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Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros

EFL practicum and classroom management among pre-service teachers at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period

Prácticum de inglés y gestión del aula entre futuros docentes en una institución pública de Loja, periodo académico 2023-2024

> **Trabajo de Integración Curricular, previo a la obtención del título de Licenciada en Pedagogía del Idioma Inglés.**

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Dedication

With deep fondness to my beloved mother, whose unconditional love and strong spirit have made of me the person I am today. I know we had long and sleepless nights in the expectation of a more delightful tomorrow, but I promise you this is just the beginning of brighter days we may reign.

To my brothers, in the past I used to wonder if one day I was going to be able to conquer my dreams as fearlessly as you fought for yours. Now I can share the joy of my victory with you, as if I were standing as vigorously as a warrior with a lustrous armour.

Nor should I forget to regard the highly appreciated company of my two dearest cats. Unexpectedly, the hard work in those long dawns became less tedious with the presence of your fluffy paws whether on my lap, next to my computer, and/or on my books.

Finally, to little old me and to those treasured comrades who enlightened this journey: We may stem from the ashes, but in the brightest days you will see us standing on our tallest tiptoes, spinning and shining like stars in the Universe.

Daniela Alejandra Arrobo García

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1. Title

EFL practicum and classroom management among pre-service teachers at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period

Prácticum de inglés y gestión del aula entre futuros docentes en una institución pública de Loja, periodo académico 2023-2024

2. Resumen

La gestión del aula constituye una de las destrezas pedagógicas fundamentales en el prácticum de docencia. El presente estudio exploró las experiencias de los estudiantes practicantes en la gestión del aula durante su prácticum de enseñanza de inglés. El objetivo consistió en describir los desafíos e identificar las estrategias implementadas en la gestión del aula en las prácticas preprofesionales de docencia. Los sujetos participantes involucraron a 25 futuros docentes de inglés de una institución pública en la ciudad de Loja, Ecuador, durante el periodo académico 2023-2024. Se adoptó un diseño exploratorio, utilizando un enfoque de método mixto con instrumentos cuantitativos y cualitativos. Un cuestionario fue aplicado para obtener datos cuantitativos sobre los desafíos enfrentados por los practicantes en la gestión del aula. Por el contrario, indagaciones cualitativas acerca de las estrategias empleadas se recolectaron en una entrevista semiestructurada. Posteriormente, se analizaron resultados del cuestionario con el uso de estadística descriptiva, mientras que respuestas de la entrevista fueron codificadas con el análisis de contenido. Los resultados indicaron que, la mayoría de practicantes enfrentaron predominantemente problemas de comportamiento y motivación de los alumnos. Por otra parte, las estrategias identificadas fueron clasificadas en cuatro categorías principales: instruccionales, de comportamiento, motivacionales, y de práctica reflectiva. Las estrategias instruccionales incluyeron el efectivo manejo del tiempo, uso de la voz, y la agrupación de estudiantes para transmitir instrucciones. Adicionalmente, el establecimiento claro de reglas y consecuencias ayudó a resolver problemas de comportamiento. Asimismo, actividades interactivas y el refuerzo positivo prevalecieron como estrategias motivacionales. Del mismo modo, procesos reflectivos y la colaboración entre pares y mentores potenciaron el mejoramiento de la gestión en el aula. En general, las experiencias de los practicantes en la gestión del aula se consolidaron como desafiantes y gratificantes, sintiéndose realizados al superar obstáculos exitosamente y observar el progreso de los alumnos.

Palabras clave: *estrategias instruccionales, desafíos de comportamiento, estrategias motivacionales, práctica reflectiva*

Abstract

Classroom management constitutes one of the fundamental pedagogical skills in the teaching practicum. The study aimed to explore the experiences of EFL pre-service teachers in classroom management during their practicum. Furthermore, this research sought to describe the challenges and identify the strategies implemented in classroom management in the teaching practice. The subjects under study included 25 EFL prospective teachers of a public institution in the city of Loja, Ecuador, throughout the 2023- 2024 academic period. Employing an exploratory design, the research used a mixed-method approach that comprised both quantitative and qualitative instruments. A questionnaire was applied to gather quantitative data about the challenges faced by student teachers. Contrastingly, qualitative information related to the strategies employed by the subjects to overcome classroom management issues was collected through a semi-structured interview. Subsequently, the data analysis was conducted as descriptive statistics for the quantitative questionnaire results, and content analysis for the interview responses. The findings indicated that most trainee teachers endure classroom management challenges predominantly associated with behavior and motivation. Moreover, the strategies were classified into four categories: instructional, behavioral, motivational, and reflective practice. Instructional strategies contemplated the effective use of time management, pre-service teachers' voice, and student grouping in the delivery of instructions. Additionally, establishing clear classroom rules and consequences undisputedly helped to manage behavioural issues. Likewise, engagement activities and positive reinforcement were highly adopted as motivational strategies. Similarly, reflection processes alongside collaboration with peers and supervisors were reflective practices that guided improved classroom management in teaching performance. Overall, pre-service teachers' experiences in classroom management were consolidated as challenging yet rewarding when successfully overcoming hurdles that led to fulfilment in seeing learners' progress.

Key Words: instructional strategies, behavioural challenges, motivational strategies, reflective practice

3. Introduction

The teaching practicum is a space for prospective English teachers to acquire experience involving real-life scenarios and difficulties that are inherent to the teaching profession. Ariza et al. (2022) address the actual context of the teaching practicum as an opportunity to encounter enriching social and cultural aspects that are incorporated into the concrete scenarios of the teaching process. In this sense, it establishes the pedagogical foundations and competencies for future professionals in the teaching of English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

Given this context, Burgin and Daniel (2020) analyse evolving reforms in teacher training and professional development in Ecuador that have been submitted to provide effective EFL teacher education programs, ensuring English teachers are competent professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills (Davila, 2020). In so doing, future teachers must accomplish educational qualifications determined by TESOL. Hence, standards such as *Professionalism and Ethical Commitment* encourage teachers to pursue professional growth opportunities to enhance their teaching abilities (Ministry of Education, 2012).

Considering the aforementioned, the researcher during her practicum could evidence that classroom management was one of the most complex pedagogical skills to develop for pre-service teachers. Thenceforth, the central research question of this study seeks to answer: What are the pre-service teachers' experiences of classroom management during their practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period? Aiming to answer this main question, two specific questions were established, being: 1) What are the challenges affecting the classroom management of pre-service teachers during their teaching practicum? And: 2) What are the classroom management strategies that pre-service teachers implement during their teaching practicum?

Consequently, the primary objective of this research comprised exploring pre-service teachers' experiences in classroom management during their practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period. Additionally, two sub-objectives were derived to describe the challenges affecting the classroom management of pre-service teachers and to identify the classroom management strategies implemented by these subjects under study.

Within this framework, in a study conducted by Quintana et al. (2023) the authors found that along with learning values, tutoring, and curricular adaptation, classroom management was a challenge that pre-service teachers experienced during their teaching practicum. The problems that prospective teachers faced were related to students' indiscipline

behaviour, which limited the interaction in their endeavors to teach the content subject to the student.

According to Ramadan (2022), the effective practice of classroom management entails a process of satisfactory student attainment and discipline to promote suitable academic achievement, teacher efficacy, and teacher and student behaviour. Similarly, Mason (2013) and Kibler (2011), cited in Dwiniasih (2020), indicate that classroom management transcends the adequate administration of time and space, comprising the efficient organization of human resources, materials, strategies, activities, and instructional modifications that are necessary in an optimum teaching-learning environment.

Given this, previous studies by Maulidinaa et al. (2022), Muhammad et al. (2022), Mkhasibe and Mncube (2020), Tagle et al. (2020), Fajar et al. (2022), and Ramadan (2022) have been conducted to explore the challenges of pre-service teachers in classroom management during the teaching practicum. The main findings of the researchers discussed disruptive behaviour, students' lack of motivation, and lack of self-confidence in prospective teachers to control the class as the most common problems when managing the classroom.

Notwithstanding, there has not been sufficient research about the classroom management problems that pre-service teachers experience in the context of teaching practicum at public institutions in Loja, Ecuador, in order to fill this gap. Regarding this issue, the researcher aims to explore the classroom management challenges faced by pre-service teachers at a public institution in Loja during the 2023–2024 academic period.

Overall, the importance of the present exploratory research is justified to understand the role of classroom management as a fundamental skill in establishing successful interactions between educators and pupils in the teaching-learning environment. Therefore, the researcher considers that comprehending the nature of classroom management depicts the existent factors and obstacles within the professional practice of EFL teachers; a reality that prospective teachers ought to embrace during their teaching practicum to be sufficiently prepared as competitive professionals in their field.

In this context, the investigation contributes to providing awareness about the impact of classroom management practices held by EFL pre-service teachers on the teaching-learning process. In that regard, the execution of this research yields valuable cognitions benefiting to stakeholders such as pre-service teachers, mentors, supervisors, educational institutions and future researchers interested in fostering effective classroom management. To the ultimate end, the research will bring to light the classroom management challenges and strategies that

have not been covered thoroughly inside public educational settings by previous studies in Loja, Ecuador.

Thereafter, the study is addressed to pre-service teachers in the *Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros* department at a public institution in Loja, during the 2023-2024 academic period. The scope includes exploring the classroom management experiences of pre-service teachers in their EFL practicum, with the expectation to gather insights on their challenges and strategies implemented. Nonetheless, some limitations are associated with the research instruments employed for the investigation, since it was not possible to compare the participants' responses and perceptions with actual observations of their classroom management performance. Thereby, possible bias in their testimony could affect the generalizability of findings.

This research report contains the organization of its structure in this manner: first, the **Summary** including concisely the research objectives, methodology, findings, and conclusions. Then, the **Introduction** contextualizes the background, importance, research questions, objectives, research problem, justification, scope, and limitations of the study. Next, the **Theoretical Framework** providing a roadmap of existing concepts, foundations, and previous research that support the process of the investigation. Subsequently, the **Methodology** outlining the research design, methods, techniques, participants, data collection instruments, data analysis and procedure followed. Consequently, the **Results** describing the raw data with descriptive statistics and content analysis; followed by the **Discussion** comprising an in-depth analysis of the findings in relation with previous studies. After that, the **Conclusions** explaining the accomplishment of the research objectives. Finally, the **Recommendations**, presenting suggestions for stakeholders based on the results of the investigation. And, the **References** listing all the resources that supported the theoretical foundations and concepts cited within the text of the research work.

4. Theoretical Framework

The following section presents the theoretical foundations of the two variables under study. In this exploratory research, the theoretical framework endeavours to shed light on the intricate relationship between the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teaching practicum and classroom management. Within the context of language education, the practicum serves as a pivotal component in shaping the pedagogical approaches and strategies employed by educators. Classroom management, on the other hand, encompasses the multifaceted challenges and strategies utilized by teachers to establish a conducive learning environment.

