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**Teachers' Professional Practices vis-a-vis the
Challenges Mixed-Ability Secondary School Classes
Pose**

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the Master Degree in
Didactics of Foreign Languages

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Dedication

I would devotedly love to dedicate this work to my dear family, without whose constant prayers, love and support my dissertation would have been way more difficult to finish.

To my father who did not live long enough to see this work accomplished.

To the joy of my life: My mother: thank you ever so much for believing in me, for your patience, sacrifices, and endless love.

To the light of my tunnel: my sisters

To my beloved brothers

To all my nephews

I pray Allah that your love and your light will last forever; I pray Allah to give me the strength to make you always happy and proud of me, I pray Allah to forever bless you.

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Abstract

The manner in which a teacher presents his/her lesson is called a teaching strategy. This plays a significantly important role in the field of language teaching and learning. Our study is premised on the hypothesis stipulating that using well-adopted and well-thought-through teaching strategies is highly prone to generate a positive effect on students' level /using well-adopted teaching strategies to teach mixed-ability classes can improve students level. So, this research has striven to unveil whether the teaching strategies applied to teach mixed-ability secondary school classes are suitable or not. This study, likewise, aims to investigate the different problems that teachers and students alike face in the classroom, and try to look for some solutions to overcome these challenges. In order to collect the necessary data for this study, we have opted for the questionnaire as a research tool. We designed one for students and another one for teachers to meet the various objectives we set for this present undertaking. The students' questionnaire was administered to 60 secondary school students of the foreign languages stream. They were selected randomly from different secondary schools like Ati Abdelhfid, Didouche Mourad, Maghlawa Ramdan, Ben Toubal Slimane. This questionnaire aims fundamentally at exploring students' needs, personalities, attitudes, and so on. In addition, teachers' questionnaire was delivered to 16 secondary school teachers via the only available channel, viz. electronic mails. It targeted the investigation of teachers' perceptions and strategies towards teaching mixed-ability classes. Both questionnaires were administered in Mila. This study took place from May 2020 until August 2020. The research findings revealed that it is possible for teachers to deal with mixed-ability classes successfully even if they face some problems. This may require the instructors to employ effective management strategies in addressing all the challenges.

Key Words: Mixed-ability classes, teaching strategies, challenges

List of Abbreviations

C L: Cooperative Learning

I C T: Information Communication Technology

L 1: First Language

L 2: Second Language

N°: Number

N.D: No date

Q: Question

T L: Target Language

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General Introduction

Recently a big debate has been aroused on the issue of teaching mixed-ability classes; which means classes where learners have a broad range of levels. The biggest and conceivably most demanding challenge for any teacher is capturing each students' attention and conveying ideas effectively, as Trenfer (n.d) says, "The best teachers are those who show you where to look but do not tell you what to see". According to this quote, in order for teachers to make their classes more active they should implement innovative strategies and deploy different techniques. They must also take care of individual needs of each student regarding their interests, abilities, preferences, learning styles ...etc. This research talks about the various challenges that most teachers face when dealing with multilevel classes and what they suggest to overcome these challenges in order to help all students especially those with low capacities.

2. Statement of the Problem

Teaching mixed-ability classes is not an easy task as it seems to require much effort and attention. Richards (1988) believes that "every class we ever meet is mixed-ability" (p.1). The majority if not all the classes consist of multilevel students who differ greatly in ability, level, learning style, intelligence, learning strategies and so forth. This situation requires from the teachers to vary their ways of teaching and bring extra materials in order to reach all the students. Teaching strategies, therefore, are seen as a secret recipe not every teacher knows it.

Generally speaking, such differences of students in the classroom can create some challenges, like large classes, participation, task difficulty...etc. The teachers' job in here is to tackle the problem and try to overcome it through suggesting helpful solutions.

3. Aim of Study

The aim of this research is to shed light on the various language teaching strategies used by teachers to teach third year secondary school mixed-ability classes, to make sure that they help all students to understand and improve their levels. Also, we aim to get a closer look at the notion of mixed-ability classes and individual differences. Also, these strategies help both teachers and students to cope with the different challenges they face during the teaching learning process. Apart from this, heterogeneous classes are known by their diversity, so teachers need to exert more effort to reach all of them.

4. Research Questions

Our research has sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the different teaching strategies used by teachers to teach a mixed-ability class?
2. What hallmarks a mixed ability class?
3. What are the challenges encountered by teachers while teaching a mixed-ability class?
4. What are the possible solutions suggested by teachers to overcome these challenges?

5. Hypothesis

In order to answer these questions, we suggest the following hypothesis:

1. If teachers use well-adopted strategies to teach mixed-ability classes, their students' level will be improved.
2. Third year secondary school students level will be improved if teachers use suitable teaching strategies.

6. Means of Research

In order to collect the necessary data for answering the above mentioned questions, a descriptive method has been selected. We went for employing the questionnaire: our choice fell on this tool principally because it is closely connected to the nature of the research. It is the best instrument to collect data in a short period. We tailored two differently-scoped questionnaires: one questionnaire for teachers and the other for students. We have randomly selected 16 secondary school teachers, in order to investigate the different strategies and techniques applied by teachers to teach multilevel classes. All teachers teach third year foreign languages classes. The students' questionnaire has been administered to third-year foreign languages secondary school students; the participants were randomly selected from different secondary schools in Mila district.

7. Structure of the dissertation

The current research is basically divided into two parts, the first part is devoted in whole to the theoretical overview, and the second part is concerned with the field work.

Part one is made up of two chapters. Chapter one deals generally with language teaching strategies, what is teaching and the difference between a strategy and a technique. More importantly, this chapter focuses on four main strategies, namely cooperative learning, active learning, differentiated pedagogy, and using technology in the classroom (ICT). Besides, it focuses on some roles of the teacher. Chapter two defines what is a mixed ability-class and the different characteristics of individual differences. Furthermore, the difficulties that teachers face during teaching mixed ability classes, and what do they suggest to overcome those problems are also considered.

Part two encompasses the practical part. It presents the analysis of teachers'

questionnaires as well as the students' questionnaire. This chapter consists of the presentation of the results in form of graphs and tables. Also, it discusses the results and tried to find answers to the research questions. Finally, the general conclusion provides an overall summary of the different points tackled throughout the research.

Chapter One: Language Teaching Strategies

Introduction

Teachers all over the world apply different teaching strategies. This is so because they want to help students learn and achieve their objectives. Specifically, this chapter provides a brief definition of teaching. Then, a part of this chapter is devoted to explaining the difference between a strategy and a technique. The core of this chapter centers primarily on elucidating the different teaching strategies; they may vary from one teacher to another, like interactive learning strategy, cooperative learning strategy, differentiation, and using technology in the classroom. The final part of this chapter focuses on the various roles that the teacher performs or expected to in the classroom.

1. Definition of Teaching

People use different words when talking about teaching and learning. Sometimes the same word will mean different things to different people, and sometimes different words will carry particularly the same meaning. In much modern usage the word teaching was defined by Nicholas (2004) as “the art of profession of a teacher” (p.16). So, teaching is the process of attending to pupils’ needs, experiences and feelings, and intervening so that they learn particular things and go beyond the given. Also, Kumaravadivelu (2003) states that, “teaching is basically a subjective activity carried out in an organized way.” (p.5). In other words, teaching is who, what, and why. Who is the teacher, what is the content or the areas that they must cover during the lesson, what is the purpose behind teaching? Claxton (1984) refers to it as, “what one person does to try and help another to learn.” (p. 211) cited in Williams (2004, p. 16). While describing teaching Lewis and Hill (1985) points out that teaching is not the

terminal objective of what happens in the classroom (p. 7). In addition, Kyriacou (1997) adds that, “teaching that successfully achieves the learning by pupils intended by the teacher.” Webster’s Dictionary International Version (1986) definition describes the end objectives of teaching as (1) to impart knowledge or a skill; give instructions about (2) to provide knowledge of; instruct in (3) to cause to learn by example or experience (4) to advocate, to preach. (p. 176).

2. The Difference between Strategy and Technique

a) Strategy

The word strategy was firstly created by Greeks, who used the term in the military domain for the purpose of leading and commanding armies. Only afterwards did it start to get applied to other contexts and fields, like economy, business, education ...etc. Strategy can also be referred to as a tactic; in this context Orlich, Harder, Callahan, Trevisan, and Brown (2010) argue that, “the term strategy implies a thoughtful planning to do something.” (p. 4) Strategy is used to create an appropriate teaching-learning environment which helps the students in attaining the teaching-learning objectives, for instance using a black board is deemed by many teachers to be a strategy.

Furthermore, Newman and Logan (1971) claim that, “strategies are forward-looking plans that anticipate change and initiate action to take advantage of opportunities that are integrated into the concepts or mission of the company.” That is to say, strategy is the plan to achieve the overall goal, for example the strategy to win a game. According to Miller and Dess (1996) strategy is, “a set of plans or decisions made in an effort to help organizations achieve their objectives.” (p. 352). It refers to the things you think about and decisions you take. A strategy describes how the ends will be achieved by the means; it is bigger than a

technique and smaller than a method. Smith (1998) defined it as a pattern of acts that serves to attain certain outcomes and to guard against certain others. (p. 8).

b) Technique

Technique is something you do, that you might improve with practice day by day or it is a thing you say or do in a particular way. Orlich et al (2010) indicate, “the terms technique and procedure are used as synonyms to signify a series of steps that one takes to employ any general model being used in the classroom.” (p. 4). So, a technique is a moment by moment application of a skill in service of the strategy. In addition, Anthony (1963) says, “techniques were the specific activities manifested in the classroom that were consistent with a method and therefore were in a harmony with an approach as well.” cited in Douglas Brown (2000, p.16). That is to say, a technique is a particular thing you say or do in a specific way. Brown (2000, p.16) provides a precise and concise definition of a technique when he states that it is, “any of a wide variety of exercises, activities or tasks used in language classroom for realizing lesson objectives.” In other words, it is a teaching method, skill, style, procedure which a teacher has selected to facilitate the teaching/learning process (Ware, 1989).

3. Teaching Strategies

3.1. Definition

Choosing a teaching strategy is not an easy job at all. Strategies need to be chosen carefully in order to contribute most effectively to students’ learning. A good definition of teaching strategies is stated by Miller when he says, “teaching strategies are the procedures, processes, and tools used to assist in learning.” cited in Salkind (2008, p.962). That is to say, a teaching strategy is the method that the teacher uses to convey information to their students. One strategy may work with one group of learners but not with the other. Furthermore,

Lawton mentions a teaching strategy is: “a generalized plan for a lesson which includes the learner desired behavior in terms of goals of instructions and an outline of planned tactics necessary to implement the strategy”. Kassem (1992, p. 45) defined teaching techniques as teacher's activities in the classroom to involve students in the subject matter; it requires that students participate in learning activities, share equally with their peers, and react to the learning experience. The teacher also needs to work with students as a friend, and make learning more enjoyable. There are two types of teaching strategies: group and individual. Yelon (1999) declares that teachers should vary their teaching techniques or strategies when he says:

To gain and keep student’s attention, vary your instructional procedures.

One simple thing to do within the lesson is to break up explanations with examples, demonstrations, practice, and feedback. That is enough variation to keep anyone alert. Vary your program format across lessons. Sometimes explain the idea to students; sometimes have learners discover the concepts from examples you provide; sometimes have students explain the meaning of a study; sometimes run a simulation. Have students work individually or in groups. Use varied techniques within a lecture. Use a series of short lectures, followed by exercises, intersperse short readings or videos in the lecture, and ask students to briefly discuss a point with a partner or write a reaction to an issue during a lecture. (p. 154)

3.2. Types of Language Teaching Strategies

There is a wide range of language teaching strategies available to help others learn. Those strategies differ according to: students’ characteristics, interests, skills, abilities,

preferences...etc. A good teacher is the one who varies their strategies according to the factors mentioned above. As Miller (2008) said, “teaching strategies are the procedures, processes, activities, and tools used to assist in language.” (p. 962). Educators employ different instructional strategies to achieve teaching and learning goals and encourage students. The most important EFL teaching strategies are:

3.2.1. Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is not a new concept in education. It was firstly used in the one room school house, where one teacher was obliged to teach students with mixed abilities. At that time teachers use collaboration as a response to the challenging situations. Later on, a number of theories have explained it, like the generative learning theory which suggests that, “when learners explain something to someone else in their own words, they increase their understanding of what they explain.” (Stevens, p. 189). This means generative learning theory gives opportunities to all students regardless of their level. Also, sociocultural learning theory was explained through Vygotsky’s work. He claims that, “for complex cognitive tasks, learners benefit from interactions with more competent peers, like those interactions in cooperative work.” (Stevens p. 189) Moreover, the peagetion learning theory proposes that in cooperative learning, the interactions with peers stimulate this cognitive process that in turn increases learning of new information and skills.

Stevens identifies cooperative learning as, “an instructional process that engages students in collaborative discussions about the content to promote learning” (p. 187). As quoted by (Salkind, 2008, p.962). In other words, collaborative learning tries to change the social and motivational environments in the classroom to foster positive interactions between learners. The teacher is like an orchestra leader, giving instructions, transferring knowledge gradually(step by step), forming groups of students with varying skills, levels, and abilities in

order to promote communication and social skills, allowing students to work in pairs and so on.

Cooperative learning (CL) is also defined by Johnson and Roger T. Johnson as, “the instructional use of small groups such that students work together to maximize their own and each other’s learning.” as cited by (Lee, 2005, p.117). Students ought to work together to achieve their goals.

I. Types of Cooperative Learning

Generally cooperative learning has three types, Johnson & colleagues, 1998a, 1998b; Johnson and Johnson, 1999 suggest that there are, “three types of cooperative learning: formal cooperative learning, informal cooperative learning, and cooperative base groups” cited by (Lee, 2005, p. 118). First, formal cooperative learning is structured, facilitated, and monitored by the educator over time and it is used to achieve group goals in tasks, like problem solving task, decision making... etc. Second, informal cooperative learning is when students work together to achieve a joint learning goal, for instance formulating answers to the questions asked by the educator and listening to partners answers. Finally, cooperative base group is an effective method for learning complex subjects over the course of a semester and establishing help, support, and encouragement amongst peers.

II. Goals of Cooperative Learning

- When students work cooperatively they achieve more, reason better, gain high self-esteem and become more confident.
- Students become more proficient in the use of cognitive strategies, like solving problems, thinking, encoding...etc.

- Individuals learn to appreciate and respect their friends and maintain close relationships with them.
- Develop their social skills and their ability to work with teams, for example joining clubs.
- Collaborative students learning is designed properly so that students learn more than when working alone.

3.2.2. Active Learning

I. Definition

Active learning or learning by doing is anything that the teacher does in the classroom asking questions, posing a problem or issue, carrying out a lab experiment and so on rather than sitting passively in the classroom. Learning by doing is best described by a Chinese famous educator Confucius (n.d.) who said, “tell me and I will forget, show me and I may remember, involve me and I will understand.” cited in(Chatmon, Chi & Davis, 2010, p, 4) Simply, active learning requires students to do meaningful learning activities and think about what they are doing. Likewise, Astin (1985) asserts that active learning accommodates a variety of learning styles, promotes students’ achievement, enhances learner motivation, changes students’ attitudes, and basically causes learners to learn more. (p. 80)

II. Activities Used in Active Learning

Chickering and Gamson (1987) claim that, “for students to be actively engaged, they must read, write, discuss or be engaged in problem solving and take part in cooperative learning and group activities.” (p. 79). In the same view, Wiggins and Mctighe (1998, p. 80) explain that a good activity should develop deep understanding of the important ideas to be learned. Active learning strategies help to initiate learners and teachers into effective ways to

allow students to engage in the activities. Here are some examples: think-pair- share, quick write, turn and talk, polling, individual plus group quizzes, jigsaws, idea line up, four corners, pausing in lecture, sorting strips ...etc.

3.2.3. Differentiation

I. Definition

Traditionally, educators used the term “one size fits all” which means, they teach students using only one method but it is no longer adequate for the majority of learners. In contrast, differentiation provides tailor made instruction i.e. teachers shift from one single size instruction to differentiated instruction as Tomlinson (2001) states, ‘teachers in differentiated classes use time flexibly, call upon a range of instructional strategies, and become partners with their student so that both what is learned and the learning environment are shaped to support the learner and learning.’ (p. 4). Particularly, differentiated instruction attempts to meet the needs of all students since they have different interests, learning styles, preferences, abilities, and so on.

Differentiation is further described by Irish and Ilbeneme (2010) as, “one way to accomplish this is to emphasize differentiated instruction not merely as an instructional strategy, but rather as a critical teaching and learning philosophy that all prospective teachers should be exposed to in teacher education programs.” cited in (Joseph, Thomas & Ramsok, 2013, p, 28) It is a response to learners needs. Moreover, differentiated pedagogy provides students with multiple pathways; as a result, students with mixed abilities experience equal chances to learn.

Tomlinson, a key proponent of differentiation of teaching, defines it as “shaking up what goes on in the classroom so that students have multiple options for taking in information, making sense of ideas, and expressing what they learn”. (p.1). In differentiated pedagogy teachers need to vary their methods, sometimes the tutor needs to work with the whole class, sometimes with small groups, and sometimes with individuals.

II. Differentiation: Content, Process, Product

❖ Content

Teachers can differentiate three elements: content, process, product, according to students’ readiness, interest, and learning profile. (Tomlinson, 2001). Differentiation of the content of a lesson may mean varying the subject matter of the course. Tomlinson (2001, p.72) claims that, “content is the “input” of teaching and learning, it is what to teach or what we want students to learn.” Clearly, content can be differentiated through creating new lessons, in this case the teacher may use new materials, like colourful pictures to present animals for beginners. In the same way, Heacox (2002) suggests that one way teachers can differentiate the content or curriculum they teach is by providing students with the opportunity to choose a subtopic within a main topic or unit.

❖ Process

Differentiation through the process is perhaps the most common form of differentiation. Process means making sense and meaning of content as Tomlinson (2001) identifies it, “process making or, just as it sounds, opportunity for learners to process the content or ideas and skills to which they have been introduced.” (p. 79) Teachers should keep in mind that students are different; each one of them has a different way of learning,

preferences, personalities...etc. He/she must vary his/her strategies of teaching, for instance using the PPP model (present, practice, produce) in different ways, using leveled activities, re-wording...etc.

❖ **Product**

Differentiation of product is another method of differentiation; product is what the student creates at the end of a lesson to emphasize the mastery of the content. Tomlinson (2001) believes that, “a good product is not just something students do for enjoyment at the end of a unit. It must cause students to think about, apply, and even expand on all the key understanding and skills of the learning span it represents.” (p. 89) In other words, product allows students to select a way to show that they have learned what has been presented before. Furthermore, product assignment should help students rethink, use, and extend what they have learned over a long period of time (Tomlinson, 2001, p. 85).

III. Differentiation According to Students’ Readiness, Interest, Learning Profile

❖ **Students’ Readiness**

Students’ readiness generally refers to how ready they are to receive the new concepts, will they be able to understand the subject. Tomlinson (2005a, 2005b) expresses her idea about students’ readiness as, “the concept of student readiness encompasses student knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to the instruction a teacher is planning.” (p. 52). The major goal behind students’ readiness is to make sure that all students have passed through different levels of difficulty of the material presented in the classroom.

