involved in the classroom, and overcome students' boredom with using the proper strategies in class and force students to speak English language.

In starting teaching activities, both teacher started the class with asking students to pray *Do'a* in ten minutes in order to get blessing in learning. After finishing *Do'a*, both teacher asked the students about the previous topic in order to know the students' understanding and reread the material at home or not. In two classes, teachers used strategies in order to get all students involved in teaching learning process. This is also done to make students keep focusing on learning and make students become active in the class. Also, both teachers in two classes keep motivating students to be able to interact and communicate in the class by asking students questions, asking students telling the stories and promoting students to speak in front the class.

The result of interview was to support the observation result in which both teachers taught large class with using some strategies so that students able to keep focusing on their learning. To see the detail result of interview can be seen as following:

a. Planning the lesson

Teacher A and teacher B prepared the lesson plan based on curriculum. They said lesson plan is important key to be prepared before starting class. This is caused by having lesson plan, they knew what they will do in the class. When they did it, they know how to use the proper strategies in the class, they know how to face students in the class, they know how to explain the material in the class. In specifically, they can complete the class as the expected goal.

Having lesson plan before teaching class was considered as a process to implement steps in teaching in the class. Preparing lesson plan actually is not only use for teaching large class but also in normal class. Lesson plan is a strategy that must be had by all teachers before teaching. Lesson plan was the dominant strategy in teaching learning process. Without lesson plan, a teacher is believed could not implement the teaching learning process according to the expected goals. The result was supported by Fitri (2022) which found that preparing lesson plan in teaching, it will make rare mistake in teaching process.

b. Classroom atmosphere

Teacher A and teacher B created the comfortable atmosphere in order to make all students could focus on learning. By keeping students' concentration in learning process, so teachers could deliver and discuss the material in the class effectively. If students looked not active in the class, teachers A will approach the students to ask the problem that they faced, while teacher B will open discussion with the students without asking their problems. Particularly, both teachers said that by giving good responses to all students, it makes students stay enthusiastic in learning.

Teachers also realized that the condition and situation in teaching learning process was necessary for students. To obtain good circumstance in large class, teachers should create the attractive atmosphere in the class. By having well circumstance in the class, students will be active and be motivated to learn, express their feeling and speak in the

class. Mansor et al., (2012) found that creating good design classroom environment for positive and supportive learning environment can help students to achieve their learning goals. So, this strategy was very helpful and also become the solution to increase students' English speaking skills.

c. Classroom interaction and communication

In teaching English, teacher A and Teacher B said that they used first language more than English language due to the majority of students lack of understanding in speaking skill. However, they realized that they must force students to speak English in the large English classroom. So, teacher A and B asked student to work in group and opened group discussion to promote students speak or have discussion in their group. If teachers provide group in class, it will ease to control the students' activities. Students who seat in group could learn from their peer and also they will have good interaction. This result was similar with Bahanshal's study (2013) in which learning in a group or with fiends may produce a great interaction between teacher and students, and among classmates.

Moreover, teacher A will give warning or punishment to whom not want to speak, while teacher B was more patient to face students who did not want to speak English in the class by giving advice and telling the useful of English language. Also, both teachers involved all students in learning process by encouraging students to keep active in the class. By having active students, the class will have good communication among students and teachers. Students did not feel shy in asking in the class and they will brave to speak in the class.

d. Controlling students

Controlling the class with learning's rules and media were very helpful in teaching large class. In managing large class, teacher A was more critical or serious in teaching the class to the students and expected that the students can follows the class as the rules in the class. As an example, students must listen to the teachers' explanation and submit all the assignment. Teacher A considered that the rules in the class will make students responsible with their tasks in the class. Meanwhile, teacher B was more free and easy in teaching by giving more gaming, having some media, and learning from the real object and having story in the class. Teacher B supposed that the teaching and learning process should be interesting and creative in order to increase students' interest, attention, and eagerness in learning.

Apart from those, the rules in the class are also necessary in teaching large class. Teacher should make a rule in the classroom in order to make students follow the class well. Rules in the class such no submitting assignment will have punishment, making noisy, and no taking responsibility will have penalty. These rules were believed able to make students change their mind to become good students in the class so that they will learn as expected. Besides, teachers should give videos, picture and game to make all students involved in the class. The proper media that used in the classroom definitely make class more active and the teaching learning process become more attractive. Pungki & Suwartono (2019) in his study revealed that rules and media is the worthy strategy to control students' concentrating and students' enthusiasm in learning.

CONCLUSION

Teaching with large number of students in the classroom will differ with teaching students in the normal classroom. Teaching large class is a challenges for teachers that cannot be avoided. It needs more concentration to make all students focus on learning process. Based on the finding, it shows that the teachers applied some strategies in teaching at large number students of the class. Teachers had well discipline before starting the class from preparing lesson plan as the dominant key in teaching the class, creating the pleasant class to keep students focus on their learning, encouraging students speaking in the class and applying the proper rules and media for controlling students. Therefore, it is clear that the teacher handles large class by using some strategies so that students could actively follow the teaching learning process. The strategies that used by teacher are (1) preparing lesson plan; (2) creating the comfortable classroom; (3) group work ; (4) group discussion: (5) build rule and (6) provide learning media. By having some strategies in managing large class, both English teachers have their own ways of how to handle large class.

However, due to only two teachers as the object of this study, so it is suggested for further consideration to conduct study with have more participants so that may find more strategies in teaching large class.

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