4.1 EFL pre-service teaching practicum

4.1.1 Definition of EFL pre-service teaching practicum

The teaching practice is a space that prepares student teachers with holistic skills and necessary training to overcome actual situations of their field profession. Hence, this process provides EFL pre-service teachers the opportunity to develop the required skills to attain an integral formation as human beings and competent professionals who will deal with various characters of students in real classroom situations (Ariza et al., 2022; Djawamara & Listyani, 2021).

Additionally, Lucero and Roncancio-Castellanos (2019) manifest that the practicum confers the possibility for prospective teachers to identify their worries and responsibilities, as well as their hopes, fears, enthusiasm, and even frustration that may arise when they are performing their teaching role in the design and execution of the lessons.

Considering the aforementioned insights regarding the purpose of the EFL practicum, it has been stated by Quintana et al. (2023) that the incorporation of instruments such as classroom observations, lesson plans, teaching materials, alongside conversations held among supervisors and coordinating teachers, supported by the required documentation is fundamental in the process of the teaching practice.

4.1.2 Benefits of EFL pre-service teaching practicum

For Velasco (2019), the teaching practicum enables pre-service teachers' holistic comprehension of the teaching profession, allowing them to reflect on their identity and role as educators. Therefore, attention can be drawn to the fact that the teaching practicum, more than a process, constitutes the factual scenario for prospective teachers to examine their practice through an exhaustive self-assessment. Similarly, Köksal and Genç (2019) address that the fundamental mission of the teaching practicum is to prepare student teachers for the teaching world whilst immersing them in reciprocal interactions with learners in real

educational contexts. Besides, these perspectives are strengthened by scholars such as Okan (2002) and Gebhard (2009), who agree with the claim that during the practicum, relevant classroom experience can be obtained through the translation of theory to practice, which ultimately leads to expanding awareness and reflecting on the teaching-learning practices.

In the same way, it can be found that the teaching practice has more strengths than challenges. This statement is supported by the analysis of Quintana et al. (2023), who identified among the strengths of pre-service English teachers the abilities of raising learners' self-confidence and motivation, reducing their nervousness, increasing their responsibility, and facilitating learning to pupils.

Furthermore, abundant research on a global scale report about positive experiences through teaching practice which have been nurtured by human interactions, effective lesson planning, attitudes, offering and accepting feedback, valuable teaching autonomy, establishing rapport, and the control of disruptive behaviour (Heeralal & Bayaga, 2011; Koross, 2016; Ozdas, 2018; Rauduvaite et al., 2015).

4.1.3 *Pedagogical competence of EFL pre-service teachers for the practicum*

Pedagogical competence can be defined as the set of abilities that pre-service teachers require to become competent professionals in the classroom management practice of real-life scenarios. According to Ghufron et al. (2022) , well-versed teachers are expected to have a solid comprehension of students' needs, as well as being proficient regarding instructional theories, curriculum, conducting evaluation, and self-reflection about their practicum.

The research findings of the previous authors comprise seven abilities among the pedagogical competence that EFL prospective teachers develop during their practicum, as follows:

4.1.3.1 Understanding the characteristics of students. Numerous studies have identified physical, intellectual, socio-emotional, moral and spiritual ways to look at the characteristics of a student (Alghasab, 2015; Köksal & Çöğmen, 2013; Uka, 2013). In this sense, educators must recognize students' learning styles, ensure equal participation, and manage learners' diverse competencies, problems, and concerns in the classroom.

4.1.3.2 The mastery of theories and principles in the teaching-learning process. The theory of learning (Redmond & Lock, 2019) provides teachers with the awareness of methods, techniques, approaches, lesson planning, classroom organization and instruction, learning media, and the use of ICTs in their teaching practice. Thus, pre-service teachers must be trained adequately to fulfill successfully the managing of different teaching methods in the

classroom, guaranteeing learners' understanding, conducting lifelong learning, and applying the most suitable strategies to foster students' engagement.

4.1.3.3 Developing a curriculum. Richards (2001) considers the major goal in developing a curriculum the acknowledgment of what are students being taught in schools in order to promote learning opportunities that help with the achievement of the objectives; and understanding how the planning, assessment, and evaluation practices can be held in the classroom. For that purpose, student teachers must design their lesson plans and materials in accordance to the learning objectives and pupils' needs.

4.1.3.4 Conducting educative learning. The fundamental objective of the teaching-learning process is improving students' knowledge, abilities, and personalities (Xu, 2012). On that subject, it is essential to provide an enjoyable learning environment enriched with experiences that align the curriculum content into daily life, so learners can be active participants of their own learning.

4.1.3.5 Developing learners' potential. Puspitasari et al. (2016) and Wiyono (2006) define potential as the power, energy, or aptitude an individual possesses to succeed in real-life situations. In this regard, the educator's task is to increase student engagement and creativity while facilitating their personal growth and encouraging their critical-thinking skills in problem-solving activities.

4.1.3.6 Maintaining communication and interaction. Burleson and Samter (1990) classified communication skills into two categories: "affective oriented" and "non-affective oriented" abilities. The former includes people with higher cognitive complex emotional abilities such as ego, support, soothing, self-regulation, and conflict management. The latter entails persuasiveness, storytelling, referential, and conversational competence as features of friendship, for instance. Concerning this, pre-service teachers should be able to establish a communication that adheres to the previously mentioned categories to engage and connect with students, solving their inquiries in a clear, accurate, and up-to-date manner throughout their instruction.

4.1.3.7 Conducting assessment and evaluation. There are specific criteria for categorizing the purpose of evaluation, which can be selective, diagnostic, placement, for measuring achievement, among others (Lasari, 2021; Massler, 2014; Quartapelle, 2012). Furthermore, Sax (1997) accentuates formative and summative assessment, along with the theory of evaluation, as part of the functions of evaluation. That is, employing diverse assessment types and techniques allows to identify learners' strengths and weaknesses of what

they have accomplished in relation to the learning goals, and also to design the appropriate material for further lessons.

4.2 Classroom management

4.2.1 Definition of classroom management

Classroom management may be regarded as one of the major elements to consider in the teaching of English language. It is defined as a conscious effort to create an effective and fun learning environment to motivate students to be involved and play an active role in the educational process at school (Serliana et al., 2021).

Furthermore, classroom management encompasses several key elements, including fostering positive teacher-student relationships, introducing appropriate materials and standards, guiding the class effectively, and creating a motivating and organized learning environment. It integrates various factors such as the physical environment, students, instructional materials, class time, activities, and teacher behaviour, along with maintaining discipline (Bru et al., 1998; Castro Pérez & Morales Ramírez, 2015; Fernández Aquino et al., 2012).

Evertson and Weinstein (2006) define classroom management as the actions teachers take to establish a supportive environment for students' academic and social-emotional learning. These actions include developing caring relationships, organizing effective instruction, encouraging student engagement, promoting social skills and self-regulation, and providing appropriate interventions for behaviour issues.

Moreover, Brophy (2006) similarly describes classroom management as creating and maintaining a conducive learning environment through actions such as arranging the physical space, establishing rules, and maintaining student attention during lessons and activities.

Besides, Kopershoek et al. (2016) and Collier-Meek et al. (2019) affirm that although teachers often face challenges in fully implementing effective classroom management, positive changes in student outcomes and in their behaviour can occur at various levels of implementation.

4.2.2 Dimensions of classroom management

According to the revised Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control Inventory (ABCC-R) reported by Martin et al. (2007), there are two-dimensional components of classroom management, which are named as: people management and instructional management.

4.2.2.1 People management. Related with the teacher's beliefs about students' nature as individuals and the role of teachers when nurturing teacher-student interactions.

4.2.2.2 Instructional management. Perceptions of teachers' instructional role in the organization of the learning process, such as: the teacher's management of content selection, classroom procedures, assignments, among others.

4.2.3 Types of classroom management

Martin and Baldwin (1993) classify teachers' classroom management into three types: non-interventionist, interventionist, and interactionist. They are part of a control continuum ranging from low to high teacher control.

4.2.3.1 Non-interventionist. This approach presupposes that students have the inner capacity to control their own behaviors and make their own decisions for their personal growth, and thus teachers should be less involved in regulating student behaviors.

4.2.3.2 Interventionist. Students' growth and development is the result of external regulations. Thus, the teachers should be fully involved in regulating students' behaviors. Teachers are believed to be more capable of choosing what is best for their students' development.

4.2.3.3 Interactionist. Postulates that both teachers and students are responsible for students' in-class behaviors. Thus, both student's self-control and teacher power should be used collectively to frame students' development.

4.2.4 Classroom management components

Froyen and Iverson (1999), who are specialists in the field of education, allocate three components within classroom management for effective teaching practice alongside academic achievement, and the promotion of positive teacher and student behaviour, as proceeds:

4.2.4.1 Content management. It occurs when the teacher is in charge to manage resources such as the space, equipment, materials, the movement of people, and the lessons that are part of the curriculum under the study program. For example, when learners are working individually or in pairs on an assignment and the teacher is monitoring by walking around the classroom.

4.2.4.2 Conduct management. It involves following procedures to address discipline problems in the classroom, as when learners are making fun of each other and the teacher reminds the classroom rules to demand respect among everyone. Another example could be when teachers praise learners' performance through positive feedback.

4.2.4.3 Covenant management. For this component, the authors emphasize the focus on interpersonal skills to build a strong relationship between educators and pupils. Thereby, a harmonious classroom atmosphere can only be built through trust provided in teacher and student relationships. In other words, if a problem arises between a group of learners, the teacher as a mediator guides learners into reaching agreements and finding a solution together.

4.2.5 Classroom management challenges

4.2.5.1 Instructional challenges. Gunawan (2017) defines that learners may be restrained of achieving specific learning outcomes when facing obstacles related to instruction. As stated by Orlich et al. (2009), instructional problems include three main factors which are associated to *teachers' instructions*, *students' failed instructions* and *time management*.

Regarding "teachers' instructions", there are different manners implemented from teachers to deal with learners exhibiting high or low potential. Jenkins and Bainer (1990) argue that if students seem not to perform noteworthy academic attainment, then it is more likely that teachers designate their instruction with less time and attention towards these pupils. That being the case, the preconceived expectations drawn from teachers based on learners' capabilities have a tendency to impact directly in a differentiated instruction in the classroom.

Concerning to "students' failed instructions", learners do not obey the instructions given by the teacher. The findings of Cooper (2001) and Xu (2013) disclose that there is an ongoing resistance of learners towards homework, since they are frequently complaining about tasks, which makes the teaching profession face tension between home and school, considering that pupils despise doing assignments.

Relating to "time management", Kirillov (2015) asserts that efficiency and quality are increased in the product of an activity when there is an attentive control over the amount of time spent on a particular work. Thenceforth, high productivity and performance can only be obtained through a satisfactory optimization of time in time management (Sahito et al., 2016). Considering the comments of these authors, it can be said that time management includes skills such as the advanced planning, organizing and monitoring in the implementation of schedules in order to achieve the objectives of the lesson.