❖ **Students’ Interest**

Student interest is a very important basis in the learning process. In fact, any teacher should motivate their learners and encourage them to learn. According to Bess (1997) and Brandt (1998), as cited in (Tomlinson, 2001, p. 52), “there are two powerful and related motivators for engagement in the lesson are: student interest and student choice.” In the same view, student interest is, “what engages the attention, curiosity, and involvement of a student” (Tomlinson & Embeau, 2010, p. 16). If a teacher is passionate about the topic and shares his/her prediction with his/her students, interest will emerge in those students.

❖ **Learning Profile**

Learning profile is the learning preference, Tomlinson (2001, p. 60) identifies it as ways in which we learn best as individuals. While some students prefer to work individually others like to work alone or in pairs. The main aim of learning profile differentiation is to help students understand modes of learning that work best for them.

IV. Differentiation Techniques

- Tiered assignments
- Learning contract
- Varied aiding materials
- Group investigation
- Compacting
- Varied homework

3.2.4. Using Technology in the Classroom

I. Definition

Technology has become an inseparable part of our life since students are exposed to it daily. Information and communication technology (ICT) influences all the aspects of life because it provides both students and teachers with more opportunities in adapting teaching and learning to self needs. Pachler &Field (2001) pointed out that, “ICT gives learners access to a range of resources in the target language (TL) and enables them to find out about how people of TL communities speak and live.” (p. 251). In other words, ICT offers new methods and strategies of teaching since it focuses on the requirements of students. Information and communication technology has a positive impact on teaching; it improves students’ learning through innovative approaches, most of which attempt to create authentic contexts for learning rather than depending absolutely on traditional old methods of teaching and learning. Cox also identifies ICT as, “electronic and computerized devices and associated human interactive materials that enable the user to employ them for a wide range of teaching and learning processes in addition to personal use.” As cited by Nicholls G (2004, p. 58). ICT includes computers, videos, television, and connections with other computers, sensors, switches, the internet and all the software and materials that enable the teacher to teach.

ICT may have several advantages, one of which is the development of innovative ways to interact and communicate with students, like online courses. Besides, it saves money and time because of the quick movement of information. Not only that but also students become more motivated to learn and more involved in the lesson. Furthermore, learning becomes more individualized because of the availability of lessons on the net and even teachers proof of this student may have a chat with a teacher online.

II. ICT Use:

Students may use ICT in different ways such as:

1. Correcting pronunciation and intonation by using voice recognition software.

2. Listening carefully for gist and detail by using real time audio and video.
3. Electronic encyclopedias or dictionaries provide the learners with appropriate and effective references and materials.
4. Using text manipulation software and listening devices to understand the principles and interrelationship of sounds and writing.
5. Communicating with native speakers by using email or Skype or messenger or other communication tools.
6. Using computers to teach specific activities or to access information or play language teaching games, like cross words.
7. Computers can be used also to prepare written text, create graphs or visual displays, and teach the basic skills, listening, reading, writing, speaking, and for research.

4. Teacher's Role

Nowadays teachers are supposed not only to educate, but also to create a suitable environment for learners. For this reason, it is very important to play various roles in the classroom. Before describing the multiple roles of the teacher, it is necessary to explain what a "role" actually is. Hedge (2008) defines it as, "a term in common usage to denote the functions that teachers and learners perform during the course of a lesson." (p.26) In other words, the role is the expected behavior of the teacher in the classroom. As Harmer (1991) states, "teacher can have the following roles: controller, assessor, organizer, prompter, participant, resource, tutor, observer" as cited by Hedge (2000, p.26). So the teacher can play many roles in the learning process such as:

Controller: is a vital role in the classroom, the teacher should be the leader of the activities. Controllers take the register, tell students things, organize drills, read aloud and in

various other ways exemplify the qualities of a teacher fronted classroom (Harmer, 2000, p.108). A teacher must give instructions, organize drills, read aloud ...etc.

Assessor: the main job of the teacher in here is to evaluate students' performance, providing them with feedback as well as correcting them whenever needed as Harmer (2000) writes, "teachers should respond positively and encouragingly to the content of what the students have written" (p. 331)

Organizer: perhaps the most difficult and important role the teacher has to play is that of an organizer. He is like an orchestrator. A good classroom management depends on a good organization, for example the educator gives students information, tells them how to do the activity, divides students into groups...etc.

Prompter: Hedge (2000) refers to it as, "prompting the individual student with a display question to respond in a typical classroom sequence of initiation." (p. 29). This means the teacher encourages and helps students to remember a rule, formulates a point, facilitates learning for them and so on.

Participant: the teacher should join the activity done in the teaching and learning process. At this level teachers are expected to be a part of the exercise as Davies and Pearse (2000) claim, " for activities to work well, instructions should be clear, but also check comprehension and demonstrate the activity if necessary." (p. 131)

Resource: at this stage the teacher's job is to provide students with all information needed, he must be a reliable resource as Harmer (2000, p.110) advises, " when we are acting as a resource, we will want to be helpful and available, but at the same time we have to resist the urge to spoon-feed our students so that they become over-reliant on us." Framed differently, the teacher animates his students to become more independent, instead of giving

them everything; they should only direct them. Some other sources include books, dictionaries, encyclopedias and so on.

Tutor: working as a tutor means that the teacher works together with his students, he takes more time explaining the lesson, acts as a coach when students are involved in project work. Harmer (2000, p.110) adds that, “when students are working on longer projects, such as process writing or preparation for a talk or a debate, we can work with individuals or small groups, pointing them in directions they have not yet thought of taking.”

Observer: the teacher observes his students in order to get a general idea about them, what they like and dislike, which materials they prefer, what type of activities suits them...etc. Harmer states, “teachers do not observe students in order to give feedback. They also watch in order to judge the success of different materials and activities that they put into lessons so that they can, if necessary, make changes in the future.” (p. 62)

Motivator: the job facing every teacher is how to motivate learners. Harmer claims that, “one of our principle roles in writing tasks will be to motivate the students, creating the right conditions for the generation of ideas, persuading them of the usefulness of the activity, and encouraging them to make as much effort as possible for maximum benefit.” (p. 330). This means the teacher should act as a model, he presents his lesson in a motivating way, asking questions, playing a game, or anything else that can push them to exert effort.

Conclusion

To sum up, teaching is an amazing job: all it needs is a magician who can turn any negative aspect into a strength point by choosing the best strategy that suits his/her learners. There is no single teaching strategy that is suitable for all learners, for instance cooperative learning builds a positive relationship among students, and creates a learning atmosphere that

values diversity. Similarly, active learning improves critical thinking. Plus, it promotes long term retention of information. In addition, differentiated instruction strategy addresses the learner differences and needs. Moreover, using technology in the classroom helps both learners and teachers and makes learning meaningful and fun. All these teaching and learning strategies are used interchangeably. Also, the teacher plays different roles in the classroom; he /she is the controller, the leader, the assessor...etc. As Tennyson says,(2018) “while teaching strategies are important, the real conclusion of the research is that teachers need to know when to stop teaching strategies and just let students read”.

Chapter Two: Mixed-Ability Classes

Introduction

When talking about mixed ability classes, it is crucially important to shed light on students with different capacities, levels, personalities, learning styles, intelligences and so forth. Though most classes are multileveled, instructors may find it very difficult to teach such classes. They should be aware of their needs, interests, strengths and weaknesses so that they can succeed in guaranteeing decent learning for them all. education should be equivalent for all which means that the job of the teacher is to reach all the students. In order for an instructor to do this they must apply differentiation pedagogy (see chapter one). Teaching a mixed-ability class is a very challenging task indeed since the teacher is likely to encounter different students, each one of them has a specific way of learning and specific needs; for this reason the teacher may come up against different problems when dealing with multileveled classes.

1. Definition of Mixed-Ability Classes:

The topic of mixed-ability classes has been the focus of debate and investigation in a number of countries around the world. Hedge (2000) notes that, “teaching mixed ability students is a vital and genuine issue that instructors experienced daily”(p.189). Mixed-ability classes means classes where students markedly differ in ability, motivation for learning English, needs, interests, educational background, styles of learning, anxiety, experiences and so on (Ainsalie, 1994). In other words, mixed-ability classes are those which comprise a mixture of able and less able students. In these classes you may find students with high ability of understanding, they always participate in the classroom, whereas low level students may not speak for the whole session.

Also Bell mentions that, “every teacher to some extent must face the challenges of designing a program that addresses the concerns and interests of students of different abilities” (Richards & Burns, 2012, p. 87). This appears to mean the teacher should keep in mind that teaching a mixed ability class is not an easy job as it might seem at first sight; rather, it requires a great deal of hard work. Ansari (2013) identifies a mixed-ability class as, “comprising of not only learners with various capacities but also those that have a broad range of preferences and learning styles.”(p. 183). If students are all the same, the lessons would be so much easier because they have similar levels of proficiency, identical learning needs, and shared interests and strengths but students are different. This variation makes them special and unique. Ireson and Hallam (2001) propose that, “instructors need to recognize that a class is of mixed ability because learners have different strengths and weaknesses and improve at different rates.” (p. 183) Indeed, mixed-ability classes consist predominantly of two types of students which are gifted learners who are autonomous and self-directed; they prefer searching for information alone rather than relying on others unlike slow learners who depend on the teacher to guide them, provide them with lessons and so on.

2. Individual Differences

I. Definition

Human beings differ from each other in numerous ways. This could be ascribable to many biological or conditional factors. For Dornyei (2005) this term signifies, “characteristics or traits in respect of which individuals may be shown to differ from each other.” (p. 1). Clearly, individual differences are anything that marks a person, like age, personality, intelligence...etc. He also adds that individual differences could be enduring personal characteristics that are assumed to apply to everybody and on which people differ by degree. Individual differences may include but are not limited to:

1. Age
2. Aptitude
3. Motivation
4. Sex
5. Learning Strategies
6. Learning Styles
7. Personality
8. Intelligence

The above mentioned differences are interlocked with each other and are correlated together. They play important roles in language learning. We will try to spell out shortly what this entails in more tangible ways.

II. Factors of Individual Differences

1. Age

Gass & Selinker (2008) believe that, “children are better language learners than adults in the sense that young children typically can gain mastery of a second language, whereas

adults can not.” (p. 405) It is known that there is a critical period for L1 (first language) acquisition. Children have only a limited number of years during which the acquisition of second language (L2) is possible; critical period means after a specific age effective acquisition of L2 is impossible due to physiological changes in the brain. Furthermore, younger L2 learners generally do better than older learners. The critical period hypothesis according to Ellis (1985) states that: “there is a period when language acquisition takes place naturally and effortlessly.” (p. 107) Apart from this, the brain can lose its capacity to presume new functions; as a result, when the person gets older they become more conscious of using their skills.

Harmer (2007) indicates that: “people of different ages have different needs, competences, and cognitive skills” (p. 37). He thinks that children acquire the foreign language verbally in contrast to adults who can think abstractly. Ellis (1985) concludes that, “if innate abilities account for the acquisition of primarily levels no differences in route between children and adults will be observed.” (p. 110) In the same way, older learners are able to learn phonology, morphology, and syntax while children cannot.

2. Aptitude

According to Gass & Selinker (2008, p. 417) aptitude refers to, “one’s potential for learning new knowledge or new skills.” In the same view, aptitude is the individual ability to learn another language. Moreover, Carroll and Sapon (1959) as cited by Ellis (1985) suggest that there are:

“Three major components of aptitude: phonetic coding ability, which consists of ability to perceive and memorize new sounds; grammatical sensitivity, which is the individual’s ability to demonstrate awareness of the syntactical patterning of sentences of a language; and inductive ability which consists of the

ability to notice and identify similarities and differences in both grammatical form and meaning.”(p. 112).

That is to say, aptitude is a natural ability for learning a second language. Indeed aptitude is inextricably related to general intelligence and success. Many scholars think that aptitude alone does not determine the language learning ability of an individual; some individuals have exceptional aptitude for language learning. Framed differently, individuals learn at different rates and learning quickly is the distinguishing feature of aptitude.

3. Motivation

Generally, motivation appears to be the significant predictor of success; learners who are highly motivated can achieve their goals in contrast to those who are demotivated. Dornyei (2001, p. 1) defines motivation as an, “abstract, hypothetical concept that we use to explain why people think and behave as they do”. Which means motivation is the direction of behavior. Ellis (1985, p. 118) adds that, “the most successful learners will be those who have both a talent and a high level of motivation for learning”. Motivation explains why people decide to do something, how hard they are going to pursue it and how long they are willing to sustain the activity (Dornyei 2001, p.7). In other words, motivation is one of the most important ingredients of success in addition to effort and ability. Gardner (1985) quoted by Gass and Selinker (2008, p. 50) clarifies that, “motivation involves four aspects, a goal, effortful behavior, a desire to attain the goal and favorable attitudes toward the activity in question”. Among linguists several types of motivation are distinguished:

1. ***Instrumental motivation***: learners may make efforts to learn a second language for some functional reason, such as to pass an examination, to get a better job, career, to get a place at university and the list goes on. Gardner as cited by Ellis (1985, p. 118) proposes that, “instrumental motivation is more likely to be linked to subtractive bilingualism, where the learner either loses his mother tongue or fails to develop the ability to express certain kinds of functions in it”.
2. ***Integrative motivation***: learners learn second languages because they are interested in the people and the culture represented by the target language group.
3. ***Resultative motivation***: is the motivation which results from learning; namely, learners who experience success in learning may become more motivated to learn.
4. ***Intrinsic motivation***: motivation that stems from inside the learners themselves, vis the learner wishes to learn a second language for personal growth.

4. Sex

It is known that males and females are not equal human beings; they possess different features not just physically but also psychologically. Each one of them performs in different ways so the way they acquire language will be different. Sex is the sum of the biological characteristics by which males and females and other organisms are distinguished.

5. Learning Strategies

Learning strategies are the different behaviors that the learner uses to make learning more enjoyable. Gass and Slinker (2008, p. 440) claim that, “learning strategies clearly involve internal mental actions, but they may also involve physical actions as well”. In other words, learning strategies refer to a set of tactics that people use in order to gain control over their own learning process. Rubin (1975, p. 43) argues that learning strategies are, “the techniques of devices which a learner may use to acquire knowledge”. Thus, using the right

learning strategy at the right time enables students to learn the language better, become more independent, and autonomous. In short, language learning strategies are the processes which learners deploy to learn. There are three categories of learning strategies which are:

1. Cognitive strategies

Are activities used by learners to understand the linguistic input and obtain knowledge; for example: when the learner finds a difficult word in the text, he/she tries to understand the hidden meaning from the context, this is a cognitive strategy. That is to say, cognitive strategies involve mental manipulation of tasks or materials to enhance comprehension and acquisition. Not only that but also cognitive strategies enable learners to understand, analyze, and produce language in different ways (they are memory strategies) in this case using drills to practise the language is a good example.

2. Metacognitive strategies

Are strategies related to thinking about the learning process, monitoring, evaluating, planning and so on. To put it simply, O'malley and Chamot (2001, p. 8) illustrate that, "metacognitive strategies involve thinking about the learning process, planning for learning and self-evaluation after the learning activity has been completed". Those strategies are self-regulatory strategies in which learners are aware of their own learning. Purpura (1999) found that metacognitive strategies had, "a significant, positive, direct effect on cognitive strategy use, providing clear evidence that the metacognitive strategy use has an executive function over cognitive strategy use in task completion" (p. 61). In metacognitive strategies learners have the ability to plan, monitor and assess their learning. In addition to this, they consist of a range of behaviours, such as assessing linguistic resources for a particular language task, identifying problems that may occur in the task, correcting one's language production and so on.

3. Social-affective strategies

It is the combination of social and effective strategies. Social strategies means help learners work with others and understand their knowledge; culture strategies include asking questions, asking for the clarification of a confusing point, asking for help in doing a certain task, cooperation with others, etc. Affective strategies are essentially characterized by removing the anxiety, encouraging students, and taking their emotional temperature. So, social affective strategies are the ways in which learners interact with others as Brown (1987) indicates, “cooperation and question for clarification are the main social-affective strategies”. cited in Hardan (2013, p. 1718.) In this view, social-effective strategies are the techniques that learners use to learn by interaction with their classmates and lower their anxiety.

6. Learning Styles

Mixed-ability classes do not just consist of a range of abilities but also a range of learning styles and preferences. Everyone has a specific learning style and learns better through different means; since students are different, each learner must search for their own learning style. Gass and Slinker (2008, p. 432) identify the term learning style as, “the preferences that an individual has of obtaining, processing, and retaining information.” In other words, an individual’s learning style is the individual’s mode of gaining knowledge. When the teacher is conscious about his/her students’ learning styles, he/she can adopt the perfect method to teach them. Frisby quoted by Lee (2005, p. 294) describes learning style as, “habitual patterns in how a person learns, or in how a person prefers to learn”. So, learning style refers to student’s favourite way of learning. In addition, one learner can possess one learning style or a combination of learning styles.

Several different ways of classifying learning styles have been suggested. The following are amongst the most commonly reported ones.

1. Visual

Visual learners are the most common type of learners. They learn by seeing or looking. For instance, when the student sees a picture, they prefer to learn by keep staring at it. Gass and Slinker (2008, p. 437) posit that, “visual learners are those who take in information visually. Thus reading is preferred to listening.” This type of learners pays a great amount of attention to details, usually likes photos, tables, flow charts, diagrams, videos and so on. Moreover, Pritchard (2008, p. 44) argues that, “visual learners have good visual recall and prefer information to be presented visually, in the form of diagrams, graphs, maps, posters and displays.

2. Auditory

Those learners choose to learn only by listening to other people when they are talking. They like listening to music, listening to presentations, lectures...etc. “They have good auditory memory and benefit from discussions, lectures, interviewing, hearing stories and audiotapes.” (Pritchard, 2008, p. 44).

3. Kinesthetic

It is also known as ‘tactile learner’. A kinesthetic learner uses his:her fine motor skills or hands when learning; for example, they take notes, make drawings, use computers and so forth. Also, a tactile learner uses his/her whole body, like walking around when talking to another one, taking part in games and so on. Gass and Slinker (2008, p. 437) claim that, “kinesthetic or tactile learners are better when the whole body is involved or when objects can be manipulated such as in lab work.”

