



IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS AND CHALLENGES OF MANAGEMENT IN WRITING CLASSES

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Abstract:

Classroom management is one of the most significant yet challenging issues in EFL settings, mainly when L2 writing, as a productive skill, is in focus. The present qualitative study explored EFL teachers' challenges in managing their classes when instructing writing. Twelve Iranian university instructors selected based on purposive sampling volunteered to participate in the study. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews and thematically analyzed, resulting in four main themes in response to the study's research questions. Two themes were related to teachers' challenges: instructional challenges and students' misbehavior challenges. One theme was associated with the participants' negative feelings about managing writing classes, and the last theme included suggestions for better management of writing classes. The study highlights the problems EFL teachers encounter in their writing classes, hoping to attract policymakers' and administrators' attention to the teaching profession in EFL settings. The study has implications for teachers, teacher trainers, and educators.

Keywords: classroom management challenges, EFL teachers, writing skill

1. Introduction

Teaching in EFL writing classes is usually more challenging than other language skills because, in such classes, teachers have to encourage students to write assignments, correct their essays, focus on the feedback they receive, and re-write their compositions (Ip, 2017). Teachers must create a productive and encouraging learning atmosphere that relies on implementing classroom management techniques effectively. An ideal setting for teaching is creating an active environment in which learners are encouraged to learn. It is incumbent on teachers to nurture excitement and motivate learners to participate in classroom activities. Teachers should also cultivate high levels of engagement among students. Thus, familiarity with different techniques and implementing effective

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strategies to create an active and lively classroom environment are inseparable from the teaching profession. Teachers should know how to motivate learners intrinsically and extrinsically (Rashtchi & Porkar, 2023).

Classroom management techniques play a crucial role in shaping students' learning experiences, including organizing classroom activities, assigning diverse learning roles to students, and addressing instances of misbehavior. Effective classroom management aims to enhance students' cognitive development and foster their social-emotional skills. Amaewhule *et al.* (2022) point out that these techniques go beyond maintaining discipline and student control. They encompass all activities within the classroom that aim to enhance students' learning capabilities. Amajuoyi (2021) further elaborates that classroom management includes curbing disruptive behaviors, organizing classroom resources, and closely monitoring and assisting students in learning. The positive impact of these techniques on students' learning outcomes is a source of motivation for educators.

Implementing management is of utmost significance since students in classes with teachers encountering average and high-quality classroom management practices display higher engagement levels than those instructed by teachers with lower management standards (Amajuoyi, 2021; George *et al.*, 2017; Herman *et al.*, 2020; Sarfraz *et al.*, 2022). Chaotic classroom environments distract learners and impede participation in classroom procedures (Lekwa, 2019).

The issue of managing one's classes, mainly when dealing with crowded classes and problem-making students, poses severe challenges for teachers. Sarfraz *et al.* (2022) note that implementing classroom management techniques has often been overlooked in teacher training programs, resulting in teachers relying on unproven methods based on personal preferences rather than evidence-based strategies. Many teachers develop their classroom management standards through their experiences as students or during their teaching careers. In today's educational landscape, the demands on students and teachers to excel are persistent and unlikely to diminish soon. Therefore, it is crucial to establish practical and effective classroom management techniques that can support teachers and students in creating a thriving, flourishing learning environment. Although the literature has examined classroom management techniques from different perspectives, teachers' classroom management challenges partially arising from crowded classes, students' resistance to cooperating, and insufficient focus on the feedback they receive in writing courses have not been sufficiently established. Thus, the purpose of the current qualitative study was to explore teachers' challenges in managing their writing classes and provide some teaching strategies and techniques that can help teachers in instructing such classes.

2. Literature Review

Writing proficiency is what individuals need to show at an academic level. Preparing a presentation, writing for academic purposes, and showing their opinions and reflections requires good writing. To create an acceptable piece of writing, students need several

competencies besides vocabulary, grammar, and content knowledge. They must organize their thoughts and create ideas to create coherent and meaningful essays (Rahmani *et al.*, 2020). Thus, classroom practices should stimulate learners' mental capacities to generate ideas. By adopting appropriate classroom strategies, teachers can aid students in learning to analyze, synthesize, and produce coherent compositions (Rashtchi & Mohammadi, 2017). One such strategy is employing a process approach in writing classes to help learners delve into the requirements of writing and be able to present it through their compositions (Calkins, 2020). Another way is to use different brainstorming techniques (Rashtchi & Porkar, 2020), cooperative and group activities (Rashtchi & Beiki, 2015), and different forms of assessment (Jalilzadeh & Dastgoshadeh, 2011). However, in adopting such learning activities, teachers undergo several challenges, such as controlling the class, checking students' writings and giving feedback, selecting appropriate topics, and using innovative techniques and strategies to motivate learners.