4.2.5.2 Behavioural challenges. Students' disruptive behaviour extends beyond the common classroom disturbances to the point that a single disruptive student can affect the whole class by hindering their own and their neighbouring peers' attention to learn effectively (Andriawan et al., 2016).

The *character of students* is the first trait that outlines the profile of a disruptive behaviour. Soleimani and Razmjoo (2016) address that it is imperative, yet one of the most challenging concerns for both experienced and pre-service teachers to arrange the classroom and develop students' character within a pleasurable learning environment where there is the minimum disruptive behaviour. This premise is supported by the investigation of Davidson et al. (2007), which reports that cultivating attributes such as diligence, ethics, and respect is vital to build lifelong and critical individuals with an accountable idiosyncrasy nourished by competent social and emotional skills.

The second factor that leads to potential misbehaviour in the classroom is the ongoing talks amongst students best known as side conversations that most teachers can effortlessly detect (Orlich et al., 2009). On that ground, Khasinah (2017) elucidates that disruption is bound to occur even by the action of a single student whose disturbance inhibits their own and their peers' learning in the classroom. As a consequence, the burden of spending a substantial amount of time dealing with disruptiveness has repercussions on the primary goal of educators that is providing pleasing learning experiences for all pupils in the classroom (Muzaffarovna & Bakhordijhon, 2018).

Subsequently, other behaviours underscored as disruptive by Orlich et al. (2009) are problems that emerge from learners' lack of responsibility, such as *coming late to class* and *cheating in the classroom*. In regard to the first, Maile & Olowoyo (2017) enunciate that one of the biggest issues that almost every school has to deal in their administration is with students coming late to class. Similarly, the analysis of Okpupara and Chuwuone (2007) contemplates how learners' academic attainment and the educational institution performance is threatened by the perpetuation of this negative conduct.

Besides, regarding the cheating behaviour in the classroom, Dodeen (2012) defines it as an action of students that happens while they are assigned to complete a test or a task, due to factors that are related with them not feeling prepared, finding the material difficult, or when they want to pass the assignment with a good score. Therefore, in the current era, this issue has constituted a serious problem for students because it makes them act with academic dishonesty and leads to them not believing in their own intellectual capacity.

4.2.5.3 Motivational challenges. Motivating students is one of the most significant challenges during the teaching practice (Engelschalk et al., 2017). In the research of Yardimci et al., (2017), the authors articulate that motivation problems arise when individuals struggle to link their backgrounds with the assigned task or activity. Orlich et al. (2009) expound that

motivational problems include three main factors which are: 1) difficulty involving students, 2) lack of confidence, and 3) fear of failure.

The first motivating problem that pre-service teachers face is the difficulty in involving students to build a learning environment where the objectives are achieved effectively in the development of appropriate competencies and learning activities in the classroom (Rozimela, 2016). Then, the second factor encompassing motivational issues is the lack of self-confidence in students and teachers about their proficiency as EFL speakers, who seem to become self-conscious and reluctant to communicate, especially when their desired level has not been sufficiently mastered (Pérez Vidal et al., 2018). Last but not least, the studies of Haghbin et al. (2012) and Abdi Zarrin et al. (2020) ponder that the fear of failure may distress learners' motivation, since they might adopt an apprehensive attitude which makes them be intimidated by an unwanted outcome in their learning process.

4.2.6 Classroom management strategies

4.2.6.1 Physical presence. Maintaining a strong physical presence in the classroom is key to establishing authority and fostering engagement. As Wong and Wong (2018) assert in their influential book "The First Days of School", and as Harmer (2020) emphasizes in "The Practice of English Language Teaching", teachers who actively move around the classroom, make eye contact, and use non-verbal cues create a sense of connection with their students. Furthermore, promoting a positive learning atmosphere where disruption is prevented and learners' needs are addressed promptly can only be guaranteed through the authority of an educator whose presence commands attention whilst ensuring that pupils remain focused on the execution of their tasks.

4.2.6.2 Voice. The effective use of voice is another crucial classroom management tool. Jones (2019), in his work on classroom management techniques, emphasizes the significance of a calm, clear, assertive voice that can manage students' disruptiveness to maintain a respectful and safe learning environment without the need of shouting or raising the voice. Therefore, a variation in teachers' voice tone and volume conveys different emotions and instructions to guide pupils appropriately.

4.2.6.3 Stages of a lesson. Hunter (2017) accentuates the compulsory task of teachers to structure their lessons in clear stages. A clear exemplification of the aforementioned is the "seven-step lesson plan" of the eminent educational researcher Jeremy Harmer, whose approach enables students to clearly comprehend the class flow. Hence, the primary objective of structuring a lesson is that teachers plan and deliver their lessons with minimum distractions, fostering a learning environment that incorporates engaging warm-ups,

innovating materials, guided practice, independent practice and closing activities (Harmer, 2020).

4.2.6.4 Seating arrangement. The classroom dynamics and interaction among learners can be highly influenced by the physical layout of the classroom. The research of Evertson and Emmer (2019) adverts how strategic seating arrangements can play a significant role in enhancing student collaboration and minimizing distractions. Teachers can organize seating in rows, groups, or a horseshoe shape, depending on the activity or learning objectives. Carefully considered seating arrangements facilitate group work, encourage interactions, and establish a positive and inclusive learning atmosphere.

4.2.6.5 Student grouping. Cohen (2018) analyses the impact of grouping students heterogeneously to foster cooperation among learners, or homogeneously for targeted instruction based on skill levels. The author's comments divulge that rotating student grouping encourages pupils to work with different peers, develop social skills, and be part of a classroom community supported with inclusiveness.

On the other hand, Slavin (2013) advocates for homogeneous student grouping to tailor instruction to the specific needs of students at different proficiency levels. By grouping students with similar skill levels together, teachers can provide differentiated instruction, ensuring that each student receives appropriate learning opportunities. Homogeneous grouping also allows teachers to employ specific instructional strategies that cater to the abilities of the students in the group. This targeted approach fosters student progress and confidence, as learners feel appropriately challenged and supported in their learning journey (Slavin, 2013).

Both Cohen (2018) and Slavin (2013) acknowledge the importance of flexibility in student grouping. Implementing a combination approach that includes rotating groupings can further enrich the learning experience. By periodically reshuffling groups, students get the opportunity to collaborate with different peers, thereby broadening their perspectives and social skills.

4.2.6.6 Call-and-Response. The Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO, 2023) advocates for the use of 'Call-and-Response strategies' as an effective method for regaining students' attention, particularly in noisy environments. These strategies involve the teacher calling out a phrase or word, to which the students respond in unison with a pre-determined reply. This interactive technique not only helps to refocus the class but also fosters a sense of unity and engagement among students. By integrating *call-and-response*

routines into classroom management, teachers can quickly and effectively manage disruptions and maintain a positive learning atmosphere.

4.2.6.7 Setting clear classroom rules and consequences. Establishing rules and procedures aims to encourage students to self-regulate and reduce disruptive behaviour. The most effective teachers are not just those who reprimand students for misbehaviour but those who work together to create a comfortable, organized, and motivating learning environment. To foster self-regulation in students, it is essential to set rules and procedures governing their behaviour from the start of the course (Espinosa-Cevallos and Soto, 2020). This involves meeting with the students to discuss the specific behaviours expected of them.

Kauchak and Eggen (1993) state that class rules serve as a guide for acceptable student behavior, helping them understand what is expected of them. To be effective, these rules should be created collaboratively by teachers and students. They should be limited in number (5-8 rules), clear, specific, positive, consistently applied, explained, and demonstrated by the teacher. It is recommended to spend the first few days of class explaining the rules to ensure they are well understood.

Procedures, on the other hand, are systems that outline class routines and the activities and tasks to be completed (Evertson & Weinstein, 2013; Freiberg & Lapointe, 2013; Pérez Pérez et al., 2012). A considerable number of procedures can be established to manage classroom activities, such as submitting homework, using the restroom, and others. Sometimes, it is beneficial for teachers to negotiate these rules with students, as suggested by Ausubel's (1976) democratic model of discipline. Additionally, it is imperative to ensure that students understand the expected behaviours and the corresponding consequences.

What is more, all the classroom rules and procedures should be planned in advance to set clear, specific, and directly related consequences for disruptive behaviour (De la Mora, 2015; Rabadán Rubio & Giménez-Gualdo, 2012). In this manner, teachers must address explicitly whether what kind of behaviours met the guidelines established.

4.2.6.8 Assigning extra responsibilities. Assigning extra responsibilities to students can be an effective strategy to manage disruptive behavior in the classroom. By giving students specific roles, such as classroom helper or technology monitor, teachers can foster a sense of ownership and accountability. This strategy not only helps in reducing disruptive behavior but also enhances students' engagement and self-esteem (Baron et al., 2020; Finley, 2017). Moreover, implementing this strategy encourages students to take responsibility for their actions and contribute positively to the classroom environment.

4.2.6.9 Direct communication. Direct communication with individual students plays a pivotal role in effective classroom management by addressing behavioural issues in a personalized and constructive manner (Smith et al., 2019). This strategy is grounded in several learning theories of prominent researchers, such as Skinner's Behaviourism Theory and Bandura's Social Learning Theory, for instance.

According to B.F. Skinner's operant conditioning theory, behaviours are influenced by their consequences. Hence, direct communication allows teachers to provide immediate feedback and reinforcements (positive or negative) to shape student behaviour (Skinner, 1953). Similarly, Albert Bandura's theory postulates that individuals learn behaviours by observing others and through direct interactions. In this sense, direct communication enables teachers to model appropriate behaviours and set clear expectations, which students can emulate (Bandura, 1977).

Furthermore, by fostering direct communication, teachers encourage dialogue and understanding among students, allowing them to reflect on their behaviour's impact on others (Wachtel, 2016). By the same token, Bowlby (1969) underscores the significance of secure relationships in child development to build trust, direct and supportive communication in effective behaviour management (Bowlby, 1969). Moreover, Reinke et al. (2018) discovered that positive direct communication techniques, such as behaviour-specific praise and private conversations, significantly enhance student engagement. Overall, these findings highlight the importance of effective communication in educational settings.

4.2.6.10 Positive Reinforcement. The implementation of positive reinforcement techniques can significantly boost students' motivation, encouraging them to participate more actively in classroom activities (Gaffar et al., 2022). Positive reinforcement plays a crucial role in enhancing student motivation. According to Santrock (2011), positive reinforcement involves an increase in the frequency of a response due to the introduction of rewarding stimuli. Teachers can provide reinforcement during the learning process in both verbal and nonverbal forms. Verbal reinforcement includes praise such as "good," "nice," "excellent," "correct," "awesome," and similar expressions. Nonverbal reinforcement includes gestures like smiles, nods, thumbs up, or claps, which the teacher uses to remind students to stay motivated and engaged in their learning.

Furthermore, the research of Susila (2019) elucidates other forms of reinforcement, such as giving stamps, rolled paper, etc. to cultivate a positive learning environment where students are motivated to learn by participating in an extra activity.