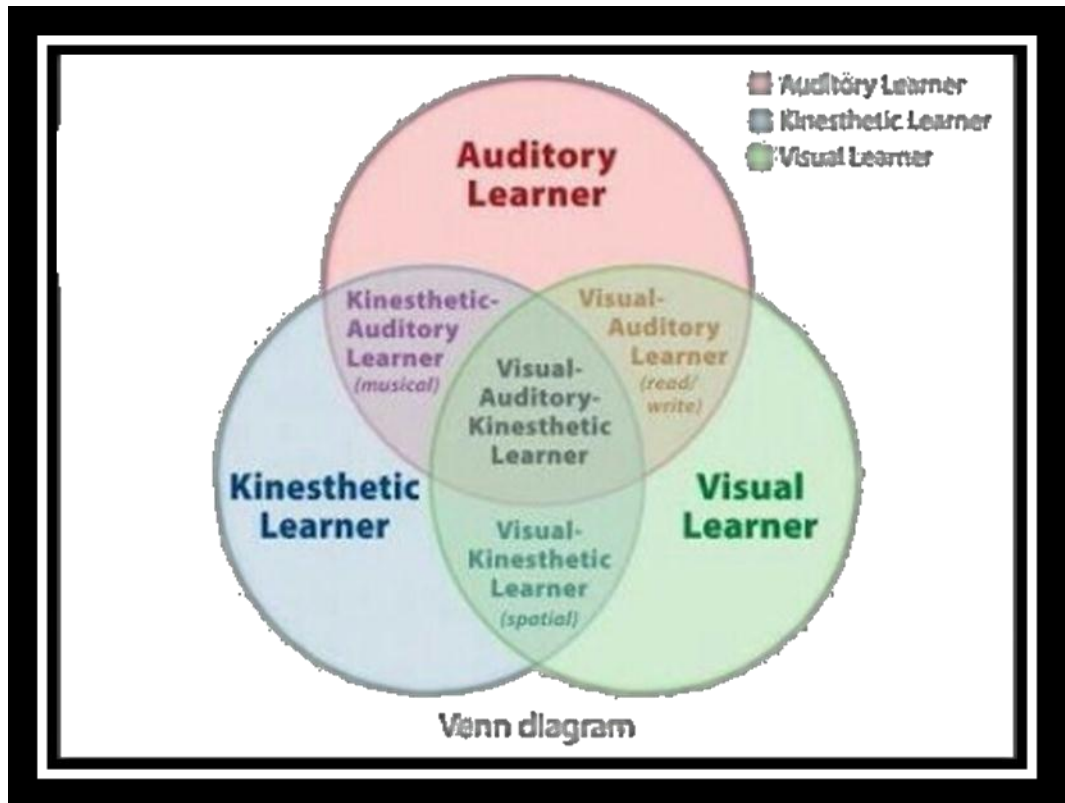


Figure 1: Types of learning styles

There are other learning styles, like musical, spatial, read and write and so on.

But these are not amongst the most important ones.

7. Personality

For decades, human personality has been the core of the study of human psychology. It is something that the individual always takes with him; it affects his thinking, feeling, and behaviors. Cattell (1950, p. 2) cited by Corr and Mathews (2009, p. 3) maintains that, “personality permits a prediction of what a person will do in a given situation.” Personality is a set of qualities that make a person distinct from others. Additionally, Pervin and John’s (2001) quoted by Dornyei (2005, p. 4) argue that, “personality represents those characteristics of the person that account for consistent patterns of feeling, thinking, and behaving.” Furthermore, Blumentritt adds personality is commonly defined as, “the constellation of traits

or typical and relatively stable patterns of responding to the environment, which are unique to various individuals.” Cited by Salkind (2008, p. 780). That is to say, people tend to choose and consequently do what they feel most comfortable with. Personality may include a number of characteristics such as:

1. Extroversion and Introversion

Definitely, extrovert learners learn rapidly, like to take risks, and build relations with others easily. Eysneck (1964) quoted by Ellis admits that, “there are two general traits represented as dichotomies: extrovert introvert and neurotic stable”. Ellis (1985, p. 120) claims that, “extrovert learners will find it easier to make contact with other users of the L2 and therefore will obtain more input.” Nevertheless, an introvert learner is believed to be more quiet, retiring and reserved. Also, he is more concerned with the inner world of ideas and is more likely to be involved in solitary activities. Naimen et al 1978 found that there is, “no relationship between extroversion and introversion and proficiency” Ellis (1985).

2. Inhibition

Another aspect of personality is inhibition which is a set of defenses an individual builds to protect himself. Ellis (1985, p. 121) states that, “it is hypothesized that the defectiveness associated with inhibition discourages the risk taking which is necessary for rapid progress in L2.” In other words, inhibition is a feeling that makes the person unable to act in a relaxed way. Sometimes, the learner may commit some mistakes; the role of the teacher in here is to correct those mistakes; as a result, the student feels free and ready to take risks.

3. Anxiety

Many people who are good learners may experience anxiety. Scholars like Thomas defined anxiety as, “a unique emotional state characterized by feeling of distress and tension about real or anticipated threats that may manifest in cognitive behavioral or physiological patterns.” quoted in Salkind (2008, p. 38). So anxiety acts as a double-edged trait which can be either positive or negative. A slight amount of anxiety can be helpful and increases the performance of the learner; it is known as facilitative anxiety whereas too much anxiety can play the reverse role demotivating the learner by decreasing his performance. It is called debilitating anxiety (harmful anxiety).

8. Intelligence

Intelligence can be defined in several unique ways. It is considered to be the potential for finding or creating solutions for problems. Wechsler (1958) admits that intelligence is the ability to act rationally and purposefully and interact with the environment. So, intelligence is the capacity of the mind especially to understand principles, truths, facts, or meaning, acquire knowledge and apply it to practice. Gardner (1993) quoted by Jordan, Carlile, and Stack (2008, p. 98) further claims that intelligence is, “a collection of potentialities or abilities that allow us to solve problems or fashion products that are of consequence in a particular cultural setting.”

Intelligence has different models, one of which is multiple intelligences; the theory of multiple intelligences has been developed by the psychologist Howard Gardner. He posits that individuals possess eight or more types of intelligence; each person owns all eight intelligences. Armstrong (2018, p. 12) highlights that, “multiple intelligence is not a theory of cognitive functioning, and it proposes that each person has capacities in all eight intelligences.” Moreover, Gardner (1993), cited by Pritchard (2008, p. 34) emphasizes that we

all have various levels of intelligence across a range of intellectual areas. Gardner suggests eight types of intelligence, such as:

1. **Linguistic-Verbal Intelligence:** Linguistic-verbal intelligence is the capacity to use words effectively whether orally or in writing (Armstrong (2018, p. 2). Or it is the ability to think and use language and express meaning and play with words; people who have linguistic and verbal intelligence are good at reading, writing, telling stories, memorizing words for a long time, like poets, authors, teachers...etc.
2. **Logical-Mathematical Intelligence:** This area has to do with logic, solving mathematical problems, reasoning and so on. People who have this kind of smart can think abstractly, understand the relationship between cause and effect, like engineers, scientists, doctors, researchers.
3. **Spatial-Visual Intelligence:** It means the ability to visualize with mind's eye. Armstrong (2018) mentions that spatial and visual intelligence is, “the ability to perceive the visual spatial world accurately (e.g. as a surveyor, cartographer) and to perform transformations upon those perceptions (e.g. interior, decorator, architect, artist, or inventor)” (p. 2).
4. **Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence:** This type of smart allows the learner to control his body movement and handle objects skillfully. People who have high bodily kinesthetic intelligence are good at physical activities, like sport, dance, act, and make things.
5. **Musical Intelligence:** According to Gardner (1993) musical rhythmic intelligence is, “the ability to recognize tonal patterns and sensitivity to rhythm, pitch, melody.” Quoted in Freeman (2000, p. 170). That is to say, those kinds of people

are able to play musical instruments, sing, and compose music, like singers and music producers.

6. **Interpersonal Intelligence:** The capacity to detect others' moods and feelings; people of this type of intelligence communicate effectively with others, like mediators, politicians, psychologists.
7. **Intrapersonal Intelligence:** This area has to do with self-awareness and self-reflective capacities, which means that the learner recognizes his/her strengths and weaknesses, his/her own needs and objectives. He/she learns best by working individually.
8. **Naturalistic Intelligence:** People who have this intelligence like to categorize plants, animals, rocks, mountains, and other objects in nature like, framers.

Intelligence	Preferences
Linguistic/Verbal learner: intelligence related to language and to the written and spoken language.	Likes to: read, write and tell stories, work with riddles. Is good at: using descriptive language, memorizing places, dates and trivia. Learns best by: saying, hearing, and seeing words.
Logical/Mathematical learner: intelligence related to reasoning, numbers, abstractions and patterns.	Likes to: do experiments, work things out, work with numbers, ask questions and explore patterns and relationships. Is good at: math, reasoning, logic and problem-solving, working from concrete to abstract. Learns best by: categorizing, classifying, and working with abstract patterns and relationships.
Spatial/Visual learner: intelligence related to anything visual and the creation of mental images.	Likes to: draw, build, design and create things, daydream, look at pictures and slides, watch films, and play with machines. Is good at: imagining things, sensing changes, mazes and puzzles, and reading maps and charts. Learns best by : visualizing, dreaming, using the mind's eye and working with pictures
Bodily/Kinesthetic learner: intelligence related to physical movements and actions located	Likes to: move around, touch, ' tinker ,talk, use body language and perform. Is good at:

in the brain's motor cortex (where movements are controlled).	physical activities and crafts. Learns best by: touching, moving, interacting with space and processing knowledge through body sensations.
Musical learner: intelligence related to: sounds and auditory patterns, to rhythm, beat and tempo.	Likes to: play musical instruments, sing, drum. Likes the sound of the human voice. Is good at: listening,, inventing tunes, keeping time (tempo), tempo discriminating between different sounds. Learns best by: listening, especially if things are set to music or are rhythmical.
Interpersonal learner: intelligence related to relationships with others and various means of communication	Likes to: have lots of friends, talk to people, solve problems and join groups. Is good at: understanding other people's feelings, leading others, organizing and communicating. Learns best by: sharing, comparing, relating and talking.
Intrapersonal learner: intelligence related to self- reflection and self-awareness.	Likes to: work alone and pursue own interests, daydream. Is good at: understanding self, focusing inwards on feelings and dreams, following instincts, pursuing interests/goals and being original. Learns best by: working alone, individualized projects, self-paced instruction and having own space. 1
Naturalistic learner: intelligence related to observation and awareness of the natural world and the patterns to be found there.	Likes to: work out doors, or at least close to the natural environment. Is good at: collecting and classifying, identifying natural artifacts. Learns best by: working outdoors, relating classroom ideas and found there activities to the natural world.

Table 1: Learning Activity Preferences for the Different Intelligences

(Pritchard, 2008, p. 34)

3.Problems of Mixed-Ability Classes

Teachers may encounter different problems when teaching mixed-ability classes. Therefore, they need to identify the root of those troubles and try to cure them. The differences among students like personality, abilities, motivation and so on pose various problems which are:

1. Lack of materials

When teaching a mixed ability class, a teacher has to deal with the problem that students react to the textbook in different ways due to their individual differences. First, some students may find it boring and hard, while others find it very easy and interesting. Second, the teacher does not provide a range of teaching aids like: pictures, videos, slides etc. As Ur (1993, p. 83) states in his book *A Course in Language Teaching*, “the teacher works according to a syllabus, or according to his or her program, using textbooks and supplementary materials as the need arises.”

2. Task Difficulty

It is clear that students have different strategies and ways of learning. After every session learners must be evaluated to check their understanding. High-level students find the task very clear unlike low level ones who may find it hard and complex.

3. Participation

Perhaps the major problem in mixed-ability classes is that some learners are advanced and always participate in the classroom, taking many turns, while others show indifference and may not speak for the entire lesson. As a result, low-level students may feel disappointed and suffer from lack of grammatical knowledge. Maybe the reason behind such behaviour is that students are introvert and shy, they prefer working at ease.

4. Discipline

Disruption of discipline is another serious problem in multileveled classes. Those who finish the task before their classmates will tend to misbehave while waiting for others to finish. In this context, weaker learners lose their confidence and can not complete the task. Noise will disrupt calm students.

5. Shortage of Training Programs

Teachers are also faced by the shortage of training programs and strategies to prepare them for such situations. These strategies help teachers to ensure there is success in the learning process. In fact, the majority of instructors cannot manage their classes well, and implement different strategies to meet learners' needs. Teachers in mixed-ability classes need to be afforded with the necessary training in order to overcome the challenges of the diverse learners.

6. Interests

Another problem proposed to crop up in mixed-ability classes is the interest of the learners; teachers find it very hard to motivate all the students and generate interest in the topic being discussed. Some learners may find lessons dull, and the topic has no familiarity with their own life and interests. Furthermore, the teacher may spend the whole session explaining so the other students do not have a chance to express their ideas.

7. Large classes

Most classes are comprised of a large number of students, and the role of the teacher is to control them and deliver the lesson effectively. It is very difficult to set a lesson for a mixed-ability class since every student has a different level of understanding. This becomes a challenging task for teachers because they need to address the needs of every student and try to employ the best method that suits them.

4. Suggested Solutions

When teachers work with mixed-ability classes it is very important to keep in mind the following set of advice:

1. The teacher needs to adopt suitable materials not only relying on the course book but also other materials to add variation, Ainslie (1994, p. 33) claims that, “we need to introduce new material in short segments so that older course members and slower or less advanced learners have the time to assimilate it before moving on to something else.” The instructor may vary materials, like using pictures, flash cards, videos, CD’s...etc. In addition to this the teacher can design their own materials, for example: he/she uses confetti (small pieces or strips of colored paper) and write on them questions. Then, he/she throws them on the ground. This strategy is very dynamic and motivates the introvert learners to participate.
2. It is very important for the teacher to identify their learners’ needs first. After that, he creates easier versions of the same task: for instance, for learners who are visual, use activities that contain images and drawings to capture their intention, whereas for the others who are tactile, ask them to do ellipsoids. Ainslie (1994, p. 33) points out that, “lesson by lesson and even task by task learners must be aware of their learning objectives, must be set a task that is within their capabilities.” The teacher must use tasks according to students’ abilities, like tiered tasks. Apart from this, the teacher must allow the students to work alone, in pairs, or in groups.
3. The teacher should act as a model for his students; he should encourage them to speak. This can be done through letting them express their ideas and describe their experiences when talking and writing. He ought to ask them about their future plans and motivate them to participate as Dornyei (2001, p. 29) claims, “if the content of the task is not attractive to the students, you cannot motivate them.” So, the tasks must be attractive for the learners. As Ainslie (1994, p. 24) adds our aim is, “to encourage learners to be independent, autonomous and to take charge of their on learning”.

4. Ability grouping is very useful as an organizational tool; that is to say, ability grouping is the classification of students into fast, average or slow learners according to their scores and achievement. Oakes (1985, p. 3) defines it as, “dividing the class into groups according to their abilities: slow, average and quick learners.” This method helps the slow learners in the sense that it eliminates competition offered by fast learners and gives equal chances to low-level students to express themselves.
5. Curriculum designers should design a program that suits all learners; it must be selected on the basis of the learners’ needs and preferences. The topics should reflect the everyday experiences and students’ backgrounds.
6. Create conditions which motivate all pupils to make sustained progress in learning within a common curriculum framework. In other words, the tutor should create a proper environment for students and build up an atmosphere of mutual respect and self-confidence. As a result, learners will feel secure and try to make the class more enjoyable and stimulating.
7. The teacher should give clear instructions and present it in easily manageable ways. Moreover, he introduces the tasks clearly using different strategies to facilitate the task for them.
8. Needs analysis is another solution of mixed-ability classes; it is a formal systematic process of identifying and evaluating training that should be done. Needs are often referred to as gaps or the difference between what is currently done and what should be performed. Hayland (2006, p. 73) describes needs analysis as, “the techniques for collecting and assessing information relevant to course design: it is the means of establishing the how and what of a course.” Needs analysis helps the teacher to gather information about your learners. As a result, he

can detect their strengths and weaknesses, interests, learning styles and so on. So the teacher can apply the best methods for them.

Conclusion

The conclusion that can be drawn from this chapter is that mixed-ability classes are found in almost all schools and teachers face different problems while teaching such a category of classes. These challenges require the instructors to employ effective management in addressing those challenges. This can be achieved by using different methods and strategies and settle on the most effective ones. Mixed-ability classes are known for their diverse strengths. Moreover, teachers who have a positive attitude towards the diversity in terms of students' abilities are more successful in teaching multi-level classes. In addition, the key strategies for teaching those classes are probably developing a positive and collaborative working atmosphere. Finally, the teacher must involve the whole class in the teaching process.

Chapter Three

Data Collection & Analysis

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we have presented a theoretical review of our research. This chapter is devoted to the practical one. The aim of this research study is to find out the different strategies adopted by teachers to teach mixed-ability classes. For this purpose we designed a formal questionnaire for both secondary school teachers and 3rd year secondary school students, and then we administered them both via email.

1. Research Instrument

In order to answer the research questions and meets the various objectives of the present research; the questionnaire was deemed the best instrument to do so. A questionnaire is an important research tool which consists of a set of questions which permit to collect a considerable amount of data. Brown (2001) cited by Dörnyei (2007. P, 102) defines a questionnaire as, “any written tool that contains a series of questions and statements which the respondents answer either by using their own words or choosing answers from those they are

provided with". We used the questionnaire in this study because it is more practical, quick, and easy.

2. Student's Questionnaire

2.1. Aim of the Questionnaire

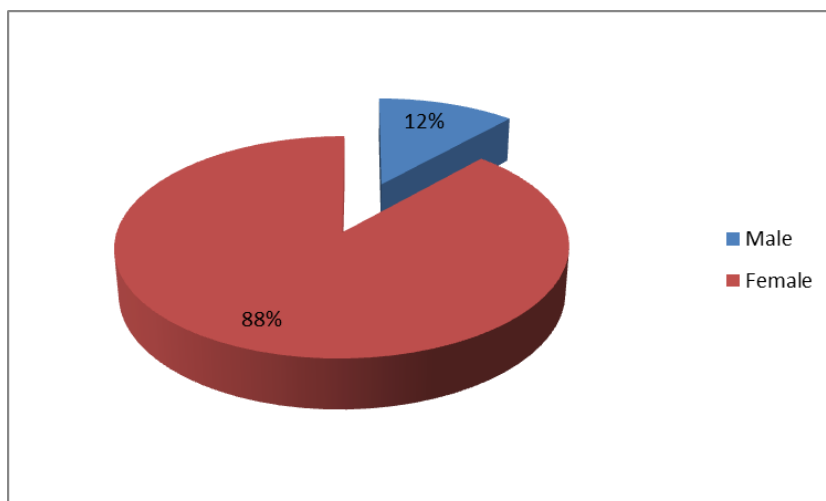
The main aim behind the administration of a questionnaire to third-year students is to have an idea about their learning preferences, levels, motivation, personality, intelligence, learning strategies, and the different challenges they face while learning. More specifically, we want to get to the bottom of whether they are aware of the strategies used by teachers or not.

2.2. Targeted Sample

The student's questionnaire was administered to 60 third-year students at different secondary schools in Mila like Matkan Ati Abdelhfid, Didouche Mourad, Maghlawa Ramdan, Ben Toubale Slimane. We submitted the questionnaire to foreign languages students via email. The respondents were randomly selected, which gives each member of the whole population an equal chance of being chosen.