On the other hand, several studies on different aspects of writing have focused on various teaching methods and viewed writing from students' perspectives (Karim *et al.*, 2018; Machili *et al.*, 2020). They have mostly attempted to find solutions to students' writing problems while concentrating on methods, techniques, and strategies. However, paying attention to classroom practices and problems teachers encounter in implementing their lesson plans to meet the requirements and standards (based on the approved syllabi) is crucial to creating successful classroom environments (Mitchell *et al.*, 2017).

Along the same lines, teachers should be able to manage students' behaviors and discipline their classes to enhance students' learning outcomes. Emmer and Stough (2009) argue that there is a reciprocal relationship between teaching environment and successful instruction. Teachers should be proficient in several dimensions, one of which is competence in classroom management. Teachers are trained in several types of knowledge, including technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge (Mahmoudi *et al.*, 2021). However, dealing with issues such as time management, behavior management, and classroom discipline can promote teacher efficacy and reduce burnout (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000).

Macsuga-Gage *et al.* (2012) propose three areas for effective teaching. They believe teaching should guarantee maximum student engagement, employ valuable classroom management strategies, and create relationships with students and their parents. According to Emmer and Everson (2009), teachers initially utilize classroom rules to convey examples of appropriate behavior. To ensure effectiveness, they recommend that rules be expressed positively and clearly. Students need to be involved in the rule-setting process to foster their sense of ownership over the rules, which can lead to a productive atmosphere. Student participation could involve discussing the rationale behind rules, generating suggestions for specific behaviors, or collectively deciding on particular rules. This approach is likely to enhance students' compliance with the rules. However, classroom management techniques are more inclusive than behavior settings.

Establishing a positive and supportive learning environment hinges on successfully executing appropriate techniques to enhance students' learning. Marzano

and Marzano (2003) suggest that proficient classroom management is critical in promoting students' learning and involvement, which could be achieved by setting up a clear picture of expectations, building friendly relationships with students, employing positive reinforcement, and maintaining consistency in discipline by using diverse methods and protocols. Furthermore, a captivating classroom requires efficient time management, incorporating various teaching strategies, and carefully integrating technology.

Writing classes require extra management expertise since students need different amounts of time to draft, revise, and complete their written products (Yerukneh *et al.*, 2023) due to several factors, such as English language proficiency, mental concentration, and cognitive abilities (Isa & Shyamala, 2021). Thus, time management is of utmost importance in writing classes because the skill is time-consuming, and several steps are required to prepare students for writing, such as brainstorming with learners on the topic and teaching rules of cohesion and coherence (Dhanya & Alamelu, 2020). Teachers can incorporate group writing tasks and ask learners to share ideas for brainstorming (Rashtchi & Porkar, 2020). They can also rotate writing tasks, such as finding keywords, writing topic sentences, and arranging peers' ideas in an outline (in group activities), to maximize instructional time and reduce unnecessary disruptions (Osakwe & Osakwe, 2015). Effective class time management can establish a structured and efficient learning environment, promote students' engagement, help them develop positive attitudes, and enhance learning outcomes.

Another issue to consider is that teachers should set the goals of the class, clarify their expectations, and draw graphic organizers to show how students are supposed to perform writing tasks and where they should stand at the end of the session (Chen & Lu, 2022). Teachers should communicate their expectations clearly to students to ensure mutual understanding (Scarlett, 2015). Besides task performance, teachers should provide students with a clear explanation of what is expected of them and inform them of the limitations and behavioral guidelines in the classroom, which fosters a positive and productive learning environment while reducing the likelihood of disruptive behavior like cheating, copying, and using unauthorized materials (Jalilzadeh *et al.*, 2024). Additionally, according to Amajuoyi (2021), drawing a clear classroom framework can boost students' motivation to meet academic expectations. Hussein (2019) showed that positive reinforcement not only boosts student motivation but also plays a role in nurturing robust self-esteem and a positive self-concept. Successful classroom management employed by teachers can create a supportive learning environment.