4.2.6.11 Reflection on teaching performance. The educational insights of Marzano's (2016) research recommend regular reflection throughout the teaching performance seeking feedback from peers or mentors in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement regarding one's own teaching practice. Hence, this reflective analysis seems to contribute to professional growth and improved classroom management, as educators continuously adapt and refine their instructional strategies to nurture students' academic and socio-emotional growth within positive and conducive learning environments.

In reflecting on their teaching performance, educators realize that it is important to have a balanced approach to practice activities and classroom management. Through different types of practice activities including controlled, guided, and independent practice, an educator can enable active learning and enhance the students' comprehension of the content.

In conclusion, the educator's reflection on their teaching performance highlights the importance of integrating diverse practice activities and employing effective classroom management strategies. By continuously refining their instructional approach, educator aims to create a supportive and enriching educational experience for all students, fostering an environment conducive to growth and academic success.

4.3 Previous Studies

Several studies support the foundation of the present research. Among them, a previous case study held in the Latin American context aimed to explore the classroom management practices of Chilean pre-service teachers and novice in-service teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The qualitative research collected data through non-participant observations of the subjects' classroom interventions and semi-structured interviews. The main findings revealed that most of the research subjects' classroom performance was characterized by a teacher-centered approach, analyzed within the dimensions of people management, instructional management, and behavior management (Tagle et al., 2020). Since the research is a cross-sectional study with the data collected at an exact point in time, the authors recommend observing how pre-service or in-service classroom management practices change over time. In addition, they suggest that contributions to future research on classroom management can be made by comparing the participants' perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs on similar studies.

Additionally, Mkhasibe and Mncube (2020) conducted exploratory research to get an extensive comprehension of pre-service teachers' classroom management skills in rural communities under the supervision of five subject mentors during their teaching practicum. The observation and interviews used as instruments for data collection revealed that pre-

service teachers struggled to manage effectively their classrooms and that the efforts of their mentors had little impact on how the classes were managed. Considering these findings, it is recommended to administer further investigation of effective classroom management strategies for pre-service teaching practice in rural areas.

Another article that supports this research is the *Classroom management problems faced by pre-service teachers of English Education Program in senior high schools*, a study that involved 56 pre-service teachers selected through a random sample technique to discover the problems and how prospective teachers address the related to classroom management. Therefore, a quantitative descriptive method was implemented with the use of an interview and a questionnaire as instruments for gathering the respective data. As a result, 17 issues were classified by the researchers into two categories: "classroom discipline" and "classroom procedure" (Fajar et al., 2022). Consecutively, five major classroom management challenges that pre-service teachers face were found, such as: students making too much noise, their lack of interest, their inability to understand the lesson, them not paying attention, and coming too late intermittently. Despite there are no explicit recommendations for further investigation, it can be inferred that it would be favourable, for instance: a) to investigate the impact of classroom management problems on language teaching methods and strategies to address effectively these challenges; b) to examine strategies for improving classroom procedures and discipline; and c) to investigate specific factors contributing to the five classroom management challenges previously mentioned, to address them conveniently.

Similarly, in the study of Muhammad et al. (2022), where two EFL pre-service teachers were developing their practicum at an Indonesian high school, the data collected through the interview and observation instruments disclosed seven issues by the classroom management challenges experienced by prospective teachers. These were related to 1) difficulty moving students' seating arrangement, 2) disobedient learners to rules and routines, 3) students' ignoring the pre-service teachers' instructions, 4) educator's inability to understand students' characteristics, 5) pupils' lack of attention and disrespect to the student teacher, and 6) the subjects' research struggle in controlling the class. Therefore, considering the researchers' findings, some of the most relevant recommendations for further research are: a) to conduct a larger-scale study providing insights into the classroom management challenges of a more diverse sample of pre-service teachers in different contexts, and b) to explore the impact of different teaching strategies on classroom management challenges and student behaviour.

In support of the aforementioned, a study implemented by Maulidinaa et al. (2022), having 20 pre-service teachers as the participants at a private university in Indonesia, focused on the classroom management problems faced by prospective teachers and how they overcome those challenges through teaching strategies. The qualitative research data was collected using a narrative inquiry approach, which was executed from perceptions of the research subjects' journals, questionnaires, and interviews as instruments of data collection. The results demonstrated that motivational, instructional, and disruptive behaviour are the difficulties encountered by student teachers in classroom management. Furthermore, the researchers found that factors such as negative attitudes and learners' low motivation affect classroom management and overall teaching performance. Thereupon, to address these challenges, the pre-service teachers applied building classroom relationships, establishing classroom routines, and setting classroom rules as pedagogic strategies to manage the classroom. That being the case, it is recommended for future investigations on this topic to examine the effectiveness of different classroom management strategies in dealing with the above-mentioned difficulties. Also, it would benefit educational research to evaluate the long-term impact of classroom management problems on teacher burnout and job satisfaction.

Ultimately, Ramadan (2022) conducted experimental research to investigate the effectiveness of the flipped classroom model in developing the classroom management skills of 34 Egyptian EFL prospective teachers. The participants were randomly divided into two experimental groups, one of which used a traditional pedagogy in their practice sessions, while flipped classrooms were implemented in the other. Data for this paper was collected using a designed and validated classroom management questionnaire. The research findings exposed that the flipped classroom model had a notable impact on developing some subjects under study classroom management skills, such as providing stronger classroom discipline, enhancing pupils' learning motivation, and regulating classroom interaction. Consequently, recommendations for further investigation have been drawn to test the effects of the flipped classroom approach in the teaching of listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar English language skills.

Finally, the in-depth analysis of this theoretical section emphasizes that by fostering a deeper understanding of effective classroom management strategies within the context of EFL instruction, educators can strive towards creating enriching learning environments that promote student engagement and academic success.

5. Methodology

The methodology section of the dissertation outlines an exploratory research study examining classroom management in EFL practicum settings. It emphasizes the careful selection and integration of qualitative and quantitative methods to comprehensively address the research objectives. Furthermore, the section highlights the chosen data collection techniques and instruments, as well as considerations for participant recruitment, ethics, and data analysis, ensuring the study's integrity and scientific rigor.

5.1 Setting and participants

The research was conducted with a population of 25 pre-service teachers at a public institution, in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period of the English major. They were assigned to answer a Google Forms questionnaire (see Annex 1) about their beliefs, attitudes, and challenges encountered in classroom management. Additionally, a sample of 7 prospective teachers was selected in the same population to ask them a set of open-ended questions that were part of a semi-structured interview (see Annex 2), in which the researcher discussed with the participants about their experiences and strategies implemented for classroom management in the EFL teaching practicum. The subjects under study were chosen through convenience sampling method, in which the students were chosen based on their accessibility (Bhardwaj, 2019).

5.2 Procedure

The procedure for this study was carefully designed to explore and analyse the classroom management experiences of EFL pre-service teachers during their practicum in public institutions in Loja, Ecuador. Following an exploratory design, the research combined qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The steps involved identifying the research gap, collecting data through appropriate instruments, and systematically analyzing the findings to address the study's objectives. This methodological process ensured that the investigation remained focused on capturing both the challenges and strategies employed by pre-service teachers, ultimately contributing valuable insights into their professional development and classroom management practices.

5.2.1 Method

The current paper used a mixed method approach which combines both quantitative and qualitative data sets to address the general and specific questions derived from the research. As Arammo-Immonen (2013) stated, mixed methods are useful to provide researchers from diverse research disciplines, with a rigorous approach to answering research questions.

5.2.2 **Research design**

Furthermore, the research design followed an exploratory model. Thence, it aimed as an attempt for the researcher who sought to understand what is happening through new insights, and asking questions to assess various phenomenon with a different perspective (Yin, 1994).

5.2.2.1 Identifying the problem

The exploratory study was conducted once the researcher identified a gap in the amount of research regarding classroom management in the public educational settings of Loja, Ecuador. It would seem that in the specific context of Loja city, there is not sufficient information in comparison to other papers who have identified the challenges experienced by pre-service teachers at an international level. Thenceforth, the following central research question was proposed: What are the pre-service teachers' experiences of classroom management during their practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period?

5.2.2.2 Gathering background information

The next step after identifying the problem was to implement convenience sampling method to ask the potential participants about their accessibility to be part of the study. Also, during some discussion sessions held with the supervisor teacher in the academic period of 2023-2024, it was greed by many pre-service teachers that classroom management was one of the main pedagogical skills in which they encountered challenges during their practicum.

5.2.2.3 Designing the study

In order to conduct efficiently the study, it was necessary to consider the budget and timing that the completion of the whole research would take. Besides, it is relevant to mention that the designing of the study was carefully planned to align it with the research questions and objectives aimed to achieve in this paper.

5.2.2.4 Collecting data

In the first place, 7 pre-service teachers at a public institution, in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period of the English major were selected using convenience sampling by the researcher. They were part of a semi-structured interview (see Annex 2) applied in a one-to-one session that took place as soon as they finished their practicum. The researcher recorded their responses in an audio file, whose transcriptions had to be coded for better interpretation of the qualitative data.

After that, the pre-service teacher administered a questionnaire consisting of two sections related to the pre-service teachers' general beliefs and attitudes regarding classroom management, and their challenges in classroom management. This questionnaire was responded in the Google Forms platform by 25 pre-service teachers at a public institution, in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period of the English major. Furthermore, the Cronbach Alpha's Reliability Test was used to analyze the correlation of the subscales in the Likert Scale. Subsequently, the researcher used the quantitative results obtained from this questionnaire to interpret them into tables and graphs.

5.2.2.5 Analysing and interpreting data

In this stage, the data collected through transcriptions and quantitative responses was analysed and interpreted through different statistical tables and graphs. The general results and findings were reported by establishing conclusions and recommendations that helped to respond to the research subquestions formulated by the researcher.

5.2.2.6 Implementing and sharing results

Finally, the analysis and interpretation of the qualitative and quantitative data gathered was used by the researcher to draw the subsequent discussion of the results, followed by conclusions, and a set of recommendations that can be used by future prospective teachers to conduct further research on effective classroom management within educational fields of EFL teaching.

5.2.3 *Data collection sources and techniques*

The research was conducted using a survey technique. Surveys aim to obtain data and provide evidence about the attitudes, procedures, opinions, behaviours, or characteristics from a set of respondents (Story and Tait, 2019 & Fink, 2010). In the case of the present study, this technique was used to explore the experiences, identify the challenges and describe the strategies that pre-service teachers face in classroom management.

This research technique gathers quantitative, qualitative, or both types of data sets depending on the objectives. As the general objective of the investigation was to explore the experiences of pre-service teachers on classroom management during their practicum, a questionnaire (see Annex 1) and a semi-structured interview (see Annex 2) were the two instruments of data collection.

The questionnaire was the instrument used to gather quantitative data about the attitudes, beliefs and challenges of prospective teachers in classroom management. Contrarily, the qualitative responses from the interview were utilized to provide beyond insights on the

strategies developed by PSTs to overcome classroom management issues, as specified in the second subobjective of the research.