2.3. Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire is made up of 21 questions; it was first written in English then translated into Arabic. The questionnaire consists of three sections, each one focusing on a particular part. It includes closed questions as well as open ended questions. Through the closed questions the respondent has to tick one option, or to choose "yes" or "no" answers, while open questions require the students to give their own responses. These questions are categorized into three interrelated sections:



Graph 2: Gender Distribution

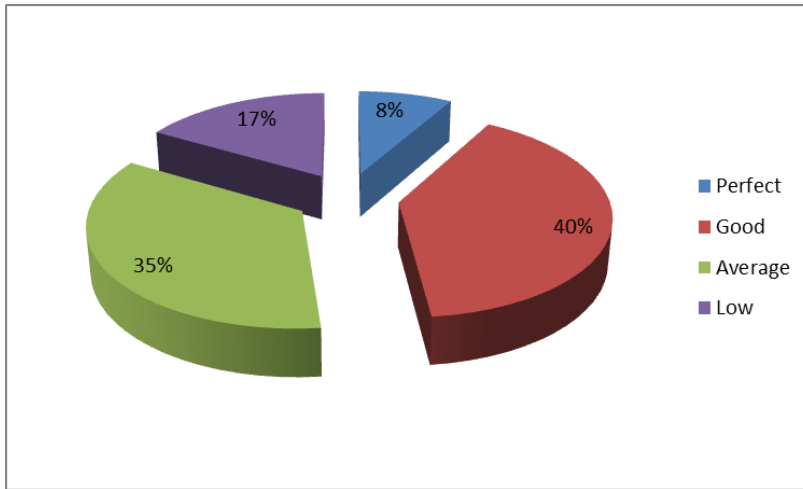
The chosen sample in this study reveals that 88.33% of our participants are females, whereas only 11.67% are males. Since the factor of gender is taken into consideration in this undertaking, we can say that females are better language learners than males. According to Heinzman (2009), “it is commonly held folk belief that girls are better in language learning than boys” (p. 1). To put it in otherwords, females try always to appear somehow perfect and focus more on details, while boys do not.

2. How do you consider your level in English?

- a) Perfect
- b) Good
- c) Average
- d) Low

Options	Perfect	Good	Average	Low	Total
N°	5	24	21	10	60
%	8,33%	40%	35%	16,67%	100%

Table 3: Student’s Level in English



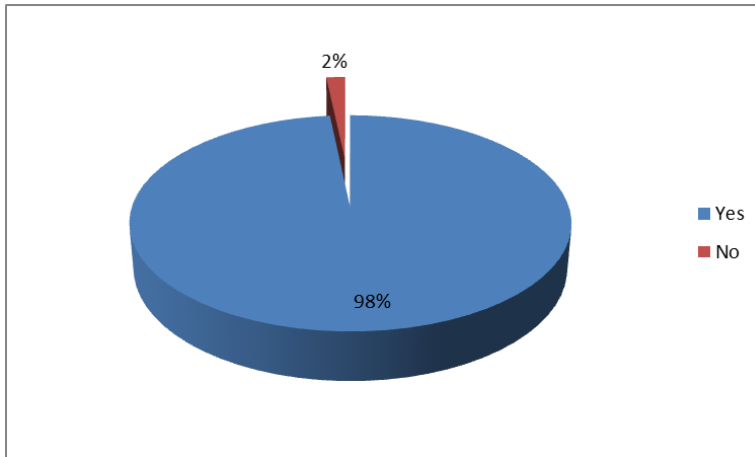
Graph 03: Student’s Level in English

As it is shown in the table, we can note that the highest percentage of students 40% claim that their level is good and 35% said that their level is average, while 16.67% viewed themselves as being perfect. Others 8.33% indicated that their level is low. It can be concluded that these students may attribute their levels to the marks they got.

3. Do you like the English language?

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	59	1	60
%	98,33%	1,67%	100%

Table 4: Rate of Students’ Interests to Learn English



Graph 4: Rate of Students' Interests to Learn English

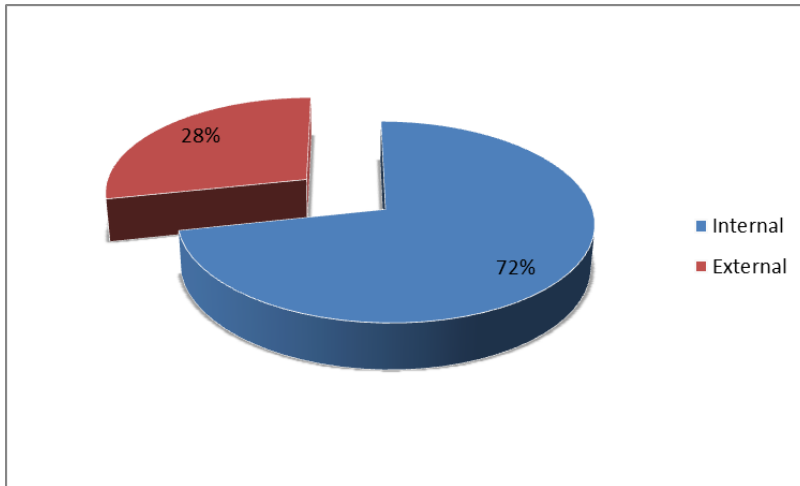
The data clearly shows that 98.33% of students are interested in learning English. This is so because it is the second widely spoken language in the world. Only 1.67% of them dislike the English language; this minority thinks that English is difficult to learn. To sum up with, English is the most used language in the world; besides, it allows individuals to access multiple cultures, meet new people, and get a good job in the future.

Section Two: Individual Differences

4. Are you motivated to learn English by: a. Internal forces b. External forces

Options	Internal	External	Total
N°	43	17	60
%	71, 67%	28, 33%	100%

Table 5: Factors of Motivation



Graph 5: Factors of Motivation

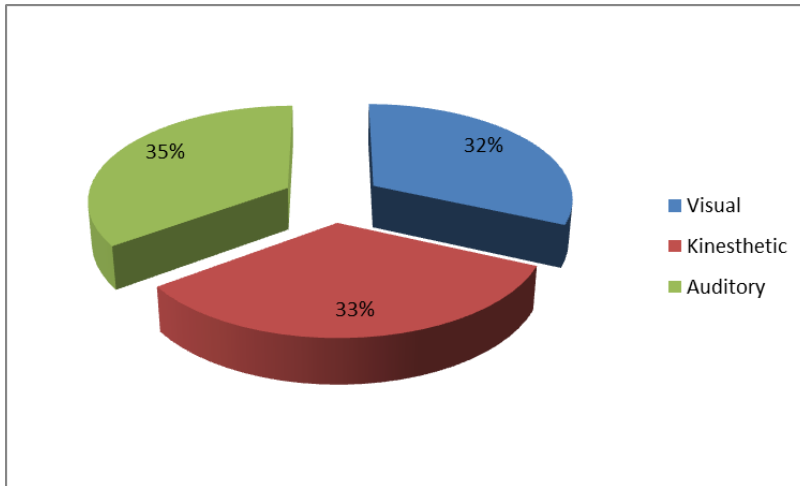
The results of the table show that the majority of students 71.67% are motivated to learn English by internal forces. It is the result of our thoughts and feelings. This means that students are motivated for the purpose of achieving goals, for instance getting the Baccalaureate degree, and so on. The rest 28.33% claim that they are motivated due to external forces. This might mean that the learner is encouraged to learn the language because of external forces, like family, friends, money, and rewards. As a result, we can say that internal forces are not enough for success as we may sometimes need some external support.

5. What is your favorite learning style?

- a) Visual b) Auditory c) Kinesthetic

Options	Visual	Kinesthetic	Auditory	Total
N°	19	20	21	60
%	31,67%	33,33%	35%	100%

Table 6: Favorite Learning Style



Graph 6: Favorite Learning Style

From the table above we can notice that 35% of the students maintain that their favorite learning style is the kinesthetic one; in other words, people with this learning style like to touch things and use their hands. Similarly, 33.33% of them claim that they prefer to learn auditorily; they like listening to audios, presentations, and so forth, while 31.67% of the participants state that their preferable way of learning is through seeing pictures, graphs, maps, focusing on details (height, weight, colour). Finally, we can say that knowing their learning style helps students increase their level of comprehension and motivation.

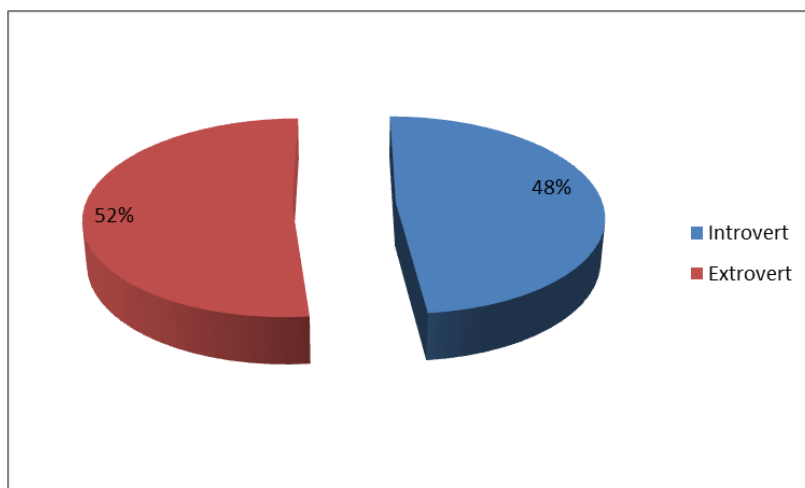
6) As a student how do you evaluate your personality?

a) Introvert

b) Extrovert

Options	Introvert	Extrovert	Total
N°	29	31	60
%	48,33%	51,67%	100%

Table 7: Types of Personality



Graph 7: Types of Personality

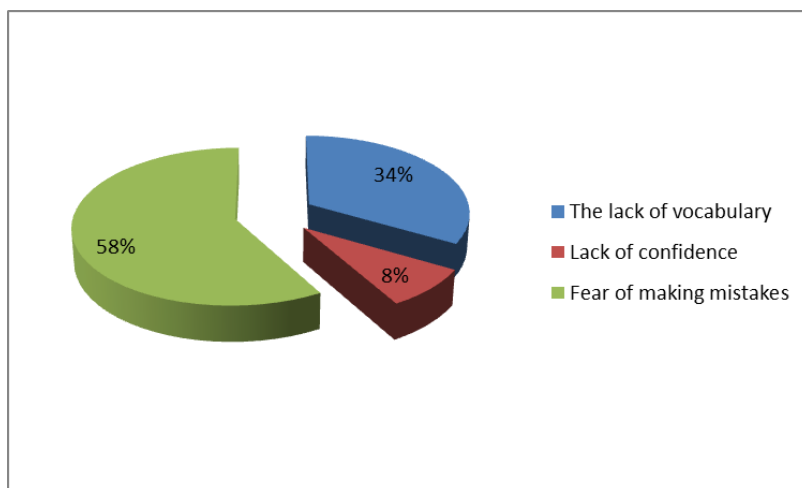
Approximately more than the half of students consider themselves as extroverts; clearly because most of the students like to talk, share ideas with others, and take risks. 48.33% of them say that they are introvert learners. That is to say, they are shy, quiet, and they prefer to work alone. Generally, introvert learners are likely to perform better in listening and writing, whereas extroverts are good at speaking and reading.

7) In case you feel anxious this is due to:

- a) The lack of vocabulary
- b) Lack of confidence
- c) Fear of making mistakes

Options	The lack of vocabulary	Lack of confidence	Fear of making mistakes	Total
N°	20	5	35	60
%	33,34	8,33	58,33	100%

Table 8: Causes of Anxiety



Graph 8: Causes of Anxiety

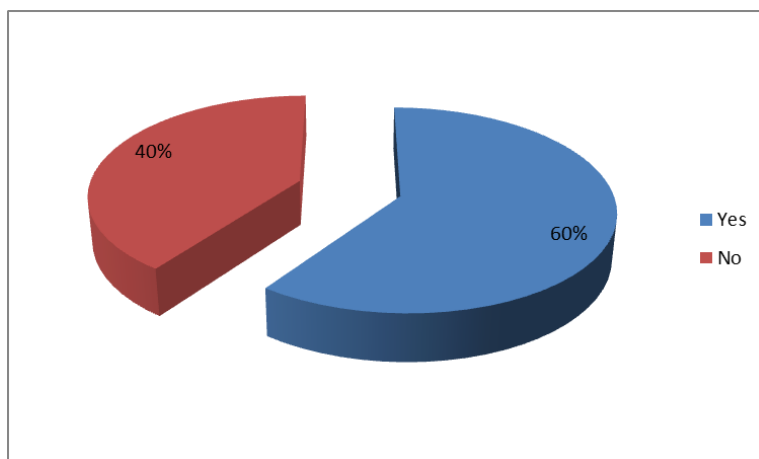
From the data above, 58.34% of the respondents state that they feel anxious due to the fear of making mistakes; 33.33% of them feel anxious because of the lack of vocabulary; that is to say, they cannot express their ideas freely. The rest of the sample says that the reason behind the anxiety is lack of confidence. It can be concluded that students may feel stressed due to different reasons.

8) Do you worry about making mistakes in front of your classmates?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	36	24	60
%	60%	40%	100%

Table 9: Rate of Students Worried in the Classroom



Graph 9: Rate of Students Worried in the Classroom

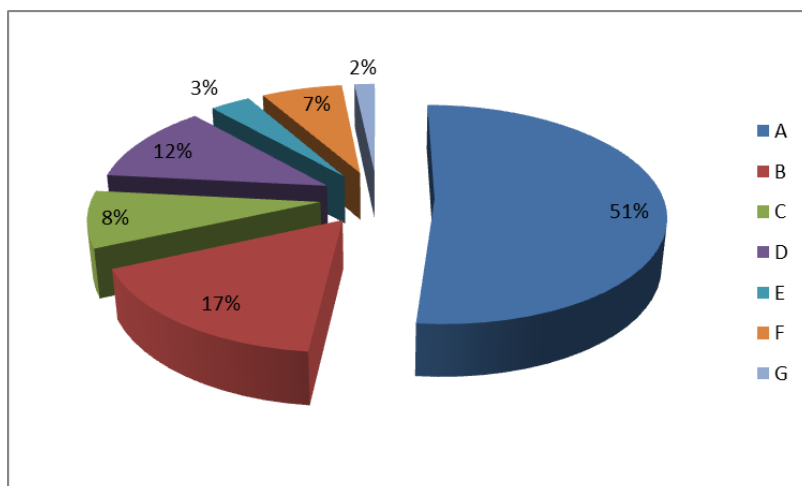
The results show that the vast majority of students 60% worry about making mistakes in front of their classmates, maybe because of the reactions of their friends and hesitation. The rest 40% of them claim that they do not care if they make mistakes, because they believe that if you are too afraid to take risks and fall into errors, you can't learn. This reflects the students' self-confidence and their competence.

9) How do you classify your intelligence?

- a) Linguistic b) Logical/ mathematical c) Spatial/ visual d) Bodily/ kinesthetic
 e) Musical f) Interpersonal G) Naturalistic

Options	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total
N°	31	10	5	7	2	4	1	60
%	51,67%	16,67%	8,34%	11,67%	3,33%	6,67%	1,67%	100%

Table 10: Types of Intelligence



Graph 10: Types of Intelligence

More than the half of students 51.67% claim that they possess linguistic intelligence, those students are good at using language and playing with words. 16.67% of them state that they own a logical or mathematical intelligence, they like numbers and abstract things. 11.67% argue that their intelligence is kinesthetic, this type of students learns best by touching, moving and interacting with others. 8.33% have answered that they have visual intelligence. 6.67% claim that they have intrapersonal smart. 3.33% of them say that they have musical intelligence and only 1.67% say that they are naturalistic learners. It can be concluded that all the students are intelligent in different ways and no one is stupid, each one shines in a special way.

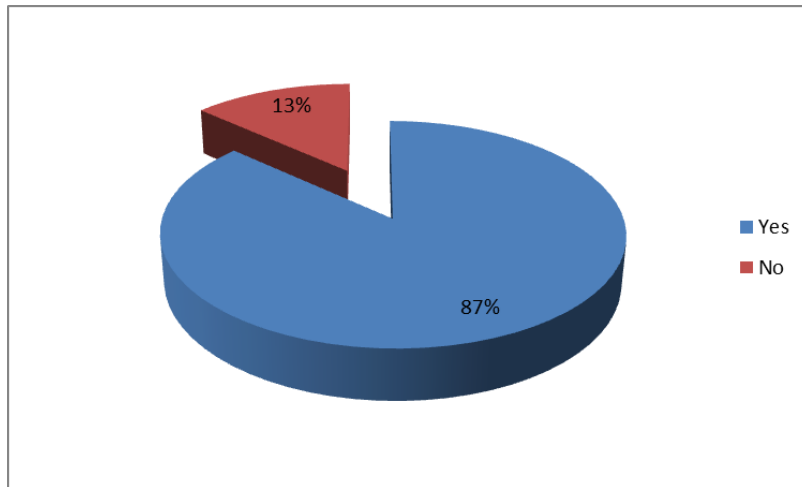
10) Do you employ some strategies while learning?

a) Yes

b) No

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	52	8	60
%	86,87%	13,33%	100%

Table 11: Students' use of Strategies While Learning



Graph 11: Students' use of Strategies While Learning

The majority 86.67% of the students say that they employ some strategies while learning in the classroom; this means that they use some techniques to facilitate the learning process. In contrast, 13.33% of them assume that they do not apply any strategies. As a conclusion, we can say that using some learning strategies helps students obtain knowledge effectively.

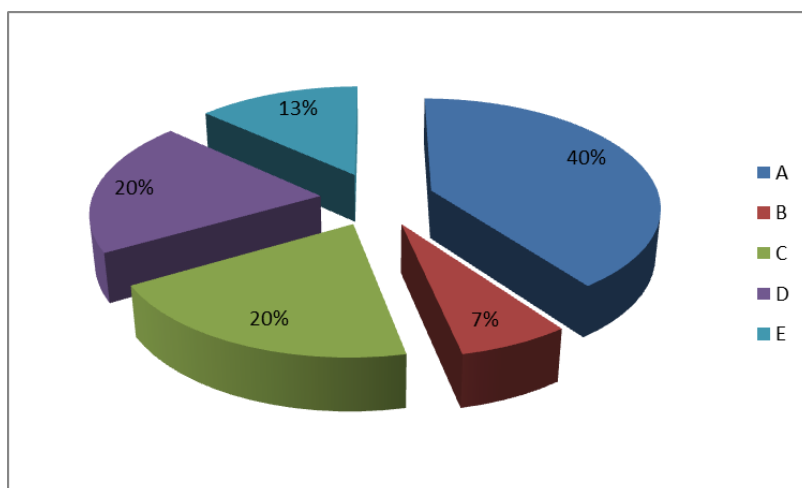
11) Which of these strategies do you use to facilitate your learning process?

- a) Try to understand the hidden meaning from the context
- b) Self-evaluating
- c) Summarizing passages or texts
- d) Asking for more clarification
- e) Cooperation with others

Others please mention them.....