Another factor that encourages students to write is receiving written and verbal feedback. Positive recommendations, rewards, and showing students' improvement can encourage learners in writing classes. Keeping a record of their compositions and using portfolios to show their writing development can involve them in writing activities inside and outside the classroom (Song & August, 2002). Chen and Lu (2022) suggest that teachers employ various forms of positive reinforcement to promote practical actions and consistently create a pleasant classroom atmosphere. By effectively incorporating positive feedback strategies, teachers can adeptly manage their writing classes while

supporting the academic growth of their students. Written feedback is another encouraging factor in writing classes. Students should be ensured that their writings are reviewed and corrected. Besides, teachers should ask students to revise their writing based on the feedback received and make assessments according to the revised version. In this way, writing classes can help students reflect on their written products and develop self-regulated strategies (Asshabi, *et al.*, 2024).

Another fundamental aspect teachers should follow in writing classes is nurturing positive relationships. Yonas *et al.* (2023) emphasize that teachers must create a welcoming, respectful, and supportive environment where students feel valued and cared for, which might be achieved by showing a genuine interest in students' lives, providing regular feedback and encouragement, and promoting opportunities for student collaboration and communication. Saleem *et al.* (2020) point out that these positive interactions help students feel included in the classroom and motivate them to engage in classroom activities. Tahir and Qadir (2012) highlight that educators prioritizing building relationships with their students tend to manage their classes more efficiently and foster a positive learning atmosphere.

It is significant to vary teaching writing to engage a diverse group of students (Mohammed Yousuf *et al.*, 2023). Incorporating a variety of instructional approaches and strategies, such as peer correction, writing based on classroom discussions, cooperative writing tasks, and multimedia-based writing tasks, are likely to cater to different learning styles. Through variety, teachers can accommodate dissimilar learning styles and needs. Adding variety to writing classes is beneficial for successful classroom management, prevents monotony, and fosters learners' active engagement. Technology, including multimedia presentations and online resources, can promote learning outcomes.

Students' seating arrangement is also significant in establishing a productive learning atmosphere in writing classes. When teachers strategically group or pair students, they encourage collaboration and peer interaction (Tahir & Qadir, 2012). Organizing seating positions can support student cooperation and reduce interruptions (Amajuoyi, 2021). Teachers can encourage collaboration and teamwork through supervised seating arrangements for writing activities and sharing ideas before starting to write. Conversely, when students need to work independently or take writing exams, positioning chairs in conventional rows or U-shapes can maintain concentration and lower disturbance (Sarfraz *et al.*, 2022). Adjusting seating layouts according to lesson objectives could help teachers with class control and discipline.

Teaching English can be challenging for EFL teachers, as they are non-native speakers. However, it remains a popular career choice for many individuals. There are times when EFL teachers strive to understand their students' needs. While classrooms are never ultimately issue-free, a good teacher plays a vital role in identifying and addressing common problems that arise. Although teaching methods may not always yield perfect results, they create a more productive and relaxed atmosphere for teachers and students.

Challenges from teaching writing to large classes include physical, psychological, and technical issues (Yonas *et al.*, 2023). Physically, teachers often experience heightened

stress levels when speaking loudly to ensure students at the back of the class can hear them well. Psychologically, some instructors find managing a sizeable group of students daunting. Task-tracking attendance and assessing assignments can also pose logistic setbacks in class settings. Teachers in large classes frequently report feeling discomfort in fostering collaboration among students due to the crowded environments, which may cause fatigue on teachers' side, struggling to maintain control over noise disruption, striving to cater to each student's unique needs adequately, and finding evaluation of students challenging.

All teachers, even the most experienced ones, may feel stressed professionally. They are likely to suffer stress due to several factors, for instance, having to teach low-motivated students, lack of sufficient time to cover the expected syllabus, colleague and administrative pressure, keeping discipline, being evaluated by others, low proficiency, and poor lesson planning. Besides, teachers will likely encounter challenges in mixed-ability classes where students' varying general language levels are conspicuous (Al-Subaiei, 2017). In conclusion, teaching English might sound straightforward; however, it has various hidden layers that must be considered to provide a positive, productive context for teachers to work effectively.