For the first section of the questionnaire, the researcher sought to address the main objective of the investigation, exploring the attitudes and beliefs of prospective teachers regarding the dimensions of *People management* and *Instructional management*. Subsequently, the second section complied with the first specific objective of the research mirroring the classroom management challenges of PSTs through the indicators of *Instruction*, *Behaviour*, and *Motivation*. Additionally, there was a three-point Likert Scale from one (Disagree) to three (Agree) that was applied for the participants under study to answer each item of its corresponding dimension or indicator. The response scale was the following:

Table 1.
Response scale for the questionnaire

Scale	Score
Disagree	1
Neutral	2
Agree	3

5.2.4 Timing

Regarding the timing of the semi-structured interview, in which the 7 selected pre-service were the research subjects, it was delivered in a unique one-on-one session that took place right after the participants finished their teaching practicum, with a duration of approximately 30 to 45 minutes for each interviewee.

And with respect to the administration of the Google Forms questionnaire, it took to the 25 prospective teachers an estimate number between 10 and 15 minutes to answer all the items in the two sections concerning to their attitudes, beliefs, and challenges endured in classroom management. The student teachers responded this questionnaire in only one session after they finished their practicum.

5.3 Data analysis

The data analysis included descriptive statistics, which role is to characterize a phenomenon, answering questions about who, what, where, when, and to what extent underlying patterns and trends occur in a population (Loeb et. Al, 2017). In order to perform descriptive analysis, the researcher used measures such as the mean score, frequencies, percentages, and the Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test to effectively communicate the characteristics of the data to the intended audience. This descriptive analysis method was utilized for the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire.

Furthermore, the content analysis method was used to analyse the qualitative responses of the semi-structured interview. This systematic and objective approach examines qualitative data, encompassing text, audio, or visual materials to identify and quantify frequencies and percentages of patterns, themes, or categories within the data to derive meaningful insights (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). To carry out this method, in the first place, the researcher transcribed the responses of pre-service teachers in the semi-structured interview; then, assigning categories and codes was the following step, in order to lead their interpretation along with frequencies and percentages for the occurrences of data.

Moreover, Microsoft Excel was the program utilized to obtain the Cronbach's Alpha scores and the corresponding tables as well as graphs that were pertinent to the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data. Besides, content analysis was conducted manually by the researcher to identify the codes in the responses of the participants interviewed, the same which will be also displayed into tables through frequencies and percentages.

6. Results

The following section entails the results of the research instruments conducted in the exploratory investigation in two sections. First, it is presented the findings unveiled by the quantitative questionnaire, which addresses the challenges faced by pre-service teachers in their practicum in classroom management. They are detailed in the form of descriptive statistics, with percentages pertaining to each item and the mean score relevant to the indicator. A total number of 25 prospective teachers were the respondents in the questionnaire.

Additionally, in the second section, the findings of the interview underscore the strategies implemented by student teachers in classroom management. They are presented in the form of content analysis, followed by their corresponding frequencies and percentages per code. In this qualitative instrument, the researcher analyses the responses of 7 pre-service teachers.

Objective 1: To describe the challenges affecting the classroom management of pre-service teachers during their teaching practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period.

Sub-question 1: What are the challenges affecting the classroom management of pre-service teachers during their teaching practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period?

6.1 Challenges faced by pre-service teachers in classroom management according to *Instuction*, *Behaviour*, and *Motivation*

6.1.1 Instruction

Table 2.
Classroom management challenges in Instruction

Classroom management challenges in *Instruction*				
Items	**Disagree (%)**	**Neutral (%)**	**Agree (%)**	**Total**
1. The pre-service teacher's instructions and classroom rules are not followed by learners.	12%	60%	28%	100%
2. The pre-service teacher frequently receives complaints about the tasks and homework in general.	8%	72%	20%	100%
3. The pre-service teacher has difficulty to deliver the lesson according to the time established in the lesson plan.	12%	52%	36%	100%
Total =	32%	184%	84%	

Mean =	11%	61%	**28%**

Figure 1.
Classroom management challenges in Instruction
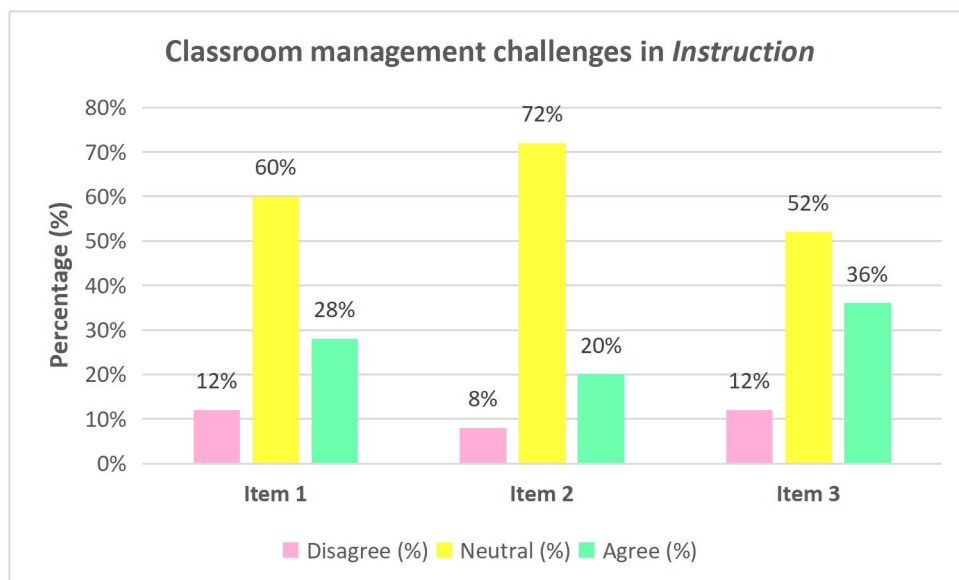
Note.

1. The pre-service teacher's instructions and classroom rules are not followed by learners.

2. The pre-service teacher frequently receives complaints about the tasks and homework in general.

3. The pre-service teacher has difficulty to deliver the lesson according to the time established in the lesson plan.

Figure 1 represents the findings concerning to the indicator of *Instruction* in the classroom management challenges. The bar graph indicates the percentages per item according to each of the values of the three-point Likert Scale. It is illustrated the level of agreement and disagreement among EFL pre-service teachers about problems related to learners not following instructions, complaining about tasks, and the difficulty to deliver the lesson in the time planned.

In the first item, the 60% of pre-service teachers are neutral compared to the 28% that agree and the 12% who disagree in relation to obstacles with instructions and classroom guidelines. These results demonstrate that over half of prospective teachers are neutral about having problems where the instructions and classroom rules are not followed by learners. In comparison, about a third part of the population agree while only a small percentage disagree. Besides, they are corroborated with the perceptions of trainee teachers in the semi-structured

interview, who mentioned that they faced problems when students did not listen to instructions or ignored the classroom rules.

Additionally, the second item indicates that 72% of pre-service teachers are neutral in contrast with the 20% agreeing and the 8% disagreeing. The highest value suggests that most prospective teachers nor agree neither disagree about receiving complaints of homework and tasks in general. However, there is a small fraction of PSTs who agree with this statement, and an even tiny portion who do no not consider having these issues. Regarding to the percentage of PSTs acknowledging these problems, some of them shared their experience in how their EFL learners often express discomfort about the amount of homework and saying that the tasks were too difficult to develop.

Subsequently, in the third item, the 52% of student teachers are neutral with having difficulty to deliver the lesson plan according to the time established, compared to the 36% assenting, and the 12% dissenting. These findings point that the majority of pre-service teachers nor agree neither disagree, while the third part sympathize, and a small fraction disagree about these problems of time management in instruction. Furthermore, the PSTs interviewed also commented that time management was a big problem, and that there were occasions where they could not complete the lesson as planned.

Overall, as it can be seen in the mean score in bold of Table 1, the 28% of EFL prospective teachers assented enduring problems related to learners not following instructions, complaining about tasks, and the difficulty to deliver the lesson in the time planned. From this, it can be concluded that almost the third part of PSTs who answered the questionnaire considered having instructional challenges in classroom management during their practicum.

6.1.2 Behaviour

Table 3.
Classroom management challenges in Behaviour

Classroom management challenges in *Behaviour*				
Items	**Disagree (%)**	**Neutral (%)**	**Agree (%)**	**Total**
4. The pre-service teacher's instruction is affected by students' misbehaviour (verbal insults, clowning, rudeness to teacher, defiance, hostility, etc.).	32%	36%	32%	100%
5. The pre-service teacher's instruction is disturbed by one or more learners talking or laughing among themselves throughout the lesson.	8%	48%	44%	100%
6. The pre-service teacher faces students' academic dishonesty in the development of assignments and	8%	56%	36%	100%

in summative assessment.			
Total =	48%	140%	112%
Mean =	16%	47%	**37%**

Figure 2.

Classroom management challenges in Behaviour
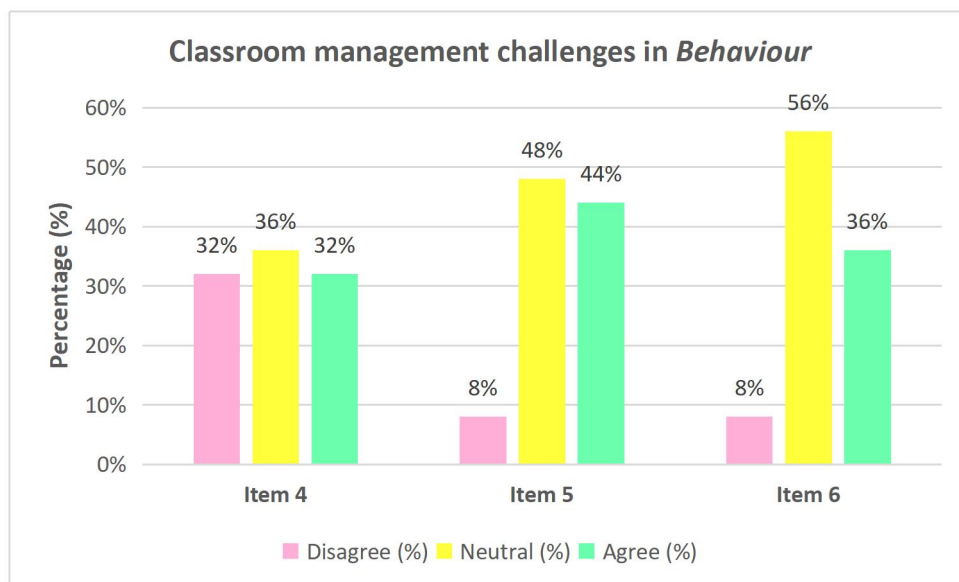
Note.

4. The pre-service teacher's instruction is affected by students' misbehaviour (verbal insults, clowning, rudeness to teacher, defiance, hostility, etc.).