Options	A	B	C	D	E	Total
N°	24	4	12	12	8	60
%	40%	6,67%	20%	20%	13,33%	100%

Table 12: Learning Strategies Used by Students



Graph 12: Learning Strategies Used by Students

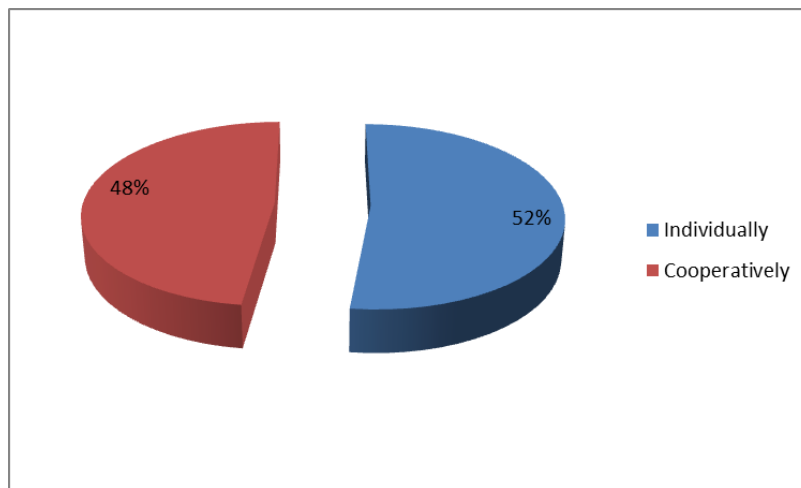
Concerning the results mentioned above, 40% of the participants state that they try to understand the hidden meaning from the context. 20% of them claim that they ask the teacher for more clarification. Similarly, 20% of the sample assume that they summarize passages and texts in order to get the general ideas. 13.33% of them assert that they cooperate with others, which mean they exchange ideas together. Only 6.67% use self-evaluation. Some students add some strategies, like pair work, translating the difficult words, using dialogues and reading short stories to acquire vocabulary and so on.

12) How do you like to solve the activities?

- a) Individually
- b) Cooperatively

Options	Individually	Cooperatively	Total
N°	31	29	60
%	51,67%	48,33%	100%

Table 13: Ways of Solving the Activities



Graph 13: Ways of Solving the Activities

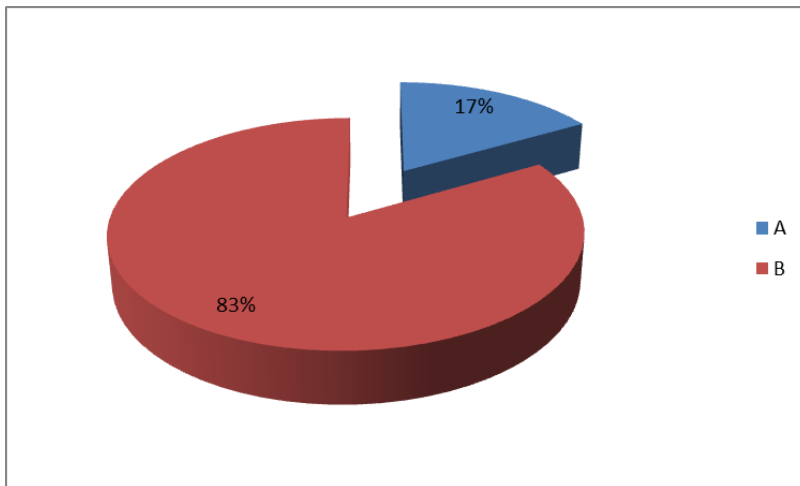
Apparently, more than half 51.67% of the informants point out that they like to solve the activities individually. This means that students can work at their own pace. Only 48.33 % of them claim that they prefer to complete the activities cooperatively since this technique helps them to break the difficult tasks into smaller more readily manageable bits *, and try to understand them through discussions. The conclusion that can be drawn from these results is that both working individually or in groups helps in promoting students' learning and achievement.

13) While doing an activity and you face a problem what do you do?

- a) You stop and do not complete the activity
- b) You use some techniques to cope with it

Options	A	B	Total
N°	10	50	60
%	16,67%	83,34%	100%

Table 14: Students Attitudes towards Solving the Activities



Graph 14: Students Attitudes towards Solving the Activities

The results show that more than half 83.33% of the respondents claim that when they face a problem during the activity they use some techniques to cope with it. This may denote that they highlight the key words or translate them to make them clear. Likewise, 16.67% say that they stop and do not complete the activity; this is so perhaps because they are not interested and lazy. To sum up with, students who exert more effort to solve the exercises are more active and they are usually best risk-takers.

Section Three: Language Teaching Strategies

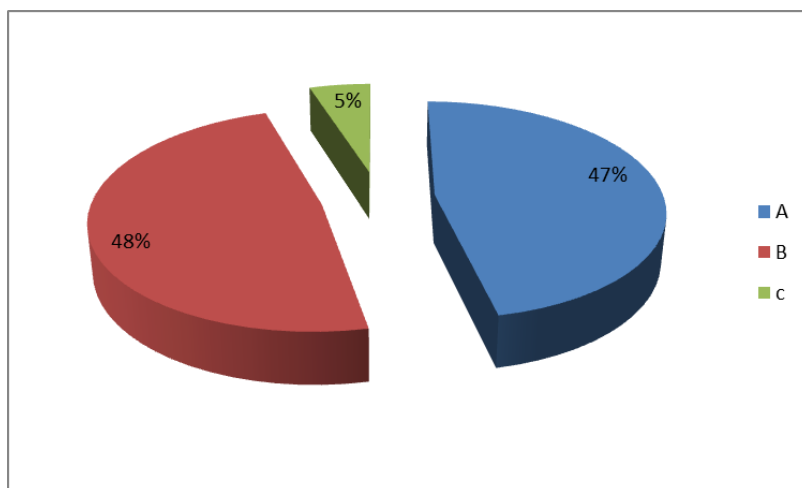
14) What do you want your teacher to do when you make mistakes?

- a) To correct your mistakes immediately
- b) Wait until you finish and correct them
- c) Ignore the mistakes

Options	A	B	C	Total
N°	28	29	3	60
%	46,67%	48,33%	5%	100%

Table 15: Students' Preferences for the Techniques Used by Teachers to Indicate

Mistakes



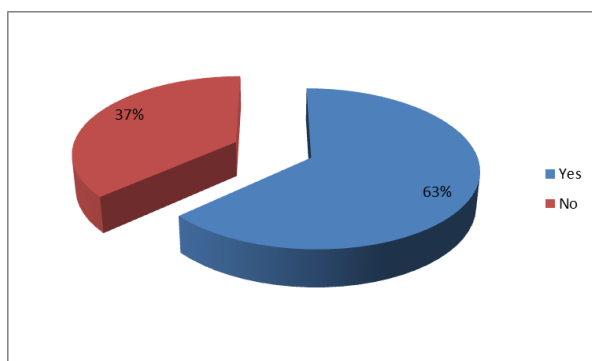
Graph 15: Students' Preferences for the Techniques Used by Teachers to Indicate Mistakes

It seems clear from the results obtained that 48.33% of the students claim that when they make a mistake, they want their teacher to correct it immediately. In the same way, 46.67% of them state that they want their teacher to wait until they finish and correct it. The rest of the sample 5% opted for “C”. In other words, the teacher ignores the mistake. In short, we can say that teachers must correct the students' mistakes. So feedback is very important for them because it improves their level.

15) Do you like the teaching strategies used by your teacher?

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	38	22	60
%	63,33%	36,67%	100%

Table 16: Students' Awareness about Teaching Strategies



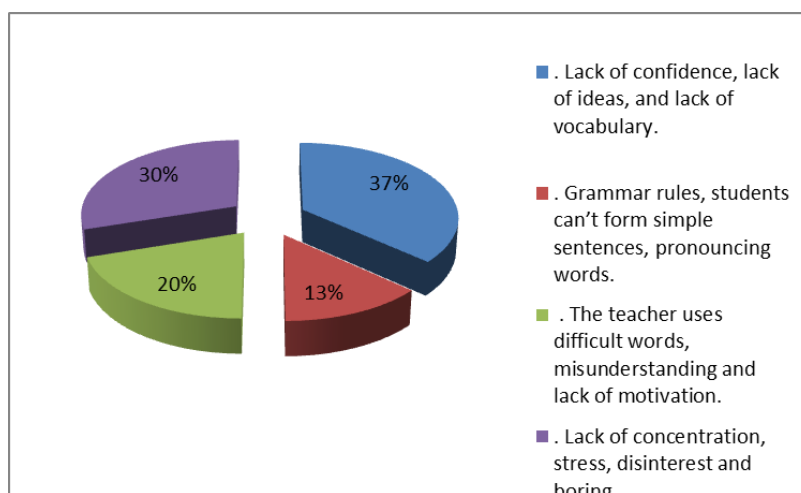
Graph 16: Students' Awareness about Teaching Strategies

More than half of the sample 63.33% admit that they like the teaching strategies used by their teachers. This means that those teachers are more proficient, they adopt the best strategies that suit their learners' needs and abilities. Also, they explain in an easy way that ensures understanding for all. Conversely, 36.67% of them claim that they dislike the teaching strategies used by their teachers. Those students think that their teachers are under-qualified; they cannot convey information and keep using the same traditional methods. To conclude with, teachers need to differentiate their teaching strategies while teaching a mixed-ability class in order to reach all of their learners.

16) What are the difficulties that you face during learning?

Difficulties	N°	%
. Lack of confidence, lack of ideas, and lack of vocabulary.	22	36,67%
. Grammar rules, students can't form simple sentences, pronouncing words.	8	13,33%
. The teacher uses difficult words, misunderstanding and lack of motivation.	12	20%
. Lack of concentration, stress, disinterest and boring.	18	30%
Total	60	100%

Table 17: Students Difficulties while Learning



Graph 17: Students' Difficulties while Learning

This question was designed as an open ended one; it requires the respondents to state the various problems they face while learning. 36.67% of the students say that they face some obstacles during learning, like lack of self-confidence, lack of ideas, and lack of vocabulary. Similarly, 30% of them state that they feel stressed if they can't answer the questions asked, get bored and can't focus. Likewise, 20% of the respondents claim that when the teacher explains the lesson, they can't understand because the teacher uses difficult words and expressions; besides they do not motivate them. In the same way, 13.33% of them assert that

they have a problem in pronouncing words and speaking fluently; in addition, they can't form a simple sentences because they don't know the rules. Thus, it can be concluded that teachers should detect their students' problems and try to attend to them all in accordance with a well-balanced, well-thought-through, pro-lower ability students plan.

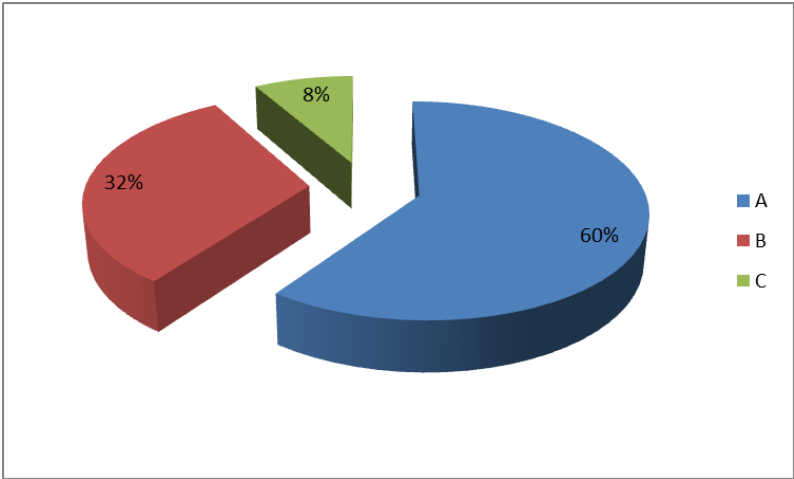
17) How does your teacher act if you do not understand the lesson?

- a) Uses other materials
- b) Gives you some activities.
- c) Allocates another session for explaining the confusing points.

Others, please add

Options	A	B	C	Total
N°	36	19	5	60
%	60%	31,67%	8,33%	100%

Table 18: Techniques Used by Teachers to Facilitate the Lesson



Graph 19: Techniques Used by Teachers to Facilitate the Lesson

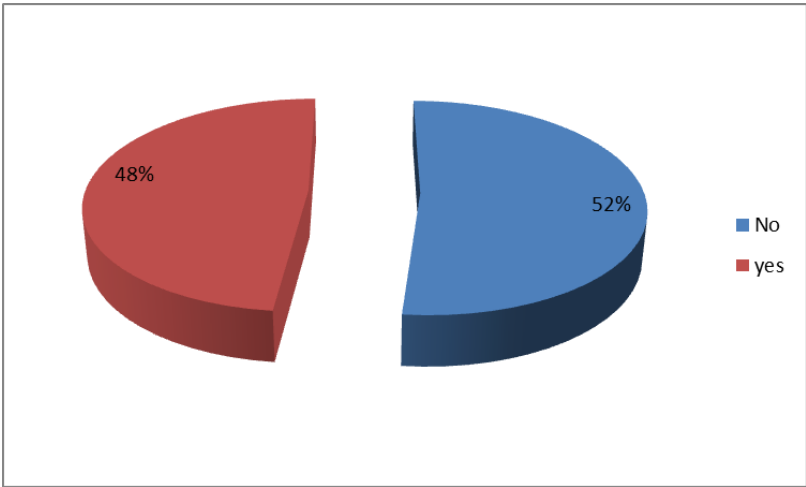
As displayed by the graph above, more than half of the participants 60% say that the teacher uses other materials if they do not understand the lesson. This may be taken to imply

that the teacher uses other aiding tools like the datashow. 31. 67% of them reported that the teacher gives them some activities. This means that he/she consolidates the lesson with more practice to ensure that all students understand. Only 8.33% of the respondents state that they allocate another session for explanation. In other words, he/she devotes more time to clarify the complex things (words, rules, activities). Some students suggest some techniques, such as providing more examples, the teacher taking the students to the library and asking them to search in order to understand alone, giving the students a project work and so forth. We can deduce that repetition of the explanation allows the students to pay more attention to the key words

18) Does your teacher vary his materials?

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	29	31	60
%	48, 33%	51,67%	100%

Table 19: Rate of Teachers Who Vary their Materials



Graph 19: Rate of Teachers Who Vary their Materials

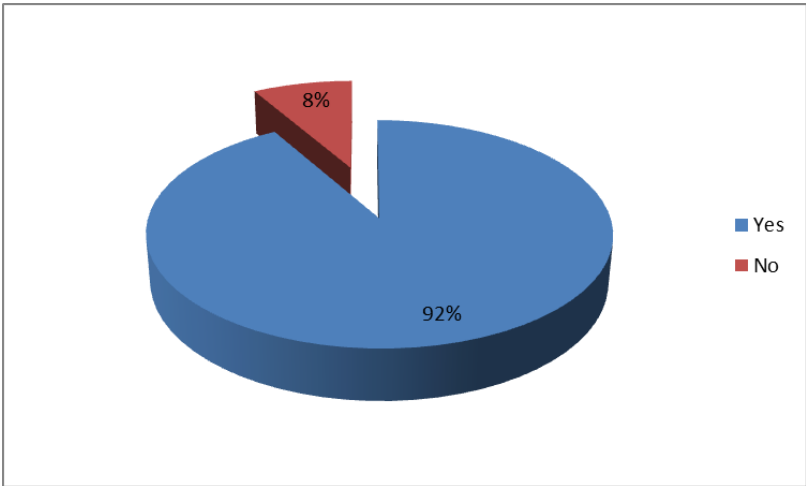
From the table we notice that 51.67% of the students entertain the belief that their teachers do not vary the materials they use in the classroom. This is so because the budget of the educational institutions is unable to provide the necessary means, like computers, data shows, microscopes and the list goes on and on. 48. 33% of them assert that their teachers use different materials. This means that some teachers adopt simple materials, like maps, pictures, videos and so on. To sum up with, teachers must vary their materials because what works for one group may not necessarily work for the other.

19) Does your teacher encourage you to exert more effort?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	55	5	60
%	91,67%	8,33%	100%

Table 20: Rate of Teachers Who Encourage their Students



Graph 20: Rate of Teachers Who Encourage their Students

Most of the students, 91.67%, say that their teacher encourages them to exert more effort, because it is the teacher’s responsibility to direct his/her students and guide them to

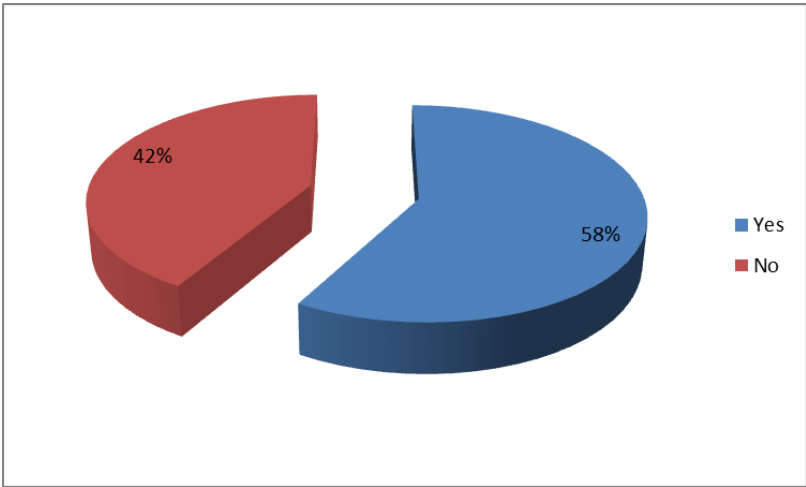
achieve their goals. A minority (8.33%) of them assert that their teachers do not motivate them. The conclusion that can be drawn here is that motivation is a key factor of success that cannot and must not be discarded no matter what promising alternatives the teacher thinks he/she can make maximal use of.

20) Do you like using the computer in the class?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	35	25	60
%	58,33%	41,67%	100%

Table 21: Students’ Preferences of Using the Computer



Graph 21: Students’ Preferences of Using the Computer

We notice from the table that most of the students (58.33%) like using the computer in the classroom. This may mean that most of the students use it because of its advantages, such as easy access to information; it also provides more engaging activities that render students more interested in the subject matter. In contrast, 41.67% of them dislike using computers; they think that computers make people lazy and swastes time. As a conclusion, we

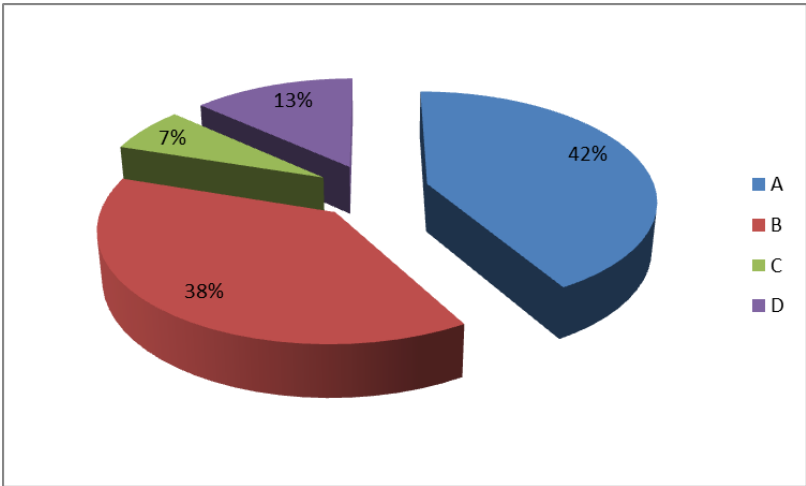
can say that the computer is a double-edged weapon: it can be positive and negative at the same time.