One crucial threat, as an international crisis, to the teaching profession is teacher burnout (Mead, 2024). However, by adopting appropriate classroom management techniques, teachers can slacken the workload they experience, particularly in writing classes. Although burnout is multi-dimensional and several factors, such as lack of motivation, stress, and anxiety, are responsible for teacher burnout (McCarthy *et al.*, 2016; Mead, 2024), the authors of the current study believe that teachers' decisions in managing their classes, using coping strategies, and controlling students' misbehavior might reduce the likelihood of their decision to leave the profession they once loved. Thus, the current study aimed to explore EFL teachers' challenges in English writing classes and suggest solutions to reduce such challenges. This study, as Ary *et al.* (2010) argue, focused on detailed descriptive narratives aimed at comprehending a phenomenon, process, or specific perspective from the viewpoint of the individuals and attempted to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: What are EFL teachers' perceptions about the challenges that intrude on teaching writing?

RQ2: How do teachers feel in response to the challenges in writing classes?

RQ3: What are some of the techniques and strategies that can reduce teachers' workload in writing classes?

3. Material and Methods

3.1 Participants

The participants were 12 Iranian university instructors who had taught Paragraph Writing (2 credits) or Essay Writing courses (2 credits) for at least four semesters at the B.A. level and volunteered to participate in interview sessions. The reason for selecting the B.A. level was that such classes are usually crowded (between 30 to 35 students in

each class), and students have different writing abilities and language proficiency levels. The participants signed an informed consent form to be part of the study after being assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of their data. Table 1 illustrates their demographic information.

Table 1: Participants Demographic Information

Demography	Age		Gender		Teaching experience		Degree	
	25-35	36-45	Female	Male	<10	>10	Ph.D.	Ph.D. Candidate
Number	6	6	7	5	5	7	4	8

3.2 Instrument

Semi-structured interviews were employed to gain insight into teachers' problems and feelings regarding managing their classes when they teach writing skills. Initially, the researchers formulated ten questions after reviewing the relevant literature. The questions were reviewed and revised by a panel of five applied linguists with a Ph.D. degree and over ten years of experience. The panel assessed the questions as "essential," "useful but not necessary," or "not necessary." Consequently, they removed three questions, resulting in seven interview questions (see Appendix). The Content Validity Ratio (CVR) was calculated for the revised questions. The ratios indicated over 83%, demonstrating high validity (Gilbert & Prion, 2016).

During the interviews, the participants discussed the challenges they faced in managing their classes while teaching writing. Each interview session took about 50 minutes, which the researchers recorded (after receiving each participant's permission) and immediately transcribed. The interviewees set the interview time at their convenience and participated willingly in the sessions. After data collection, the researchers sent the transcribed interviews through WhatsApp to the interviewees for member checking to ensure their accuracy. Besides, an external rater reviewed 20% of the transcriptions and verified their truthfulness.

4. Results and Discussion

The data was analyzed qualitatively through thematic analysis after being transcribed. Each interview was analyzed in two phases: first, intra-analysis based on the information in each interview, referred to as vertical analysis (Miles *et al.*, 1994). Second, the interviews were conducted under constant comparative analysis, in which the identified codes were continuously compared to find similar themes. An external rater reviewed the codes and approved the final themes.

4.1 Findings

The data analysis obtained from the semi-structured interviews (questions 1 to 6) with the teachers revealed three major themes for instructing writing: teachers' instructional challenges, teachers' challenges with students' misbehaviors, and teachers' psychological

states in writing classes. Interview question number 7 helped the researchers develop techniques and strategies to help teachers manage their classes with fewer problems.

4.1.1 Instructional Challenges

Table 2 shows the instructional challenges teachers encountered. As evident, students' hesitation or delay in doing assignments is the main complaint of the teachers. Thus, "undone or delayed writing assignments" (f=12) enjoyed the highest frequency, and "dealing with heterogeneous classes" (f=3) enjoyed the least frequency among the participants. Besides, teachers mostly complained about students' lack of attention to the corrective feedback (neglecting teachers' corrective feedback, f=11), reluctance to revise their compositions (f=9), using cell phones for purposes not related to class work (f=8), students' use of google translate instead of a quality dictionary (f=6), and dealing with low-motivated students (f=5). One of the respondents stated:

"I get exhausted when encouraging some of my students to be active, positive, and energetic. Some are sleepy, indifferent, constantly checking their watches, and quiet."