5. The pre-service teacher's instruction is disturbed by one or more learners talking or laughing among themselves throughout the lesson.

6.The pre-service teacher faces students' academic dishonesty in the development of assignments and in summative assessment.

Figure 2 exhibits the findings concerning to the indicator of *Behaviour* in the classroom management challenges. The bar graph indicates the percentages per item according to each of the values of the three-point Likert Scale. It is illustrated the level of agreement and disagreement among EFL pre-service teachers about problems related to learners misbehaving, interrupting the lesson, and being dishonest academically.

In the fourth item, the 36% of pre-service teachers are neutral compared to the 32% that agree and disagree in relation to obstacles with students' misbehaviour. These results demonstrate that over the third part of prospective teachers are neutral about facing learners' indiscipline. Contrastingly, there is a dichotomy of acceptance and dissent among the rest of population. Besides, these findings are corroborated with the perceptions of trainee teachers in

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the semi-structured interview, who mentioned that they faced verbal insults, and other attitudes such as rudeness and hostility coming from students.

Following, the fifth item indicates that 48% of pre-service teachers are neutral in contrast with the 44% agreeing and the 8% disagreeing. The highest value suggests that approximately half of prospective teachers nor agree neither disagree about enduring disruptiveness. However, there is also a considerable part a bit below of PSTs who assent with this statement, and a tiny portion who do no not consider having these issues. Regarding to the percentage of PSTs acknowledging these problems, some of them shared their experience in how their EFL learners interrupt the instruction whilst talking among themselves or laughing during the lesson.

Subsequently, in the sixth item, the 56% of student teachers are neutral with having difficulty to deliver the lesson plan according to the time established, compared to the 36% assenting, and the 8% dissenting. These findings point that the majority of pre-service teachers nor agree neither disagree, while the one third sympathize, and a small fraction disagree about the problem of students' academic dishonesty. Furthermore, the PSTs interviewed also commented that the most common among their learners was cheating on assignments and plagiarism in summative assessments.

Generally, as it can be seen in the mean score in bold of Table 2, the 37% of EFL prospective teachers assented enduring problems related to learners misbehaving, interrupting the lesson, and being dishonest academically. From this, it can be concluded that over the third part of PSTs who answered the questionnaire considered having behavioural challenges in classroom management during their practicum.

6.1.3 Motivation

Table 4.
Classroom management challenges in Motivation

Classroom management challenges in *Motivation*				
Items	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Total
7. The pre-service teacher encounters complicated to bring a positive attitude from learners towards the activities proposed.	36%	40%	24%	100%
8. The pre-service teacher faces problems involving students to achieve effectively the lesson objectives.	8%	56%	36%	100%
9. The pre-service teacher and learners	12%	52%	36%	100%

present lack of self-confidence regarding the proficiency of the foreign language to communicate efficiently.				
10. The pre-service teacher's classroom endures students' fear of failure.	16%	44%	40%	100%
Total =	72%	192%	136%	
Mean =	18%	48%	**34%**	

Figure 3.

Classroom management challenges in Motivation
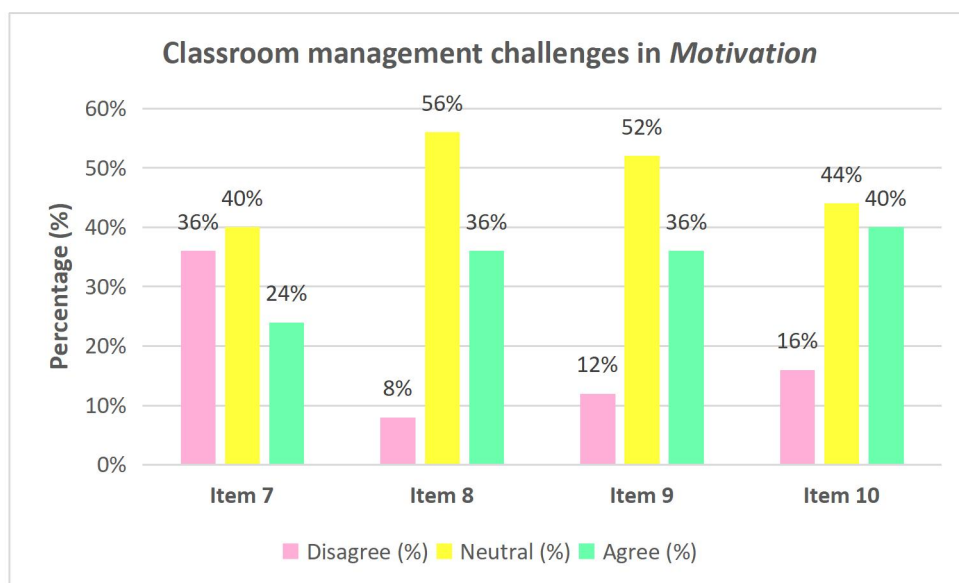
Note.

7. The pre-service teacher encounters complicated to bring a positive attitude from learners towards the activities proposed.

8. The pre-service teacher faces problems involving students to achieve effectively the lesson objectives.

9. The pre-service teacher and learners present lack of self-confidence regarding the proficiency of the foreign language to communicate efficiently.

10. The pre-service teacher's classroom endures students' fear of failure.

Figure 3 displays the findings concerning to the indicator of *Motivation* in the classroom management challenges. The bar graph indicates the percentages per item according to each of the values of the three-point Likert Scale. It is illustrated the level of agreement and disagreement among EFL pre-service teachers about problems related to bringing a positive attitude from learners, achieving effectively the lesson objectives, and lack of self-confidence to communicate efficiently in the foreign language.

In item 7, the 40% of pre-service teachers are neutral compared to the 36% that disagree and a 24% who agree in relation to obstacles with bringing a positive attitude from students towards the activities proposed. These results demonstrate that more than a third of respondents are neutral about the problem of engaging learners. Conversely, over one third dissent and just around a quarter of participants admit struggling with this aspect. In addition, these findings are substantiated with the perceptions of prospective teachers, who declared facing lack of enthusiasm from students in the development of lesson activities.

As regards item 8, it is disclosed that the 56% of trainee teachers are neutral, whereas a 36% agrees and the 8% left disagrees with respect to the problem of involving students in the effective achievement of lesson objectives. This means that over half of respondents neither agree nor disagree about having this issue. Contrariwise, there is still the opinion of those who sympathise represented by over the third part of participants, and just a tiny portion differing. In the case of PSTs acknowledging this challenge, they commented that in their practicum they struggled to meet the lesson objectives, since some learners could not understand what it was aimed to achieve.

By the same token, item 9 illustrates a similar tendency, in which there is a 52% of pre-service teachers being neutral compared to the 36% agreeing and a 12% who differ with regards to the lack of self-confidence among the prospective teacher and learners to communicate effectively in the foreign language. These findings signal that more than half of student teachers nor agree neither disagree in this particular aspect, while just over one third admit overcoming it in their practicum, and a small fraction dissent. Moreover, the PSTs interviewed also stated that their learners would not feel confident to speak in English, and what is more, both trainee teachers along students would be unsure about their overall language skills.

Finally, in item 10, the 44% of pre-service teachers are neutral, in comparison with the 40% assenting and the 16% in disagreement in regard to enduring students' fear of failure in the classroom. The highest value suggests that approximately half of PSTs neither agree nor disagree with having this issue. In spite of this, more than one third sympathised about this challenge, whereas fewer than a third of respondents dissented. Likewise, the perceptions of student teachers unveiled feelings of self-consciousness along learners' fear of failing in front of their classmates.

To summarize, as it can be seen in the mean score in bold of Table 3, the 34% of EFL prospective teachers assented enduring problems related to bringing a positive attitude from learners, achieving effectively the lesson objectives, and lack of self-confidence to

communicate efficiently in the foreign language. From this, it can be concluded that more than the third part of PSTs who answered the questionnaire considered having motivational challenges in classroom management during their practicum

Table 5.

Mean score percentage of agreement in the classroom management challenges of Instruction, Behaviour, and Motivation

Agreement Mean Scores	
Classroom Management Indicators	**Mean Score**
1. Instruction	28%
2. Behaviour	37%
3. Motivation	34%

Figure 4.

Mean score percentage of agreement in the classroom management challenges of Instruction, Behaviour, and Motivation
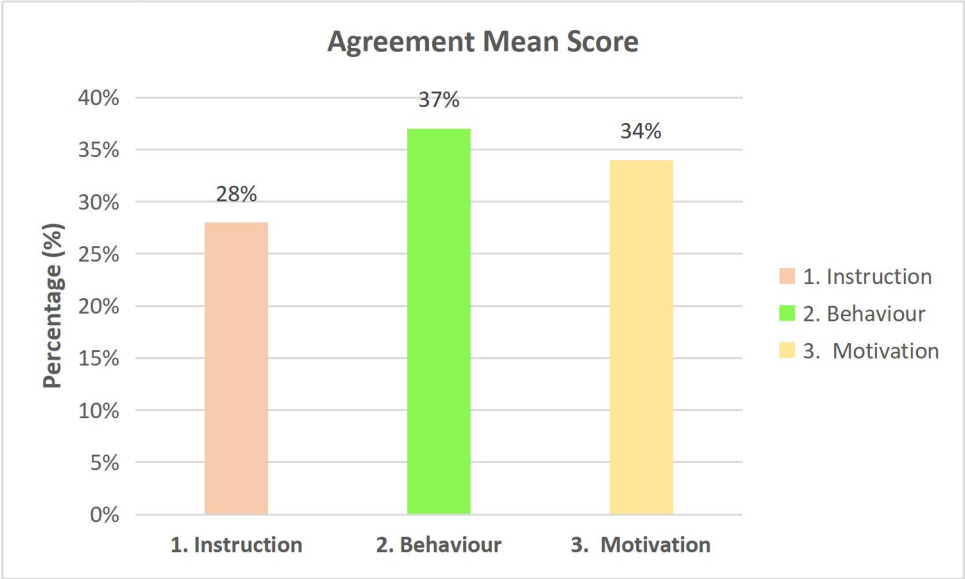
In Figure 4, it is exposed the Mean Score Percentage of Agreement corresponding to each of the indicators of classroom management (instruction, behaviour, and motivation). As it is illustrated in the bar graph, the highest value of 37% falls directly above the indicator of *Behaviour*, followed by the 34% in *Motivation*, and the 28% in *Instruction*. When adding together the mean scores of indicators 2 and 3, they demonstrate that many more than a half of pre-service teachers agreed whether presenting behavioural and motivational challenges in classroom management during their practicum. Oppositely, around one third of respondents sympathised with overcoming instructional challenges.

Objective 2: To identify the classroom management strategies that pre-service teachers implement during their teaching practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period.

Sub-question 2: What are the classroom management strategies that pre-service teachers implement during their teaching practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period?