21) What do you usually use the computer for?

- a) Research
- b) Projects
- c) Playing games
- d) Solving the activities

Options	A	B	C	D	Total
N°	25	23	4	8	60
%	41,67%	38,33%	6,67%	13,33%	100%

Table 22: Students’ Uses of Computers



Graph 22: Students’ Uses of Computers

From the results demonstrated above, 47.67% of the participants say that they use the computer for research, since computers provide students with a broad range of resources and books that help them to do any research without going to libraries. 38.33% of them use it for projects. Conversely, 13.33 of them use it for doing home assignments. Only 6.67% state that they use it for playing games. To sum up with, students use the computer for different reasons.

3. Teacher' Questionnaire

3.1. Aim of the Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire is designed to investigate the teachers' opinions, ideas, and preferences about teaching mixed ability classes. It is very important in our research to give teachers the chance to express their ideas about the different strategies used in the teaching/learning process.

The aim of this questionnaire is to shed light on the different strategies used by teachers to teach mixed-ability secondary school classes.

3.2. Targeted Sample

To conduct our research, we sent the questionnaire to 16 secondary school teachers of 3rd year classes. They were selected randomly from different secondary schools in Mila.

3.3. Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire encompasses two types of questions: closed questions which contain several options from which the participant can choose, and add justifications if necessary; open questions which allow the teacher to express his/her ideas freely. The questionnaire was administered via the email. It is divided into four main parts entitled as follows:

- Background information
- Language teaching strategies
- Mixed-ability classes
- Further suggestions

The first part consists of 4 questions intended to collect information about the teachers. It aims at establishing a demographic profile of the selected sample in terms of gender, degree held, work experience, and the levels they previously taught. The second part is made up of 6 questions which together aim to investigate the different strategies used to overcome the challenges posed by mixed-ability classes. The third part is devoted to detecting the different hurdles suggested solutions to deal with mixed-ability classes. The final section is meant to give teachers the floor to express themselves freely and to put forward any further comments or recommendations.

3.4. Questionnaire Analysis

Section One: General Information

The results show that the majority of the teachers 62.50 hold a MA (Master/ Magister) degree, while 37.50 % of them hold a BA (License) and no one had a PhD (Doctorate) degree. 50% of the sample reported that they have from 1 to 8 years work experience. Likewise, 50 % of the participants said that they have over 8 years of work experience. All of them state that they taught 3rd year students.

Section Two: Language Teaching Strategies

1. How do you find teaching a mixed-ability classes?

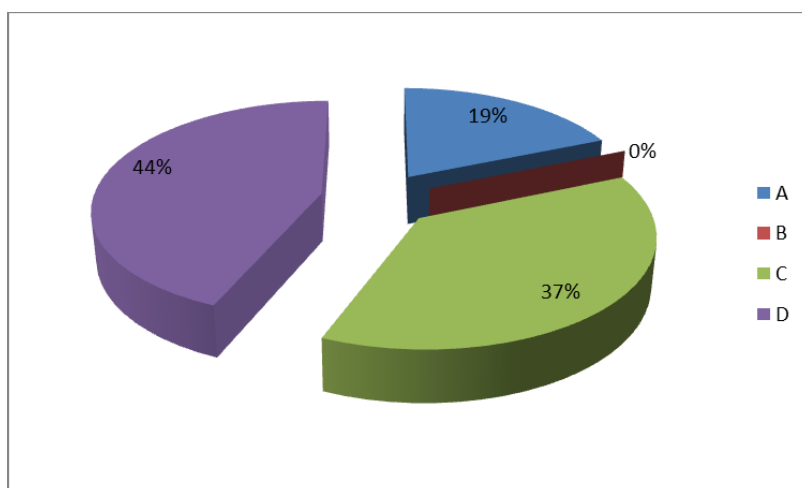
- a) Enjoyable
- b) Easy
- c) Time consuming
- d) Hard

Others please specify.....

Options	A	B	C	D	Total

N°	3	0	6	7	16
%	18,75%	0%	37,50%	43,75%	100%

Table 23: Teachers' Perceptions about Teaching Mixed-ability Classes



Graph 23: Teachers' Perceptions about Mixed-ability Classes

From the results above, 43.75 % of the teachers report that teaching mixed-ability class could be a huge uphill struggle. A considerable proportion of the sample 37.50 % say it is time consuming, while 18.75 % of them claim that teaching multilevel classes is enjoyable, and no one declares that it is easy.

In this item, four options are provided and participants were asked to add any other suggestions. Some of them present the following:

- It requires intelligence and patience.
- It is challenging.

We can assume that most of the teachers find it difficult to teach a mixed ability-class, since they are dealing with different learners at the same time. All of them vary in

levels, learning styles, intelligence, preferences, and so on. So teachers must work really hard to make sure that no one is left behind.

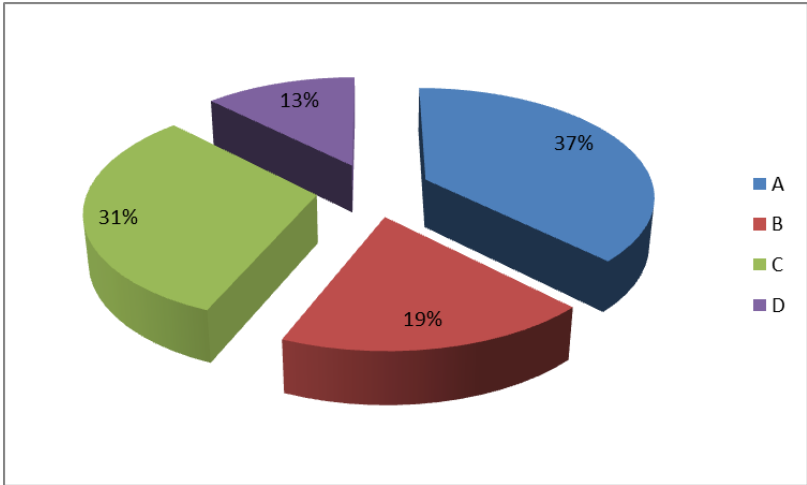
2. What types of teaching strategies do you use for teaching mixed-ability classes?

- a) Cooperative learning
- b) Active learning
- c) Differentiation
- d) ICT

Others please add.....

Options	A	B	C	D	Total
N°	6	3	5	2	16
%	37,50%	18,75%	31,25%	12,50%	100%

Table 24: Types of Teaching Strategies



Graph 24: Types of Teaching Strategies

As it is stated above, 37.5 % of the teachers say they use cooperative learning as a strategy for teaching mixed-ability classes. Likewise 31.25% of the teachers use differentiated pedagogy as a teaching strategy, while 18.75% of them use active learning and only 12.50 % use information communication technology (ICT) to teach students with different levels. Some teachers add some suggestions like:

- Using all the previous strategies together in order to address learners' skills.
- Using visualization.
- Implementing behavior management strategy.

It can be concluded that using cooperative learning or group work, differentiation of (the content, process, and product), engaging students in discussions, using pictures, realia and figures could be the most effective if not the best strategies for teaching mixed-ability classes.

3. Do using effective strategies help students succeed in their learning?

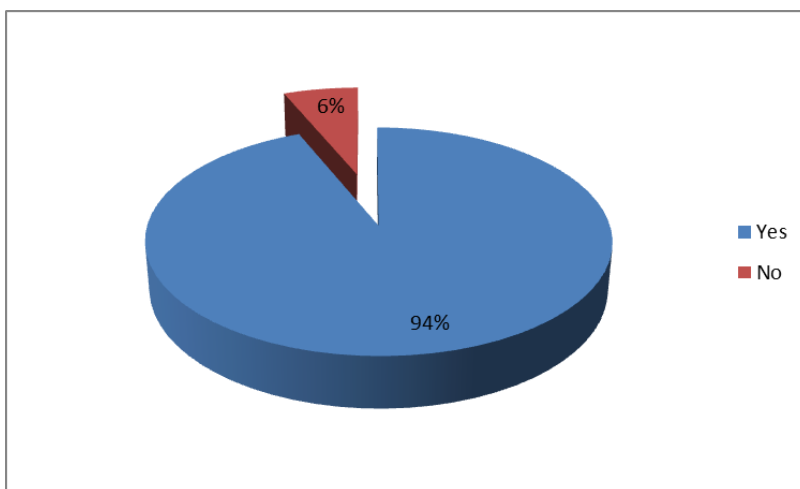
a) Yes

b) No

If yes, would you please explain why

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	15	1	16
%	6,25%	93,75%	100%

Table 25: Effectiveness of Teaching Strategies



Graph 25: Effectiveness of Teaching Strategies

The results above show that the majority of the participants agree on using effective strategies in order to help students succeed in their learning, and only 6.25 % of them claim that using effective strategies does not always help students succeed because what seems good for one learner may be the opposite for the other. To make this question yield many results, teachers are asked to justify their first choice “yes”. The statement below sums up their justifications.

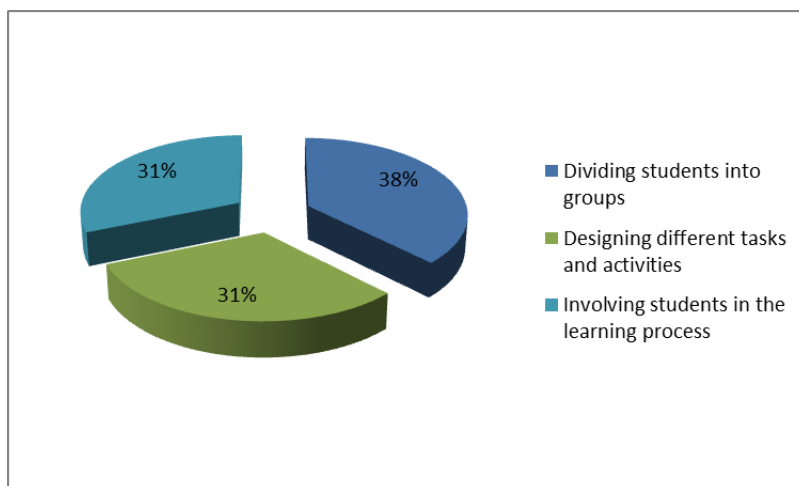
- Effective strategies help students improve their skills, understand better, acquire vocabulary, and create a healthy environment.

To sum up with, using effective strategies benefits both the learner and the teacher alike because the student will understand easily and this will not cost the teacher much effort.

4. There are good students, average students, and slow ones in your class. How do you manage to teach three different levels at the same time?

Answers	N°	%
Dividing students into groups Allow interaction between students	6	37,50%
Designing different tasks and activities Giving students equal chances	5	31,25%
Involving students in the learning process Motivate low ability students Using simple words while explanation	5	31,25%
Total	16	100%

Table 26: Managing Good, Average, and Slow Students



Graph 26: Managing Good, Average, and Slow Students

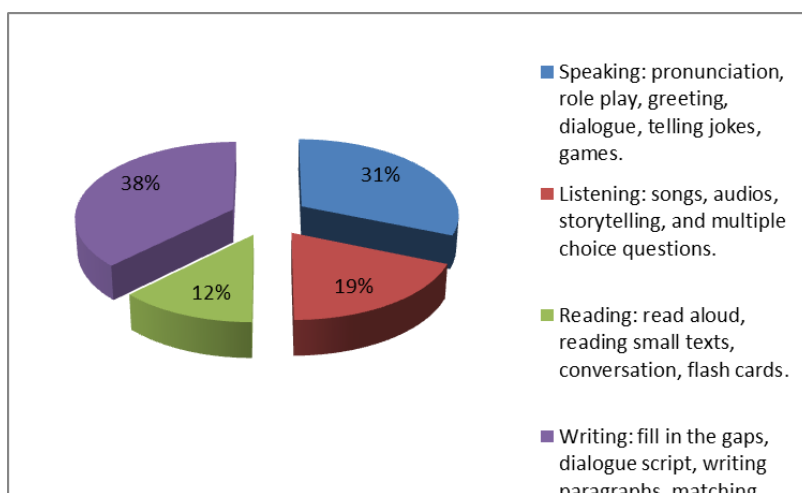
The table shows that 37.50 % of the participants report that they divide students into groups of different abilities, and allow them to interact with each other for the purpose of exchanging ideas. 31. 25% of them claim that they use different tasks and activities that suit learners’ needs, and give students equal chances to participate. Similarly, 31. 25 % of the instructors try to involve learners in the learning process, use simple words while explaining, and encourage low-ability students. The statistics revealed by the present question allow for the conclusion that teachers can manage a mixed-ability class through dividing the class into groups; this strategy fosters learner responsibility and independence, improves learning outcomes, and contributes to the feeling of cooperation. In addition, involving students in the learning process helps in raising their attention, especially if the teacher uses simple words and focuses more on the slow learners.

5. What types of activities do you use?

Answers	N°	%
Speaking: pronunciation, role play, greeting, dialogue, telling jokes, games.	5	31,25%

Listening: songs, audios, storytelling, and multiple choice questions.	3	18,75%
Reading: read aloud, reading small texts, conversation, flash cards.	2	12,50%
Writing: fill in the gaps, dialogue script, writing paragraphs, matching words...etc.	6	37,50%
Total	16	100%

Table 27: Types of Activities



Graph 27: Types of Activities

As is shown in the table, 37.50 % of the sample state that they use activities that improve the writing skills, like filling in the blanks, matching words, writing small paragraphs, and conversation completion, whereas 31.25 % use activities that develop the speaking skill, for example: pronunciation, greeting, and dialogues. 18.75% of them use activities that ameliorate the listening skill, such as songs, storytelling, listening to audios...etc. Only 12.75 % of the teachers use flash cards, conversation, and reading aloud to improve the reading skill. Thus, it can be concluded that teachers focus on the activities that develop the writing skill because the majority of the tests are written.

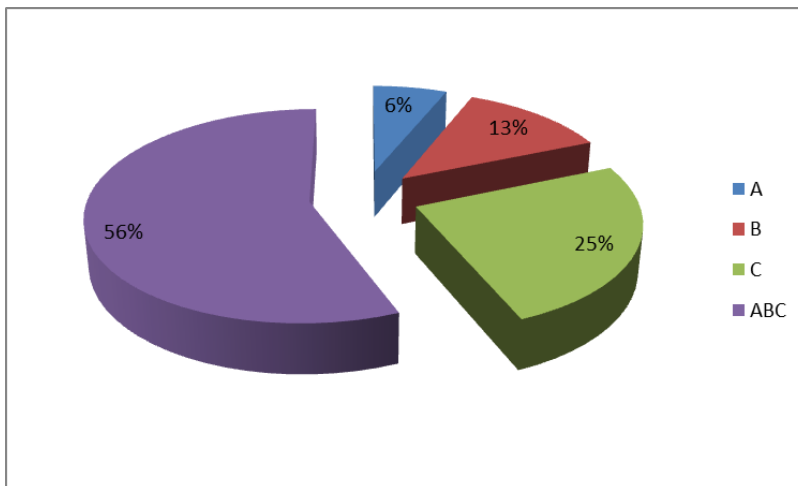
6. How do you allow students to work?

- a) Individually b) In pairs c) In groups

Would you please justify your answer

Options	A	B	C	ABC	Total
N°	1	2	4	9	16
%	6,25%	12,50%	25%	56,25%	100%

Table 28: Students' Preferable Way of Working



Graph 28: Students' Preferable Way of Work

From the results above, the majority of teachers 56.25 % allow students to work individually, in pairs, and in groups in the same activity. 25 % of them permit learners to work in groups only, while 12, 50 % authorize students to work in pairs. Only 6.25 % let them work individually. In this question teachers have different choices and whatever their choice they should justify:

- Most teachers whose answers were “ABC “ justified their choices as follows:
- It depends on the nature and the objective of the activity.

- Some activities need group work whilst others need pair work or individual.
- Teachers who went for "C" justified:
 - Working in groups can assist in matching pace between learners.
 - The advanced learners have the opportunity to help their classmates.
- Teachers who chose "B" answered:
 - Working in pairs decreases noise and motivates students.
- And those who selected the "A" option demonstrated that individual work makes students more independent and gives them more freedom. We come to the conclusion that allowing students to work individually, in pairs, or in groups is related virtually entirely to the lesson objectives and types of students.

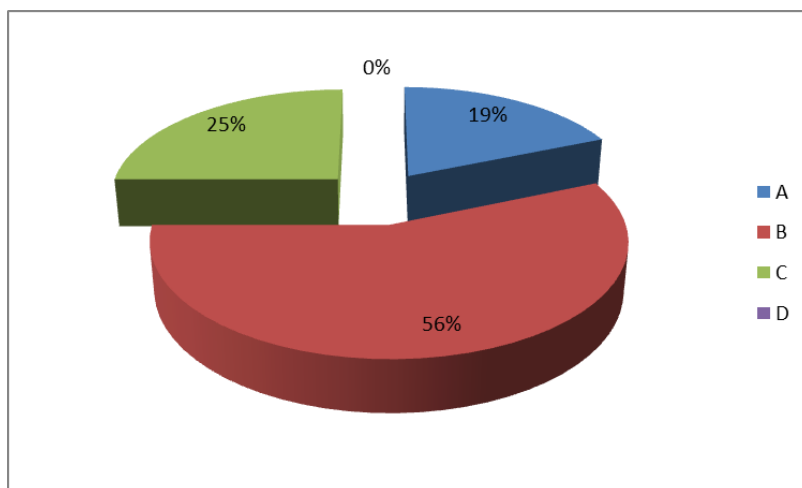
Section Three: Mixed-Ability Classes

1. How often do you face difficulties in mixed-ability classes?

- a) Always
- b) Most of the time
- b) Sometimes
- d) Never

Options	A	B	C	D	Total
N°	3	9	4	0	16
%	18,75%	56,25%	25%	0%	100%

Table 29: Frequency of Difficulties in Mixed-Ability Classes



Graph 29: Frequency of Difficulties in Mixed-ability Classes

The data manifestly shows that 56. 25 % of the teachers claim that they face difficulties most of the time. However, 25 % of them face problems only sometimes. The rest of the sample 18.75 % claim that they always face problems, and no one of them reports that he/she never faces a problem. We can say that teaching mixed-ability classes is not easy and teachers encounter many difficulties most of the time and this is due to the class richness of different abilities.