Table 2 also shows the categories and codes related to teachers' problems in classroom management. Other challenges related to classroom management included dealing with low-motivated students (f=8), controlling the time limit in group work writing activities (f=6), difficulty in grouping learners and changing the seating arrangement (f=4), not being able to meet the established expectations (f=4), and dealing with heterogeneous classes (f=3).

Table 2: Teachers' Instructional Challenges

Categories and Codes	Frequency (f)
Hesitation or delayed writing assignments	12
Neglecting teachers' corrective feedback	11
Reluctance to revise compositions	9
Using cell phones for purposes not related to classwork	8
Students' Use of Google Translate instead of a quality dictionary	6
Dealing with low-motivated students	8
Controlling the time limit in group work writing activities	6
Difficulty in grouping learners and changing the seating arrangement	4
Not being able to meet the established expectations	4
Dealing with heterogeneous classes	3

The following are some extracts from the interviews with teachers regarding the instructional challenges they face.

"When a student doesn't do homework or hand me the paper on time, I lose track and must modify my teaching and provide extra explanations."

"I work hard in my classes, but when I do not receive due attention from my students, I get disappointed."

"It is challenging to meet the time limits to complete the writing task in class and in groups. Students always ask for more time when the time is over."

"Some students never give me a paper during the term."

"Some students do not like to cooperate. They are always passive and show some indifference to classroom activities, which greatly bothers me."

4.1.2 Teachers' Challenges with Students' Misbehaviors

Table 3 illustrates the second category of challenges related to students' behaviors. The highest frequency belongs to "making noise, talking about irrelevant issues" (f=12), and the lowest frequency belongs to "absence from the class" (f=3). Leaving the class without permission (f=9), resistance to accept others' opinions (f=7), lack of enough concentration (f=7), lack of self-confidence (f=6), mental distraction (f=6), not cooperating (f=6), and absence from the class (f=6) were the categories extracted from teachers' responses to the interview questions.

Table 3: Students' Misbehavior Challenges

Categories and Codes	Frequency (f)
Making noise, talking about irrelevant issues	12
Leaving the class without permission	9
Resistance to accept others' opinions	7
Lack of enough concentration	7
Lack of self-confidence	6
Mental distraction	6
Not cooperating	6
Absence from the class	6

Regarding students' misbehaviors, the following are some extracts from the interviews:

"Noisy students interrupt the classroom procedure and do not take writing tasks seriously."

"Noisy students make fun of their classmates' opinions and frustrate them."

"Some students do not cooperate in group work activities or writing tasks; they get on my nerves."

"Some students are drowned in their dreams; they lack concentration. I asked them why, and they said they cannot concentrate."

“Brainstorming and classroom discussions grudge some students, as they dislike listening to others’ viewpoints. After such events, controlling their class and showing that you are not biased is difficult.”

“Teachers should try to enhance students’ self-confidence; some students have genuine ideas but are afraid of expressing themselves. However, it is tough for some students to talk.”

“Cell phones are used for purposes other than educational purposes, such as dictionary applications.”

“Some students try to talk to attract attention and stop others from working.”

“Sometimes, when I walk in the classroom when students are supposed to do assignments, I notice some surfing Instagram or WhatsApp while pretending to use a dictionary.”

4.1.3 Teachers’ Perceptions of Their Psychological States

Table 4 shows teachers’ perceptions of their psychological states in writing classes. The most frequent category was “anxiety due to lack of formal instruction in classroom management techniques” (f=12), with the highest frequency, and “lack of resilience due to students’ misbehaviors” (f=6), with the minor frequency stated by the teachers. Other categories were irritation due to crowded classes (f=10), exhaustion due to workload (f=10), feeling marginalized due to students’ lack of cooperation (f=6), disappointment due to students’ not learning (f=6), and lack of resilience due to students’ misbehaviors (f=6).

Table 4: Teachers’ Psychological States in Writing Classes

Categories and Codes	Frequency (f)
Anxiety due to lack of formal instruction in classroom management skills	12
Irritation due to crowded classes	10
Exhaustion due to workload	10
Feeling marginalized due to students’ lack of cooperation	6
Disappointment due to students’ not learning	6
Lack of resilience due to students’ misbehaviors	6

The following are some extracts from interviews with teachers:

“Classroom management techniques must be part of teacher training courses.”