6.2 Strategies implemented by pre-service teachers in classroom management

This section encompasses the actual strategies implemented by 7 pre-service teachers in classroom management in the EFL classroom. The results are presented according to the strategies that teachers used to overcome the instructional, behavioural, and motivational challenges addressed in the previous section. In addition, strategies related to reflective practice in classroom management are also addressed. The researcher uses frequencies and percentages to indicate the occurrences in the themes or strategies pertaining to each table.

6.2.1 Instructional strategies

Table 6.
Instructional strategies in classroom management

Instructional Strategies			
Theme	**Code**	**f**	**%**
Non-verbal communication	• "Using gestures and body language to show instructions."	3	42,86%
Voice	• "I use clear and simple language" • "Using clear words to awaken students' knowledge."	5	71,43%
Time management	• "Using a timer to ensure all stages in the lesson plan were achieved" • "Setting alarms to monitor activities" • "Monitoring the time and activities" • "Assigning extra time to each activity" • "Having extra activities planned" (when students finished before the time expected)	7	100%
Student Grouping	• **Heterogenous Grouping:** "Students with a higher level helping those with a lower level"	5	71,43%

Table 6 comprises the instructional strategies implemented by pre-service teachers in classroom management. The findings are presented after a thorough analysis in the occurrences and percentages of codes corresponding to each strategy or theme.

First and foremost, "time management" strategies are unanimously applied, with 100% of the teachers using tools such as timers, alarms, and extra activities to ensure all stages of the lesson plan are achieved. This widespread adoption underscores the essential role of time management in maintaining a structured and efficient classroom environment. Teachers prioritize this strategy to ensure smooth transitions and maximize instructional time.

In the second place, strategies in the themes of both "Voice" and "Students Grouping" are equally adopted by 71,43% of pre-service teachers. This high usage indicates that the majority of PSTs emphasize using clear and simple language to stimulate students' knowledge and ensure comprehension as a way to effectively communicate their instruction. Similarly, regarding "Students Grouping", it was found that heterogeneous student grouping, where higher-level students assist those at lower levels, is employed by most prospective teachers as well, in an attempt to foster peer learning and collaboration, allowing pupils to support each other's progress.

Then, in the third place, "Non-verbal communication" is a strategy utilized by 42.86% of EFL pre-service teachers, who employ gestures and body language to convey instructions. This suggests that around the half of PSTs consider implementing non-verbal cues in order to enhance clarity and understanding among students without relying solely on verbal explanations.

6.2.2 Behavioural strategies

Table 7.
Behavioural strategies in classroom management

Behavioural Strategies			
Theme	**Code**	**f**	**%**
Call-and-response strategies	• **Waterfall sound technique:** "I asked learners 'How does the waterfall sound?' in order that they understood they had to respond with the onomatopoeia 'shhh...' and make silence."	3	42,86%
Setting classroom rules and consequences	• **Flower technique:** "Students would receive a punishment as a consequence for their misbehaviour if the flower had all the petals." • "Setting clear classroom rules from the beginning." • "Reminding them of the rules and my expectations"	7	100%

		f	%
Assigning extra responsibilities	• "I had one student who was very disruptive… so he was my assistant most of the classes and then I could see that I gave him a little bit extra responsibility and he started to behave a little bit better as well."	1	14,29%
Direct communication	• "Talking to students privately about their disruptive behaviour"	1	14,29%

Table 7 details the behavioural strategies implemented by pre-service teachers in classroom management. The findings are presented after a thorough analysis in the occurrences and percentages of codes corresponding to each strategy or theme.

First, it was found that "Setting clear classroom rules and establishing consequences" for misbehaviour was a strategy employed by all pre-service teachers (100%). Furthermore, the interviewees remarked that techniques like drawing a flower on the board and constant reminders of rules served as foundations to structure a behavioural framework with consequences if expectations to maintain classroom order and discipline were not met.

In the second place, "Call-and-response strategies", such as the waterfall sound technique, were used by 42.86% of the pre-service teachers. During their practicum, this strategy was used moderately by around half of PSTs in managing classroom noise and fostering discipline while prompting students to respond in a specific manner to create silence or draw attention.

Besides, "Assigning extra responsibilities to students" and "Direct communication", particularly those who are disruptive, were strategies implemented by 14.29% of the prospective teachers. Regarding the former, the low adoption rate in fewer than a third of participants suggests that this strategy is selectively tailored to giving additional tasks to address individual student needs and encourage better behaviour. What is more, the usage of the latter aimed to address behavioural issues directly and individually, fostering a more respectful and understanding relationship between the trainee teacher and learner.

6.2.3 Motivational strategies

Table 8.
Motivational strategies in classroom management

Motivational Strategies			
Theme	**Code**	**f**	**%**
Engagement	• **Kinesthetic games and warm-ups:** "Hot potato", "Hangman", "Just	7	100%

activities	Dance!", "Simon says", "Bingo!", etc. • **Multimedia resources:** "Using multimedia such as pictures and songs, that helped to have the lessons more interactive and relatable."		
Positive reinforcement	• "Praising good behaviour" • "Rewards like giving stickers" • "Using kind words"	5	71,43%

Table 8 includes the motivational strategies implemented by pre-service teachers in classroom management. The findings are presented after a thorough analysis in the occurrences and percentages of codes corresponding to each strategy or theme.

Primarily, "Engagement activities", including kinaesthetic games, warm-ups, and multimedia resources, were commonly used by all teachers (100%). The general adoption of these activities outlines their critical role to make lessons interactive and relatable, capturing students' interest and keeping them actively involved in the learning process to maintain their motivation.

Additionally, "Positive reinforcement" was a strategy employed by 71.43% of the trainee teachers, involving praise, giving rewards like stickers, and using kind words to encourage good behaviour. Therefore, the majority of pre-service teachers considered as crucial the frequent use of reinforcing positive actions to nurture a conducive learning environment in the classroom atmosphere.

6.2.4 Reflective practice

Table 9.
Reflective practice strategies in classroom management

Reflective practice Strategies			
Theme	**Code**	**f**	**%**
Reflection processes	• **Instruments:** "Reflective journals to assess and improve teaching practice" • **Self-reflection**: "…even without using the instrument, you're thinking and you're making your ideas and trying to analyze the class that you just imparted. So doing that and reflecting on my classroom management really helped me to improve in that aspect."	7	100%
Collaboration with peers and	• "Observation and feedback from peers" • "Seeking advice from supervisors"	7	100%

| **supervisors** | • "Guidance on classroom management strategies" |

Table 9 underscores the reflective practice strategies implemented by pre-service teachers in classroom management. The findings are presented after a thorough analysis in the occurrences and percentages of codes corresponding to each strategy or theme.

In the first place, "Reflection processes" were unanimously embraced by all student teachers (100%), who used instruments like reflective journals and self-reflection practices to assess and improve their teaching performance. The solid application of this strategy underlines the essential role of continuous self-assessment to identify strengths and potential areas of improvement in enhancing classroom management and professional development.

Furthermore, "Collaboration with peers and supervisors" was another generally applied strategy in all pre-service teachers (100%). The subjects under study accentuated that observation combined with feedback from peers, as well as seeking advice from supervisors provided valuable guidance on classroom management. Moreover, collaborative professional development supported learning from their shared experiences, insights, and mentorship of tutors.

7. Discussion

This section encloses an exhaustive analysis of the previous results, considering the research questions proposed initially in this study, and the potential limitations that further investigations should contemplate for the development of similar research in the field.

The central research question aimed to explore pre-service teachers' experiences of classroom management during their practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period. Generally, it was found that the subjects under study appraise their experience as challenging yet rewarding because of the dual nature of teaching, acknowledging initial hurdles in their practicum related to classroom management. Nonetheless, they underwent through a sense of fulfilment when reflecting on a successfully managed classroom and seeing students' progress. These findings are aligned with the research of Kopershoek et al. (2016) and Collier-Meek et al. (2019) who report that despite being one of the most overwhelming problems to deal with, effective classroom management practices lead to long-term improvements in learners' attainment and decreasing behavioural problems.

Concerning the first research sub-question, it sought to describe the challenges affecting the classroom management of pre-service teachers during their teaching practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period. To a great extent, the research brought to light that regardless of a neutral position in most prospective teachers, still many of them admitted enduring predominantly behavioural and motivational challenges in classroom management.

As it is displayed in Figure 2, the behavioural challenges addressed by approximately half of respondents are the disturbances created by students talking and laughing whilst they are delivering their instruction throughout the lesson. Additionally, just over a third part of the study participants agreed to overcome learners' academic dishonesty and misbehaviour attitudes, such as verbal insults in the classroom. Congruently, previous studies of Fajar et al. (2022) and Muhammad et al. (2022) unveiled difficulties, such as students making too much noise, their inability to understand the lesson, them not paying attention, and the disrespect to the student teacher being the most challenging problems to handle in classroom management.

Afterwards, Figure 3 depicts the motivational challenges faced by pre-service teachers. As many as half of PSTs sympathised with enduring their own self-consciousness and students' fear of failure. By the same token, it can be observed that other motivational issues included involving students into the effective achievement of the lesson objectives and the lack of self-confidence among PSTS and pupils to communicate successfully in the foreign

language. Correspondingly, authors as Yardimci et al. (2017), Haghbin et al. (2012), Pérez Vidal et al. (2018) and Abdi Zarrin et al. (2020) associate that motivating problems may stem from hurdles to link individuals' backgrounds with the activities proposed, reluctance to communicate because of an unsatisfactory proficiency level, and apprehension based on the potential outcomes of failure.

Subsequently, the second research sub-question envisioned to identify the classroom management strategies that pre-service teachers implement during their teaching practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period. After conducting a conscientious analysis in the responses of the prospective teachers interviewed, the researcher classified their strategies into four main categories that explain how they overcome classroom management challenges in their practicum. These categories comprise *instructional*, *behavioural*, *motivational*, and *reflective practice* strategies in classroom management.

Regarding the first category of *Instructional Strategies*, Table 6 shows a widespread prevalence of 'Time Management' strategies, where all interviewees applied tools such as timers, alarms, and back-up activities in the monitoring and accomplishment of all stages of the lesson plan. In addition, 'Voice' and 'Student Grouping' were strategies used by most pre-service teachers, making use of clear language and fostering collaboration through heterogenous student grouping in order to ensure the effective delivery of instructions for all learners. These results are compared to Sahito et al. (2016), Jones (2019), and Cohen (2018), who emphasize the relevance of optimization in time management for satisfactory performance, the use of an assertive voice to convey instructions, and the impact of heterogenous grouping to promote cooperation among learners.

In the second category of *Behavioural Strategies*, Table 7 exhibits that: 'Setting classroom rules and consequences' was the principal strategy used unanimously by all the interviewed pre-service teachers. They acknowledged implementing specific techniques like drawing a flower on the board helped them to establish consequences for disruptive behaviour, along with constantly reminding learners of the classroom guidelines and expectations. Moreover, 'Call-and-Response strategies', such as the *waterfall sound* technique, in particular, were convenient for some trainee teachers to elicit students' silence and control noise. Correspondingly, studies by De la Mora (2015), Rabadán Rubio and Giménez-Gualdo (2012), and Espinosa Cevallos and Soto (2020) show that constructive classroom management facilitates students' understanding of the expected behaviours and regulates directly specific consequences for disruptive behaviour. In the same line, the use of 'Call-and-Response

strategies' is encouraged by the Australian Education Research Organisation (AERO, 2023), which states that they are effective in gaining back students' attention in noisy environments.