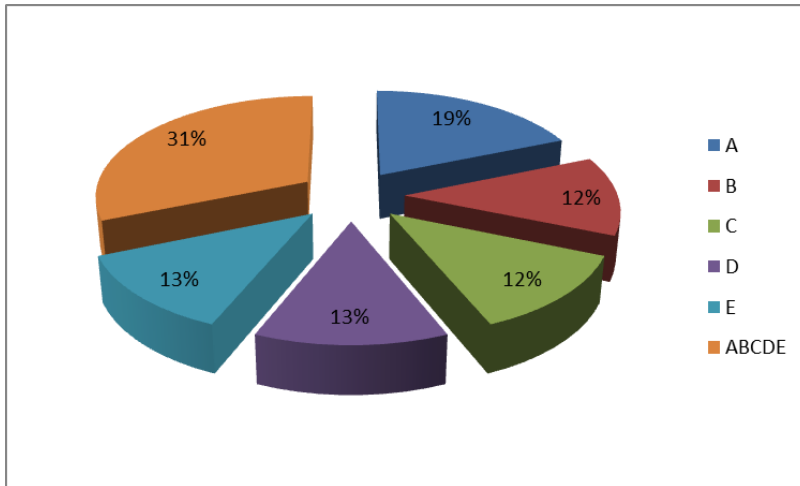
2. What challenges do you encounter when dealing with mixed ability classes?

- a) Lack of time
- b) Lack of materials
- c) Large classes
- d) Disinterest
- e) Participation

Others please mention them

Options	A	B	C	D	E	ABCDE	Total
N°	3	2	2	2	2	5	16
%	18,75%	12,50%	12,50%	12,50%	12,50%	31,25%	100%

Table 30: Challenges of Mixed-ability Classes



Graph 30: Challenges of Mixed-ability Classes

The obtained answers demonstrate that 31.25 % of the teachers say they encounter all the challenges mentioned together “lack of time, lack of materials, large classes, disinterest, and participation”. This means that teachers are unable to create a profitable environment for their learners; 18.75 % of our sample assumes that they don’t have enough time to finish a lesson. Also, 12.50 % of the participants state that the biggest obstacle for them is large classes; this means that teachers cannot control their classes because they are full of diverse learners. The remaining problems “lack of materials, disinterest, and participation” have the same percentage 12.50 %. Some teachers add other problems which are:

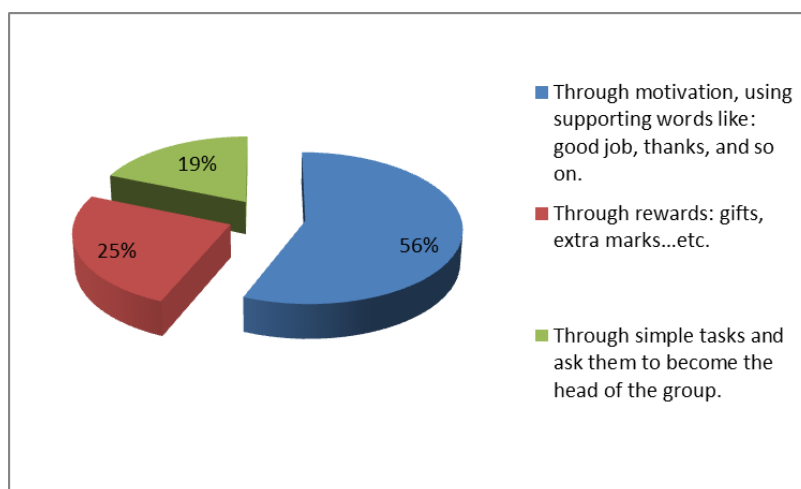
- Lack of concentration.
- Difficulty of the syllabus, some objectives are beyond the reach of students.
- Lack of vocabulary: some students can’t even understand the language.

3. How do you encourage low ability, shy learners?

Answers	N°	%
Through motivation, using supporting words like: good job, thanks, and so on.	9	56,25%

Through rewards: gifts, extra marks...etc.	4	2 5%
Through simple tasks and ask them to become the head of the group.	3	18,75%
Total	16	100%

Table 31: Strategies to Encourage Shy Learners



Graph 31: Strategies to Encourage Shy Learners

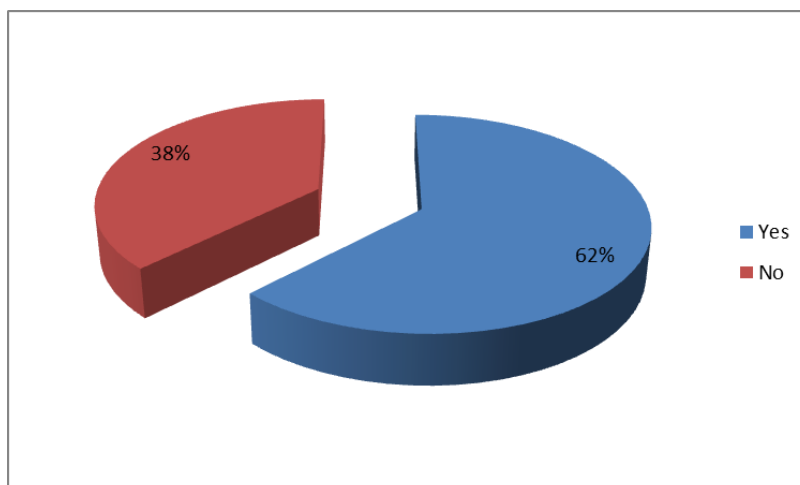
The vast majority of teachers 56.25 % encourage lower ability, shy learners through motivating them, trusting their capacities, and using supporting words. However, (25 %) say that they encourage weak students via rewards, for instance adding extra marks or giving them simple gifts like books. A minority of teachers 18.75 % mentioned that they give them simple tasks or ask them to solve effortless activities. As a conclusion, we can say that encouraging low ability students through motivation and rewards will help them attain academic success.

4. Is it good to give equal opportunities to all students in the class?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	10	6	16
%	62,50%	37,50%	100%

Table 32: Equality between Students



Graph 32: Equality between Students

From the figure above, it seems that the majority of the teachers 62.50 % assert that they give students equal opportunities in the classroom, while 37.50 % of the sample represents the opposite view. In this item two choices are provided and teachers are asked to justify the first choice “yes”. Some of them present the following:

- Fairness makes participation smooth and full of diverse views.
- To avoid discrimination.
- To help students increase their level and correct their mistakes.

As a result, we can say that treating students equally helps them to improve their level and achieve the desired goals. Also, it allows them to boost their motivation and engagement.

5. As a teacher what do you do when students make noise?

- a) Ask them to write long paragraphs.

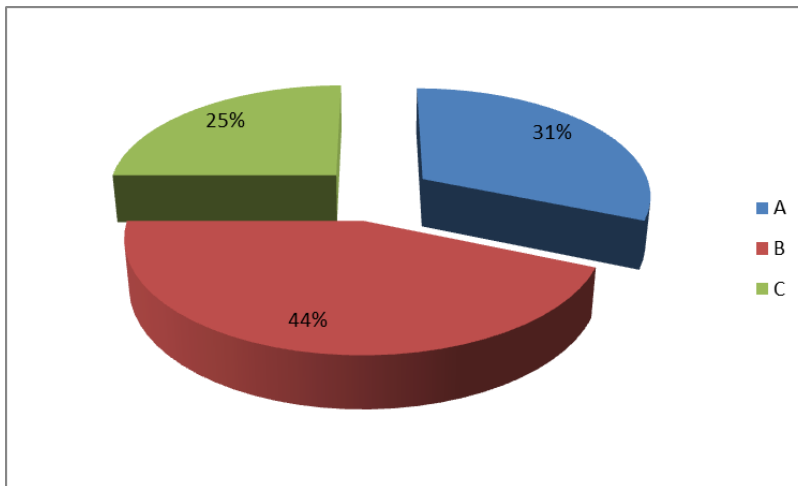
b) Ask the noisy students different questions.

c) Punish them.

Others could you please mention them

Options	A	B	C	Total
N°	5	7	4	16
%	31,25%	43,75%	25%	100%

Table 33: Strategies used When Students Make Noise



Graph 33: Strategies used When Students Make Noise

Concerning the results mentioned above, 43.75 % of the teachers ask the noisy students different questions, in order to make continued contact with the uncooperative students in the class. Similarly, 31 % of teachers ask students to write long paragraphs. Only 25 % of the respondents claim that they punish them. Some teachers suggest the following: ask them to stop talking, stop the lesson until they finish talking, shout at them, and threaten them. To sum up with, all the tips mentioned above help teachers to some extent to reduce noise and control the class.

6. Creating a healthy atmosphere is one of the rules of teaching mixed-ability classes?

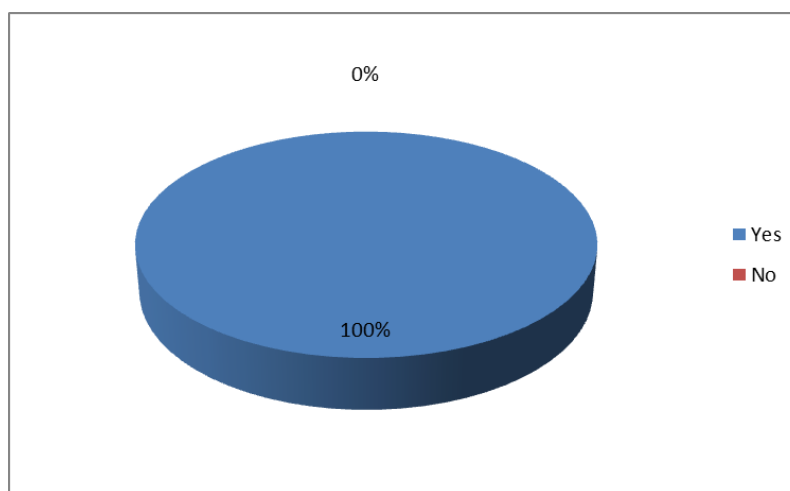
a) Yes

b) No

Could you please justify your answer

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	16	0	16
%	100%	0%	100%

Table 34: Creating a Healthy Atmosphere



Graph 34: Creating a Healthy Atmosphere

Very interesting data is gathered through this item: the whole sample 100 % agree with the statement that creating a healthy atmosphere is one of the rules of teaching mixed-ability classes. This means that a healthy atmosphere becomes a requisite condition for classroom management; as a result, learners learn better when the environment is positive and supportive. Some teachers justified their answers by putting down the following:

- Healthy atmosphere facilitates the process of teaching.
- Teachers and students need to feel safe and secure.
- It is very important for any teacher to make students feel at ease.

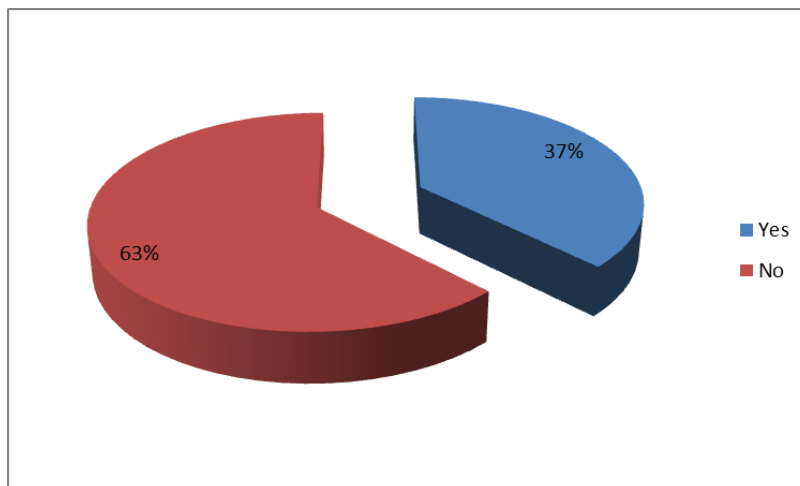
7. Should the material be the same in mixed-ability classes for all students irrespective of their level of performance?

a) Yes

b) No

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	6	10	16
%	37,50%	62,50%	100%

Table 35: Varying the Materials in Mixed-ability Classes



Graph 35: Varying the Materials in Mixed-ability Classes

As is shown in the table that more than half of the sample 62.50 % reports that the material should not be the same in mixed-ability classes. Likewise, 37.50 % of the participants think that the material should be the same in mixed-ability classes. It can be concluded that the majority of the teachers use different materials for teaching multilevel classes. As it was mentioned before, students have different learning strategies and styles; for example, one student likes to listen to the teacher while the other prefers to see pictures in order to make sense of what is being taught.

8. Do you give students different homework?

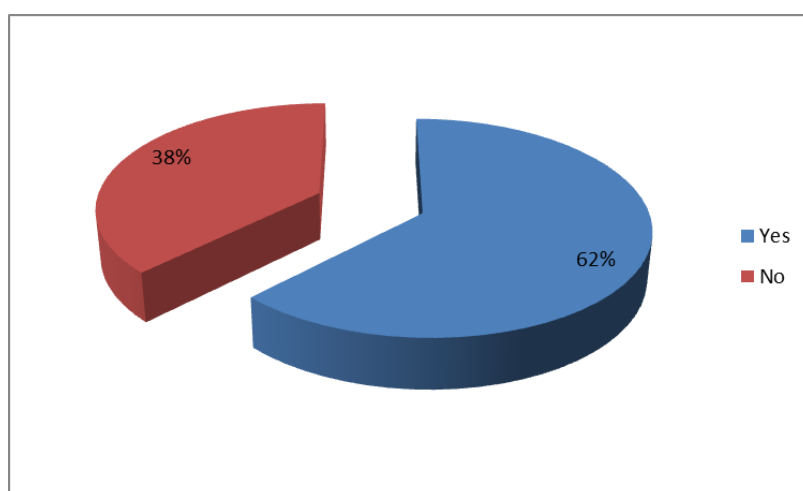
a) Yes

b) No

If yes, could you provide a brief explanation

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	10	6	16
%	62,50%	37,50%	100%

Table 36: Rate of Giving Different Homework



Graph 36: Rate of Giving Different Homework

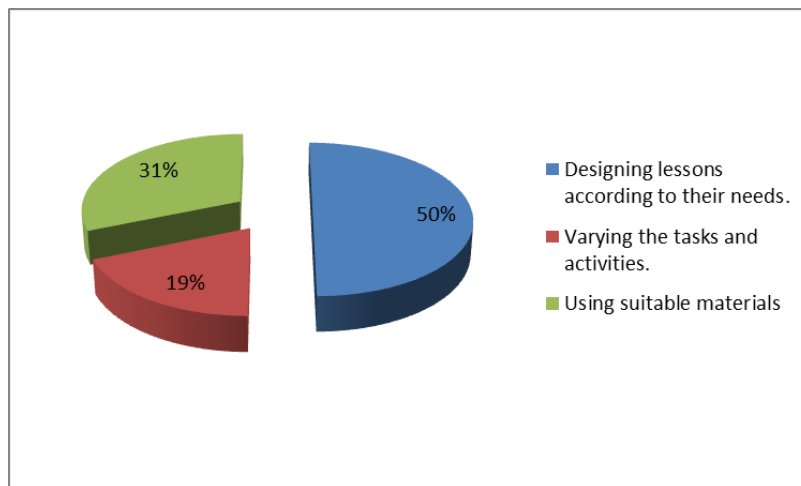
The majority of the respondents 62.50% say that they give students different homework because some learners need more activities than others, while 37.50 % of the sample represents teachers with the opposite view. This minority assumes that giving different homework types creates a kind of disruption. Two options are provided and teachers are asked to justify their “yes” choice. Some participants supplied the following explanations:

- Sometimes I break the homework into smaller activities, and then each group is asked to do only one activity.
- Homework should constitute all the different aspects of language “grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation ...etc.”

9. As a teacher how do you meet the needs of all pupils?

Answers	N°	%
Designing lessons according to their needs.	8	50%
Varying the tasks and activities.	3	18,75%
Using suitable materials	5	31,25%
Total	16	100%

Table 37: Meeting Learners' Needs



Graph 37: Meeting Learners' Needs

According to the table, 50 % of the participants say that they meet the needs of all pupils through designing lessons in accordance with their weaknesses. However, 31.25 % of them meet their learners' needs via using suitable materials. Only 18.75 % of the respondents do so through varying the tasks and activities, that is to say each activity targets the needs of specific students and eventually all learners' needs are fully met. So, when teachers identify the characteristics of each learner and meet his/her needs, they can easily plan their classroom activities and lessons. As a result, we can say that if a student feels supported by their tutor, they will exert more effort to succeed.

answers. Some of them provided the following explanations for their “yes” choice as follows:

- Low ability students need to work with high ability students in order to improve their level.
- Pupils enjoy working in groups because it is the only technique that allows them to speak, move, discuss things, ask, exchange ideas, and creates challenge between them.
- It makes class under control: each ability group will get the appropriate task, and shy learners can work better with their friends. Also, they can share their knowledge.

11. Should students be divided according to their level of ability?

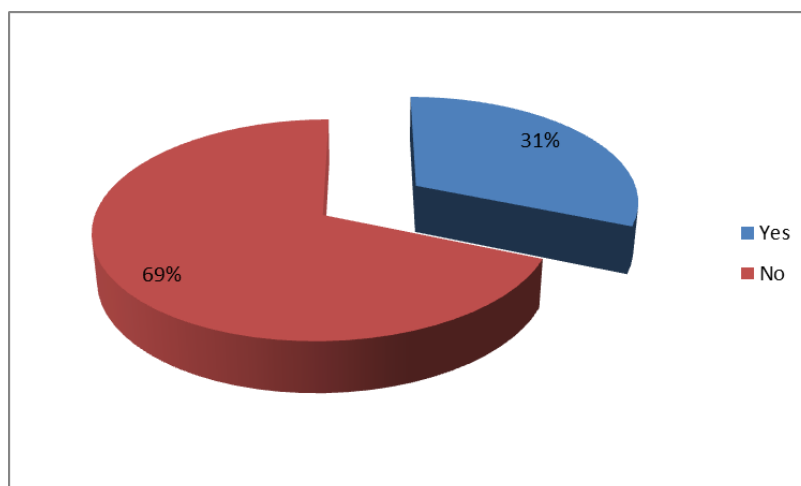
a) Yes

b) No

Please justify your answer.....

Options	Yes	No	Total
N°	5	11	16
%	31,25%	68,75%	100%

Table 39: Teacher’s Opinion about Dividing Students According to their Levels



Graph 39: Teacher's Opinion about Dividing Students According to their Levels

The results above indicate that more than half of the sample, 67.75 % of the teachers, say that students shouldn't be divided according to their level of ability because streaming students into groups of the same ability will create segregation between learners. 31.25 % of the respondents state that students must be divided according to their level of ability, which means grouping students according to their abilities is the easiest method to handle a class with varying abilities. The proponent of this method argues that when students are grouped according to their capacities, it becomes easy for the teacher to give a special attention to each group. As a result, we can assume that students should be divided into groups of different competencies or levels "high, average, and low".

Section Four: Further Suggestions

Our respondents suggest first to make a checkup or pre-test at the beginning of each year, in order to detect students' needs and weaknesses. After that the teacher forms a group of different students "high level, average, and weak ones" so that they can help each other. Also, the teacher must devote much time to low level students because this will help them enhance their level. Others suggest that each teacher must create a healthy atmosphere for his/her students, treat students equally to reduce the psychological barrier, and adopt suitable materials to facilitate the learning process. Last but not least, secondary school teachers must vary their teaching strategies in order to reach all the students and no one should be left behind.