“I am an experienced teacher, but sometimes I really cannot decide what to do with some students.”

“In the past, students in writing classes were more cooperative; nowadays, you do not know what to do with them.”

"The workload in writing classes is much heavier than in other classes like speaking, listening, and writing."

"When my students do not do their assignments or participate in brainstorming, I feel frustrated. Some make fun, and others start laughing; I feel they do not take me seriously."

"When I see no improvement in students' writing, my mood decreases."

"I lose my patience when I am in writing classes."

"I feel like leaving the profession in writing classes."

4.1.4 Teachers' Suggestions for Writing Classrooms' Management

The respondents provided some suggestions for managing writing classes. Table 5 shows their suggestions. Creating a friendly atmosphere (f=12) and using a variety of teaching methods instead of sticking to a single classroom routine were emphasized by all interviewees (f=12). Most teachers (f=10) believed that selecting challenging, controversial topics with ethical themes can give way to classroom discussions, encourage learners to express ideas, and thus be more cooperative and active. However, teachers should be able to control the class and not allow students' opinions to lead to hostility among them. Another suggestion was taking sample essays with errors and asking students to assess and give feedback (f=8), which can give variety to classroom activities and encourage learners to pay attention to errors and understand the importance of feedback. The next category was considering students' interests in selecting writing topics (f=8). Some teachers also suggested letting groups select their topic of interest. They pointed out that a single topic for the class can be tedious and might increase copying from other groups. Besides, finding a topic that interests everyone is time-consuming and sometimes impossible and can be a reason for "not writing." The interviewees also suggested using instructed writing tasks, such as cloze tasks, writing the ending for a narrative, and writing about watching slides, pictures, and short films to encourage writing. They believed such activities make writing easier while they have instructional benefits. Cloze tasks can help in learning grammar and vocabulary choices. At the same time, instructed writing tasks can facilitate writing, give students direction, and help them with "what to write" and "how to write" issues. Besides, using dictocomps (f=6) was another suggestion, which teachers believed could promote students' memory and bring fun to the class. As teachers believed, listening activities can encourage writing (f=6). Listening to TED talks, TED-Eds, and podcasts can be attractive and a deviation from conventional brainstorming with learners.

Table 5: Teachers' Suggestions for Effective Writing Classroom Management

Categories and Codes	Frequency (f)
Creating a friendly atmosphere	12
Using a variety of teaching methods	12
Selecting challenging, controversial, and ethical topics	10
Taking sample essays with errors and asking students to assess and give feedback	8
Choosing topics according to students' interests	8
Using instructed writing tasks, such as cloze tasks, writing an ending for a narrative, showing slides, pictures, and short films, and asking students to write about them	6
Using dictocomps to encourage getting started	6
Listening to TED talks, TED-Eds, and podcasts as pre-writing activities	6

The following are some extracts from interviews with teachers:

"Creating a friendly relationship with students can help control the class."

"Students' misbehaviors can be reduced when teachers establish a friendly relationship with students."

"Teachers should always make students surprise by choosing different classroom procedures."

"Controversial issues usually are useful in activating students to cooperate in writing classes."

"I use listening activities; they help me reduce the workload, control the class, and stimulate students to write."

"When they write based on something (a film, a slide, a podcast), they are more motivated. Teachers also can manage their classes more readily and experience less exhaustion."

4.2 Discussion

Teachers' classroom management skills are crucial for maintaining a structured and efficient learning atmosphere, particularly in writing classes. Harmer (2007) argues that managing EFL classes is demanding and complex for teachers regardless of their years of teaching experience. In the current study, teachers' responses to the interview questions verified that writing classes are demanding and require teachers' expertise in controlling the class and using appropriate management skills. Teachers' instructional challenges arise primarily from students' misbehavior. However, by implementing appropriate teaching techniques, teachers can control their classes, reduce their negative feelings, and enhance students' learning outcomes. This finding aligns with Lekwa *et al.* (2019), who argue that successful classroom instruction is obtained by combining effective instruction and applying techniques to manage students' behavior.