Continuing with the third category of *Motivational Strategies*, Table 8 presents the high adoption of 'Engagement activities' by all interviewees, who included kinaesthetic games, warm-ups, and multimedia resources to make lessons interactive and maintain students' motivation. Similarly, 'Positive Reinforcement' was another significant strategy developed by more than half of pre-service teachers to encourage a positive classroom atmosphere through the use of praise, rewards, and kind words. These findings underscore the importance of incorporating engaging warm-ups and innovative materials (Harmer, 1997). Also, they relate to the research of Aulia (2024), who analyses the improvement of learners' motivation and curiosity in English learning through the application of positive reinforcement.

Finally, in the fourth category of *Reflective Practice Strategies*, Table 9 exposes that conducting 'Reflection Processes' and 'Collaboration with Peers and Supervisors' were solid strategies implemented undisputedly by pre-service teachers to improve their classroom management. The results demonstrate instruments like reflective journals, self-reflection practices, and seeking advice from peers and supervisors can guide effectively classroom management in teaching performance. Furthermore, they are congruent with the educational insights of Marzano (2016), who recommends constant reflection on teaching performance through feedback from peers or mentors to identify strengths and areas of improvement.

Having all things considered, the potential limitations of this study could be related to the research instruments used to obtain information about the pre-service teachers' experiences in classroom management. Probably, it would have been beneficial to contrast the questionnaire results and interview responses with an observation sheet in which the researcher could be able to take notes about particular strengths and weaknesses of classroom management practices in the subjects under study. Moreover, it is suggested for further research to explore the impact of specific strategies of classroom management in EFL learning environments. Also, pupils' perceptions should be contemplated to analyse what classroom management strategies are optimal to overcome instructional, behavioural, and motivational constraints.

8. Conclusions

The study aimed to explore the pre-service teachers' experiences of classroom management during their EFL practicum. Considering the findings, the conclusions below can be drawn.

From a general perspective, the research brought to light that pre-service teachers address their experience in classroom management as equally challenging and rewarding. This is because, initially, during their practicum, they encountered overwhelming difficulties in classroom management with their pupils. Notwithstanding, overcoming these challenges and successfully managing the classroom led to fulfilment in seeing learners' progress.

Ultimately, behaviour and motivation were predominant challenges encountered in classroom management by EFL prospective teachers. Regarding the former, trainee teachers confirmed being interrupted mainly by students' disturbances associated with them talking or laughing among themselves throughout the lesson instruction. Concerning the latter, feelings of apprehension, self-consciousness, and fear of failure among the subjects under study and learners were submitted as motivating problems inhibiting the effective achievement of lesson objectives in classroom management.

Finally, the most prevalent strategies implemented by pre-service teachers to overcome classroom management challenges were classified into four main categories: instructional, behavioural, motivational, and reflective practice. Effective instructional strategies addressed efficacy in using time management, prospective teachers' voice, and student grouping in the delivery of instructions. Additionally, behavioural issues were managed largely by the establishment of clear classroom rules and consequences. Moreover, motivational strategies contemplated the high adoption of engagement activities and positive reinforcement. Similarly, improved classroom management in teaching performance was guided by trainee teachers' reflective practices, which included reflection processes alongside collaboration with peers and supervisors.

9. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the author proposes some recommendations regarding classroom management in the EFL practicum. In the first place, pre-service teachers should enhance their classroom management skills by engaging in continuous professional development programs focused on effective classroom management strategies. Additionally, they can gain confidence and expertise by practising active classroom management strategies during their practicum to build rapport with students in a supportive and respectful environment.

Furthermore, for mentors and supervisors, it is recommended to integrate comprehensive classroom management training into the curriculum of the teaching profession. Moreover, mentorship programs should be established, offering ongoing support and feedback to prospective teachers in the development of valuable classroom management skills to address challenges. Similarly, they can encourage pre-service teachers to practise these skills by providing opportunities like simulations and role-playing scenarios where student teachers have to implement conducive classroom management.

By the same token, educational institutions could foster a supportive practicum environment where pre-service teachers are provided with resources for effective classroom management, such as workshops, behaviour management plans, and intervention strategies. Also, they should allow trainee teachers to experiment with different classroom management strategies without fear of failure or being judged, encouraging cooperating teachers to provide constructive feedback. Likewise, they can implement evaluation systems to assess prospective teachers' classroom management skills, tailoring professional development programs and support for student teachers.

In the same way, it is suggested for further research to conduct longitudinal studies that investigate the long-term impact of effective classroom management training on the skills of pre-service teachers and learners' outcomes. In addition, future researchers can compare the classroom management challenges and strategies across diverse EFL educational settings. What is more, the incorporation of technology in supporting efficient classroom management practices and enhancing student engagement could also be studied. Finally, collaborative research between high superior education programs and schools can be developed to foster innovative classroom management strategies and professional growth.

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Annex 1. Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear student, answer the following questionnaire with sincerity and honesty. Your answers will be anonymous and confidential.

Student's code. …………………………………………….. (E.g. UNL-PINE-VII-01)

Date: ………………………………………………

Challenges faced by pre-service teachers in classroom management according to indicators such as instruction, behaviour, and motivation

Challenges that pre-service teachers face in classroom management		Likert Scale		
Indicator	Item	1. Disagree	2. Neutral	3. Agree
Instruction	**1.** The pre-service teacher's instructions and classroom rules are not followed by learners.			
	2. The pre-service teacher frequently receives complaints about the tasks and homework in general.			
	3. The pre-service teacher has difficulty to deliver the lesson according to the time established in the lesson plan.			
Behaviour	**4.** The pre-service teacher's			

	instruction is affected by students' misbehaviour (verbal insults, clowning, rudeness to teacher, defiance, hostility, etc.).			
	5. The pre-service teacher's instruction is disturbed by one or more learners talking or laughing among themselves throughout the lesson.			
	6. The pre-service teacher faces students' academic dishonesty in the development of assignments and in summative assessment.			
Motivation	**7.** The pre-service teacher encounters complicated to bring a positive attitude from learners towards the activities proposed.			
	8. The pre-service teacher faces problems involving students to achieve effectively the lesson objectives.			
	9. The pre-service teacher, along with learners, present			

lack of self-confidence regarding the proficiency of the foreign language to communicate efficiently.			
10. The pre-service teacher's classroom endures students' fear of failure.			

THANKS FOR YOUR COLLABORATION!

Annex 2. Semi-structured interview

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Presentation:

Good morning / Good afternoon, dear ……… (name of the interviewee pre-service teacher). I appreciate your willingness to be here at this time, helping me collect useful data for my thesis project. Today, we are going to discuss your experiences in relation to classroom management. First, we should remember that classroom management consists of a teacher-student interaction process that allows pre-service teachers to gain meaningful insights about real-life situations they have to endure in their profession, and which are strictly linked to how the educator handles conflicts with respect to factors such as the teacher's instruction, learners' disruptive behaviour, and fostering motivation.

Now, without any further ado, let us start with the questions.

Introduction:

1. Can you briefly describe your experiences during your EFL practicum in terms of classroom management?

Preparation and Planning:

2. Can you share specific strategies or resources you used to plan for classroom management?

Establishing a Positive Classroom Environment:

3. Were there specific challenges you encountered in creating a positive classroom atmosphere, and how did you address them?

Student Engagement and Motivation:

4. What strategies did you use to engage and motivate EFL students in your classroom? Can you provide some examples of activities or methods that were useful for you in engaging students?

Addressing Behavioral and Time Management Challenges:

5. How did you handle behavioral challenges or disruptions in your EFL classroom? Can you share a specific incident and discuss the strategies you employed to manage it?

6. Did you encounter difficulties to deliver the lesson according to the time established in the lesson plan? How did you overcome this issue?

Communication with Students:

7. How did you communicate expectations and guidelines regarding behavior and participation to your EFL students? Did you encounter any language barriers in your communication, and how did you overcome them?

Collaboration with Colleagues and Supervisors:
8. To what extent did you collaborate with other teachers or supervisors to address classroom management issues?

Reflection and Professional Growth:
9. How did you reflect on your classroom management practices during your EFL practicum? Were there any particular instruments or people who helped you with that?
10. Do you consider that in comparison to your first teaching lessons and now that you have finished your practicum, you have improved in specific areas of classroom management? If so, can you mention them?

Thank you so much for your collaboration, ………. (name of the interviewee pre-service teacher

Annex 3. Research Matrix

Title	EFL practicum and classroom management among pre-service teachers at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period			
Problem	**Objectives**	**Theoretical Framework**	**Methodological Design**	**Techniques / Instruments**
General Problem	**General Objective**	**Independent Variable**	**Research Design**	**Survey Technique**
What are the pre-service teachers' experiences of classroom management during their practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period?	To explore pre-service teachers' experiences of classroom management during their practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period.	5.1 EFL pre-service teaching practicum 5.1.1 Definition of EFL pre-service teaching practicum 5.1.2 Benefits of the EFL pre-service teaching practicum	• Mixed method approach (quantitave and qualitative data) • Exploratory investigation **Data Analysis** • Descriptive analysis • Content analysis	• Questionnaire (quantitative data) • Semi-structured interview (qualitative data)
Subproblems	**Specific Objectives**	5.1.3 Pedagogical competence of EFL pre-service teachers for the practicum		
1. What are the challenges affecting the classroom management of pre-service teachers during their teaching practicum,	1. To describe the challenges affecting the classroom management of pre-service teachers during their teaching	5.1.3.1 Understanding the		

at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period?

2. What are the classroom management strategies that pre-service teachers implement during their teaching practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period?

practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period.

2. To identify the classroom management strategies that pre-service teachers implement during their teaching practicum, at a public institution in Loja, 2023-2024 academic period.

characteristics of students

5.1.3.2 The mastery of theories and principles in the teaching-learning process

5.1.3.3 Developing a curriculum

5.1.3.4 Conducting educative learning

5.1.3.5 Developing learners' potential

5.1.3.6 Maintaining communication and interaction

5.1.3.7 Conducting assessment and evaluation

Dependent Variable

5.2 Classroom

management

5.2.1   Definition   of classroom management

5.2.2   Dimensions   of classroom management

5.2.2.1   People management

5.2.2.2   Instructional management

5.2.3 Types of classroom management

5.2.3.1   Non-interventionist

5.2.3.2 Interventionist

5.2.3.3 Interactionist

5.2.4   Classroom management components

5.2.6.2 Voice

5.2.6.3 Stages of a lesson

5.2.6.4 Seating arrangement

5.2.6.5 Student grouping

5.2.6.6 Reflection on teaching performance