4. Discussion of the Finding & Results:

4.1. Student's Questionnaire:

Analyzing students' questionnaire has revealed that 3rd year secondary school students are keenly interested in studying the English language. Also, all classes comprise students of different levels (perfect, good, average, and weak).

- Students are motivated to learn due to different reasons, like family, friends, money, achieving goals ...etc.
- Throughout the results we note that the majority of the students prefer to use their organs to learn (kinesthetic).
- The results also show that students have different personalities, most of them are extrovert and the rest are introvert.
- Moreover, all the students experience anxiety while studying and this happens due to different reasons, like lack of vocabulary, lack of self-confidence, and fear of making mistakes.
- Besides, all the students are intelligent in different ways, so if you are not smart in mathematics it doesn't necessarily mean that you are not smart at all.
- The majority of the students assume that they use some learning strategies, such as summarizing, cooperating with others, trying to understand the hidden meaning.
- In addition, students prefer to work both individually and in groups.
- Most of the students make mistakes in the process of learning, but some students like to get corrected by their teachers immediately whilst others prefer to get corrected at the end of the session.
- All students encounter some difficulties, like stress, disinterest, lack of vocabulary, lack of self-confidence, misunderstanding, pronunciation, difficulty of the language...etc.
- Almost half of the students claim that their teachers vary the materials and motivate them to exert more effort.

- Many students argue that they like using the computer in the classroom because it provides different opportunities and makes learning more enjoyable in terms of teaching the same things in modern ways.

4.2. Teacher's Questionnaire:

The results obtained from the teacher's questionnaire reveal that:

- The majority of teacher 62.25 of them have MA degree while the rest have BA degree, and 50% of them have up to 8 years of experience.
- Most of the teachers found teaching mixed-ability classes hard and time consuming.
- According to the results gathered the best strategies for teaching multilevel classes are cooperative learning and differentiation.
- Similarly, many teachers have claimed that managing a class of different abilities (high, average, and low) requires using some techniques, like dividing them into groups, designing different tasks and activities, using simple language, giving them equal opportunities, and motivating the less able students.
- Likewise, all the teachers state that they use activities that address the four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening).
- In the same way, allowing students to work individually, in pairs, or in groups depends on the nature of the activity *per se*.
- Furthermore, the majority of the teachers face different challenges most of the time, like lack of materials, lack of time, large classes, participation, and disinterest.
- In addition, secondary school teachers encourage shy and low ability students through rewards, extra marks, praising and so forth.
- Most of the teachers try to reduce noise through involving students in discussions, group work, ask them questions and make a continuous contact with them.

- All the tutors assert that creating a healthy environment is very important while teaching.
- The majority of the teachers assert that varying the materials is a condition for teaching mixed-ability classes because one size does not fit all.
- Many teachers try to meet their students' needs via designing lessons according to these needs, differentiating the materials and tasks.
- Many teachers contend that dividing students into groups of different abilities is the best strategy to teach mixed-ability classes.

Conclusion:

This field of investigation is carried out by using two descriptive research instruments: students' questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire. Both aimed at investigating the different teaching strategies adopted by secondary school teachers to deal with mixed-ability secondary school classes. The data collected by these two research tools was analyzed and discussed in the light of the previous chapters. It has unveiled that both teachers and students face some difficulties or challenges in the classroom. Furthermore, the results show that using well adopted strategies improves students' levels and helps them to succeed.

5. Implications:

The implication of this study suggests a number of avenues for future reading research. Every secondary school English teacher should recognize his/her students' learning styles, needs, learning strategies, personalities, type of intelligence, and so forth in order to apply the best strategies that suit them. Moreover, they should motivate weak, introvert learners by praising their responses and rewarding them. Also, they must give fair opportunities to all students.

Teachers can make the classroom the best place ever if they create a healthy, positive atmosphere, for example using a challenging game between groups. What makes teaching mixed-ability classes hard is that they are full of challenges. So, teachers should know the root of the problem in order to eradicate it.

6. Pedagogical Recommendations:

In the light of our findings, we would like to present some recommendations which may be helpful for improving the teaching/learning process. The recommendations could be summarized as follows:

For Foreign Language Students:

- Students need to build good self-confidence and believe in their capacities.
- Try to improve their level through practising English outside the classroom and reading books, short stories and magazines in order to enrich their vocabulary.
- Students need to be aware of the obstacles and difficulties they face while learning and try to work hand in hand with their teachers to decrease these problems.

For Foreign Language Teachers:

- Teachers should take into consideration the individual differences and vary the types of activities.
- Teachers should carry out an action research at the beginning of each year to detect the students' needs (strengths and weaknesses).
- Teachers should deal with students mistakes as a part of the learning process and should not show a negative reaction when students make mistakes.
- Teachers should have a pleasant relationship with students to help them feel less anxious during the class.

- Secondary school teachers should vary their ways of teaching in order to meet all students' needs. Therefore, this differentiation helps in involving the students in the learning process.
- Teachers should overcome the challenges of mixed-ability classes through using appropriate techniques.
- This research is based on the teachers of secondary schools. So, future researchers can conduct research work on other levels, like primary, middle as well as tertiary.
- This research work can pave the way for other related topics of mixed-ability classes; for instance, issues of mixed-ability students.

7. Limitation of the Study

In the present research we have encountered many pitfalls which resulted in many limitations of the study:

- Incapacity to make the observation because of the epidemic of Covid 19, all the educational institutions was closed and we make another questionnaire for students instead of it.
- It was very hard to collect data and meet all the participants because of that we sent the questionnaires via email.
- The sample in this study was restricted to only 16 teachers and 60 students. As such, it can be argued that the sample is small.
- We couldn't reach all the sources of information available in the library.

General Conclusion

This study is entitled teachers' professional practices vis-à-vis the challenges of mixed-ability secondary school classes. At the beginning of the dissertation, we tried to identify some technical terms, like teaching, strategy and technique. Besides, we have focused

on the main teaching strategies used by secondary school teachers to deal with multilevel students. We, in the same vein, mentioned some roles that the teacher performs in the classroom. In the second chapter we shed light on the notion of mixed-ability classes and individual differences. Also, we tried to discuss some problems of mixed-ability classes.

Throughout this research work, two data gathering tools were used (teachers' questionnaire and students' questionnaire) in order to investigate the teachers' use of these strategies while teaching and the manifold challenges they face. The two questionnaires were submitted to 16 teachers and 60 students in Mila. Both students and teachers were selected randomly.

It was found that teaching these classes is challenging due to the complexities involved, but mixed-ability classes are known for their diverse strengths. Instructors should focus more on these strengths and work hard to improve their weaknesses. The appropriate strategies and techniques according to the results are: designing specific tasks for the various levels of students, encouraging low ability learners, tracking or dividing students into groups of the same levels or different levels, varying the materials, developing cooperation and collaboration between students, giving students equal chances to participate. This confirms our hypothesis that using suitable teaching strategies improves students' level. To sum up with, these teaching strategies will ensure efficiency and success in the teaching of mixed-ability classes.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is an attempt for gathering information needed for the accomplishment of a master's dissertation. Please, take a few minutes to complete it by placing a tick (√) in the appropriate box (s) or giving full statements on the broken lines whenever necessary.

Thank you ever so much; I extremely appreciate your help.

Section One: Background Information

1- Gender: Male Female

2- How do you consider your level in English?

كيف تعتبر مستواك في اللغة الانجليزية؟

- a) Perfect ممتاز
- b) Good جيد
- c) Average متوسط
- d) Low ضعيف

3- Do you like studying the English language?

هل تحب دراسة اللغة الانجليزية؟

- a) Yes
- b) No

Section Two: Individual Differences

4- Are you motivated to learn English by:

هل انت مشجع لتعلم الانجليزية بواسطة؟

a) Internal forces قوى داخلية

b) External forces قوى خارجية

5- What is your favorite learning style?

ما هو نمط التعلم المفضل لديك ؟

a) Visual (to see) بصري

b) Auditory (to listen) سمعي

c) Kinesthetic (using the whole body touch, move...etc) استعمال كل اعضاء (حركي

(الخ...الجسم لمس تحرك)

6- As a student, how do you evaluate your personality?

كيف تعتبر نفسك كطالب؟

a) Introvert (shy and calm) انطوائي (خجول و هادئ)

Extrovert (Social and talkative) منبسط (اجتماعي و كثير الكلام)

7- In case you feel anxious, do you think it is due to?

في حال شعرت بالتوتر هل تعتقد انه بسبب؟

a) The lack of vocabulary قلة المفردات

b) Lack of confidence انعدام الثقة في النفس

c) Fear of making mistakes الخوف من ارتكاب الاخطاء

8- Do you worry about making mistakes in front of your classmates?

هل تشعر بالتوتر اذا ارتكبت اخطاء امام زملائك ؟

a) Yes

b) No

9- How do you classify your intelligence?

كيف تصنف ذكاءك؟

- | | | |
|---------------------------|--------|--------------------------|
| a) Linguistic | لغوي | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Logical/- mathematical | رياضي | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Spatial/- visual | بصري | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Bodily/-kinesthetic | حركي | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Musical | موسيقي | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Interpersonal | شخصي | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Naturalistic | طبيعي | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10- Do you employ some strategies while learning English?

عند تعلمك للغة الانجليزية هل تستعمل بعض الاستراتيجيات؟

- | | |
|--------|--------------------------|
| a) Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11- Which of these strategies do you use to facilitate your learning process?

من بين هاته الاستراتيجيات ما هي التي توظفها لتسهل عملية التعلم؟

- | | |
|--|--|
| a) Try to understand the hidden meaning from the context | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| حاول فهم المعنى الخفي من سياق الكلام | |
| b) Self-evaluating | التقييم الذاتي <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Summarizing passages or texts | تلخيص الفقرات او النصوص <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Asking for more clarification | طلب المزيد من الشرح <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Cooperation with others | التعاون مع الاخرين <input type="checkbox"/> |

Others please mention them استراتيجيات اخرى اذكرها رجاءا

12- How do you like to solve the activities?

كيف تفضل حل التمارين؟

a) Individually بشكل فردي

b) Cooperatively بشكل جماعي

13- While doing an activity and you face a problem, what do you do?

عندما تنجز تمرينا و تواجه مشكلة ما ماذا تفعل؟

a) You stop and do not complete the activity تستسلم و لا تكمل التمرين

b) You use some techniques to cope with it تستعمل بعض التقنيات لحله

Section Three: Language Teaching Strategies

14- What do you want your teacher to do when you make mistakes?

ماذا تريد من معلمك ان يفعل اثناء ارتكابك للاخطاء؟

a) To correct your mistakes immediately تصحيح اخطائك مباشرة

b) Wait until you finish and correct them ينتظر حتى تنتهي و يصححها

c) Ignore the mistakes يتجاهل اخطائك

15- Do you like the teaching strategies used by your teacher?

هل تحب استراتيجيات التدريس التي يستخدمها معلمك؟

a) Yes

b) No

16- What are the difficulties that you face during learning?

ما هي الصعوبات التي تواجهها اثناء التعلم؟

.....

.....

17- How does your teacher act if you do not understand the lesson?

كيف يتصرف معلمك اذا لم تفهم الدرس؟

a) Use other materials استعمال مواد اخرى

b) Gives you some activities يقترح بعض التمارين

c) Allocates another session for explaining the confusing points

يخصص حصة اخرى لشرح النقاط المبهمة

Others, please add يمكنك اضافة اشياء اخرى

18- Does your teacher vary his /her materials?

هل يقوم معلمك بتغيير الادوات التي يستعملها؟

a) Yes

b) No

19- Does your teacher encourage you to exert more effort?

هل يشجعك استاذك على بذل مجهود اكبر؟

a) Yes

b) No

20- Do you like using the computer in class?

هل تحب استخدام الحاسوب في القسم؟

a) Yes

b) No

21- What do you usually use the computer for?

في ماذا تستعمل الحاسوب؟

a) Research البحث العلمي

b) Projects (powerpoint) المشاريع

c) Playing games الالعب

d) Solving the activities حل التمارين

Others please specify يمكنك اضافة اشياء اخرى

Thank you for your collaboration.

Appendix 2: Teacher's Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

As a part of my Master of Education in English, I'm carrying out a research work on teacher's professional practices vis-a-vis mixed-ability classes. The purpose behind this questionnaire is to find out about the different strategies that EFL teachers usually use to cope with multilevel classes. Therefore, it is very important that you answer all the questions sincerely. Please feel free to add any questions to me. This is my email address salimasara202@gmail.com.

Please, place a tick (√) in the appropriate box(s) or give full statement(s) on the broken lines whenever necessary.

I will be immensely pleased and endlessly grateful if you could take the time and energy to answer it. Thank ever so much for your precious help.

Miss Zeroual Salima

Supervisor: Dr. Mansour Djalal

Department of Foreign Languages

English Section

Faculty of Letters and Languages

University Abdelhafid Boussouf

Mila

Section one: General Information

1. Degree held: BA(License)
- MA (Master/ Magister)
- PHD (Doctorate)
2. How many years have you been teaching?
.....
3. What are the classes that you have taught?
- 1st year
- 2nd year
- 3rd year

Section Two: Language Teaching Strategies

1. How do you find teaching a mixed-ability class?
- a) Enjoyable
- b) Easy
- c) Time consuming
- d) Hard

Others, please specify:

2. What types of teaching strategies do you use for teaching mixed-ability classes?
- a) Cooperative learning
- b) Active learning

c) Differentiation

Others please add

3. Do using effective strategies help students succeed in their learning?

a) Yes

b) No

If yes would you please explain why?

.....

4. There are good students, average students and slow ones in your class, how do you manage to teach three different levels at the same time?

.....

.....

5. What types of activities do you use?

.....

.....

6. Do you allow students to work :

a) Individually

b) In pairs

c) In groups

Would you please justify your answer.....

.....

Section three: Mixed-Ability Classes

1. How often do you face difficulties in mixed-ability classes?

- a) Always
- b) Most of the time
- c) Sometimes
- d) Never

2. What challenges do you encounter when dealing with mixed-ability classes?

- a) Lack of time
- b) Lack of materials
- c) Large classes
- d) Disinterest
- e) Participation

Others, please mention them.....

.....

3. How do you encourage lower- ability, shy learners to participate?

.....
.....

4. Is it good to give equal opportunities to all students in the class?

- a) Yes
- b) No

If yes, would you please state why.....

.....

5. As a teacher, what do you do when your students make noise?

- a) Ask them to write long paragraphs
- b) Ask the noisy students different questions
- c) Punish them

Others could you please mention.....

6. Creating a healthy atmosphere is one of the rules of teaching mixed-ability classes?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Please justify your answer.....

.....

7. Should the material be the same in mixed-ability classes for all students irrespective of their levels of performance?

- a) Yes
- b) No

8. Do you give students different home- work?

- a) Yes
- b) No

If yes, could you provide a brief explanation?

.....

9. As a teacher, how do you meet the needs of all pupils?

.....
.....
.....

10. Grouping students is the best way to handle mixed-ability classes?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Can you kindly explain why?

.....

11. Should students be divided according to their level of ability?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Please justify your answer.....

.....

Section Four: Further Suggestions

- Please, add any suggestions, comments, additional information relevant to the aim of this questionnaire.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Résumé

La manière dont un enseignant présente sa leçon s'appelle une stratégie d'enseignement. Cela joue un rôle très important dans le domaine de l'enseignement et de l'apprentissage des langues. Notre étude repose sur l'hypothèse selon laquelle l'utilisation de stratégies d'enseignement bien adoptées et bien pensées est très susceptible de générer un effet positif sur le niveau des élèves. Ainsi, cette recherche s'est efforcée de dévoiler si les stratégies d'enseignement appliquées pour enseigner aux classes secondaires à capacités mixtes sont adaptées ou non. Cette étude vise également à enquêter sur les différents problèmes auxquels les enseignants et les élèves sont confrontés en classe et à rechercher des solutions pour surmonter ces défis.

Afin de collecter les données nécessaires à cette étude, nous avons opté pour le questionnaire comme outil de recherche. Nous en avons conçu un pour les étudiants et un autre pour les enseignants afin de répondre à différents objectifs que nous nous sommes fixés pour cette entreprise actuelle. Le questionnaire des élèves a été administré à 60 élèves du secondaire de la filière des langues étrangères, ils ont été sélectionnés au hasard. Ce questionnaire vise fondamentalement à explorer les besoins, les personnalités, les attitudes des élèves etc. En outre, un questionnaire destiné aux enseignants a été envoyé à 16 enseignants du secondaire via le seul canal disponible à savoir les courriers électroniques. Il visait à enquêter sur les perceptions et les stratégies des enseignants pour enseigner à des classes à capacités mixtes. Les deux questionnaires ont été administrés à Mila. Les résultats de la recherche ont révélé qu'il est possible pour les enseignants de gérer avec succès les classes à capacités mixtes même s'ils rencontrent certains problèmes. Cela peut obliger les instructeurs à employer des stratégies de gestion efficaces pour relever tous les défis. Cela ne peut être réalisé qu'en utilisant différentes techniques et en choisissant les plus efficaces.

Mots clés: Classes à capacité mixte, Les Stratégies D'enseignement, Défis

الملخص

الطريقة التي يعتمد عليها المعلم في تقديم الدرس تعرف باستراتيجيات التعليم، حيث لعبت هذه الأخيرة دورا هاما في مجال التعليم و التعلم.

تعتمد هذه الدراسة على الفرضية التالية ان استخدام استراتيجيات التدريس المدروسة جيدا من شأنه احداث تأثير ايجابي على مستوى الطالب. لذلك سعى هذا البحث الى الكشف عن ما اذا كانت استراتيجيات التعليم المطبقة لتدريس الاقسام الثانوية متفاوتة الكفاءات مناسبة ام لا. بالإضافة الى ذلك تهدف هذه الدراسة الى الكشف عن مختلف العراقيل التي يواجهها كل من التلاميذ و المعلمين على حد سواء داخل القسم و السعي لاقتراح حلول فعالة للتغلب على هذه العراقيل.

من اجل جمع البيانات الضرورية لإكمال هذا البحث، اعتمدنا على وسيلتين بحثيتين: استبيان خاص بالطلبة و استبيان خاص بالمعلمين، لتحقيق الاهداف المختلفة التي حددناها من اجل هذه الدراسة تم توزيع الاستبيان الاول على 60 طالب سنة ثالثة لغات اجنبية من المدارس الثانوية، الهدف الرئيسي لهذا الاستبيان هو الكشف عن احتياجات الطلاب واتجاهاتهم وشخصياتهم الى اخره. اضافة الى ذلك تم تسليم استبيان المعلمين الى 16 استاذ ثانوي عبر البريد الالكتروني بهدف البحث عن الاستراتيجيات المستعملة في تدريس الاقسام مختلفة الكفاءات. كلا الاستبيانين تم توزيعهما بميلة. و قد اظهرت النتائج ان المعلمين يستطيعون تدريس الاقسام مختلفة الكفاءات بنجاح حتى و لو واجهوا بعض العوائق، لذا يجب عليهم استخدام استراتيجيات فعالة للتغلب على مختلف التحديات و هذا لا يمكن تحقيقه الا عن طريق تنويع التقنيات المستخدمة في التدريس.