Thus, it is necessary to consider teaching management techniques as part of teachers' knowledge base, especially during in-service training. Teachers should be well-informed about managing their classes, dealing with problem-making students, and overcoming their own negative feelings meanwhile gaining technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge (Mahmoudi *et al.*, 2021). Such training can reduce teacher burnout, enhance resilience, and contribute to teachers' well-being (Dawes, *et al.*, 2024). Through appropriate management techniques, teachers can adopt strategies that can control students' misbehaviors, encourage their learning, and foster their engagement (Martin & Sass, 2010). Aloe *et al.* (2014) found a correlation between teacher burnout and student misbehavior in their meta-analysis.

The present study's findings align with those of Soleimani and Razmjoo (2016), who found that teachers' challenges were primarily instructional. This study is also consistent with Rozimela (2016), who found that students' misbehaviors prevented teachers from implementing their pre-planned classroom procedures. In the long run, teachers' inability to achieve their teaching goals can result in a decline in the educational system of any country. Thus, teachers should be equipped with appropriate skills in classroom management. Rozimela suggests that engaging teachers in reflective teaching practices could be a remedy for managing their classes. Following Kumaravadivelu (2003), the present study researchers suggest that teachers should reflect on their classes and have principled freedom to adopt the most valuable techniques and procedures according to a particular classroom environment, considering their students' cultural values, personality factors, and language needs. Such opportunity can reduce their negative feelings such as anxiety, exhaustion, and feeling marginalized, as stated by the participants in this study. Similar to the current study, Tahir *et al.* (2018) also reported that students' misbehavior challenged teachers, affecting them psychologically and forcing them to modify their lesson plans.

The importance of classroom management techniques is verified by several studies that emphasize its role in enhancing learning outcomes (Chen & Lu, 2022; Herman *et al.*, 2020; Mohammed Yousuf *et al.*, 2023; Scarlett, 2015). However, studies on teacher management do not specifically focus on writing skills and their challenges. Writing classes need additional attention as the skill is essentially challenging. Crowded classes duplicate teachers' challenges, which might endanger their well-being and accelerate their burnout. The interviewees' recommendations for using a variety of techniques (Table 5) might help teachers face fewer problems in teaching writing. The most critical point is motivating teachers to establish friendly relationships with their students, which is also substantiated by the study by Yonas *et al.* (2023), who emphasized the role of classroom management skills in decreasing the challenges teachers face in their classes. The present study also aligns with Macsuga-Gage *et al.* (2012), who propose that teachers' implementing successful classroom management strategies and establishing good student relationships can lead to better educational outcomes.

5. Recommendations

Further research could focus on language proficiency as a moderator variable to obtain more precise results with higher external validity. Research exploring how teachers' cultural background and demographic characteristics affect the challenges of managing an EFL classroom might yield exciting findings. Studies that delve into L2 learners' psychological states and instructional problems in writing classes can be beneficial topics for further research.

6. Conclusion

L2 writing might pose instructional, behavioral, and psychological challenges to teachers. However, awareness of the challenges can contribute to teachers' self-reflection and teacher trainers' richer curricula in preparing teachers to deal with the challenges more effectively. The study has implications for teachers, pointing to challenges many EFL/ESL teachers might face in their classes. Sharing the same problems might help teachers feel that they are not alone in undergoing instructional and psychological challenges. Another implication for educators is considering classroom management techniques as part of teachers' knowledge base. They can also include training teachers in classroom management techniques and strategies in in-service and teacher training courses. Policymakers and administrators should consider crowded classes as a threat to education and consider teachers' well-being by adopting appropriate policies to decrease burnout rates.

The present study had limitations. A larger sample population is needed to ensure the generalizability of the findings. The educational context of the study was limited to the EFL setting. Focusing on ESL settings and comparing language schools, primary schools, and high schools in different contexts might yield broader results. Teachers' personal preferences and approaches were also neglected in the current study.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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Appendix: Interview Questions

- 1) Please talk about your experiences with classroom management in writing.
- 2) What was the most challenging issue regarding managing your writing classes?
- 3) What are some of the personal psychological barriers in writing classes?
- 4) What instructional problems did you have?
- 5) Would you like to share your feelings regarding writing classes and classroom management?
- 6) Would you please talk about students' behaviors in writing classes?
- 7) What techniques do you think can help teachers control their writing classes?

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