

## **Developing Positive Management Strategies for Effective Classroom Discipline- a shared experience for EFL pre-service teacher training**

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### 1. Introduction

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#### **Background: Rationale**

##### **On classroom management**

Classroom management refers to all those activities necessary to create and maintain an orderly learning environment such as planning and preparation of materials, organization, decoration of the classroom and certainly the establishment and enforcement of routines and rules (Tan, Parsons, Hinson, & Sardo-Brown, 2003). According to Doyle, 1986 (as cited in Krause, Bouchner & Duchesne, 2003) classroom management is certainly concerned with behaviour, but it can also be defined more broadly as involving the planning, organization and control of learners, the learning process and the classroom environment to create and maintain an effective learning experience."

##### **On management Techniques and Personality Traits**

The humanistic side in teacher's personality plays a great role in the teaching learning operation. A teacher should possess a humoristic personality in addition to flexibility in the classroom. The students need a happy teacher, not an angry one. "Effective teachers differ from ineffective teachers not in the way they respond to students' misbehavior, but instead in how competently they manage the group activities." Kounin (1970)

The teacher should show interest in students' own needs with a caring attitude and a bit of smiling and fun so as to attract his students

and add another sweet spicing to his learning environment. It is of paramount importance then for learners to sense the supportive attitude from their teachers for they need to feel safe in a supportive learning environment because this may be the only secure study environment setting where they really need that helps to use their true potential.

Another asset that teachers should own is passion-this is the love feeling for their jobs. If teachers devote some of their time teaching earnestly, there will be no doubt that success will be achieved. Then teachers should love their craft of educating the others-they need to be caring, passionate and impatient.

### **On classroom Management and adopted Approaches**

Efforts to improve education must focus on the single most important component: the classroom teacher (Ingwalson & Thompson, 2007). Through his experience the researcher resorted to two combined methods (the use of the instructional and the desist approach combined)

#### **The use of the Instructional Approach**

Teachers who use the instructional approach to classroom management prevent most management problems by actively engaging students in high-interest lessons geared to meet their interests, needs, and abilities. Thus, students are motivated to attend class, positively participate in activities, and manage their own behavior. Jacob Kounin (1970) advocated the instructional approach to classroom management where the teacher is supposed to begin each class by telling the students exactly what will be happening during the course. The teacher outlines and prepares beforehand what he and the students will be doing during the session. He may set time limits for some tasks, selects the activities that students need to do and assigns group and pair work.

#### **The use of the Desist Approach**

The desist approach is advocated by Lee and Marlene Canter (1976) in their **assertive discipline** model and by B. F. Skinner (1968, 1971) in his research on **behavior modification**. The desist approach to classroom management gives the teacher full responsibility for regulating his own classroom. The teacher establishes and enforces a set of specific rules right from the beginning of the school year to control student behavior in the classroom. It is through this approach that teachers exert their utmost power to deal forcefully and quickly with misbehavior. This approach probably is the most widely used classroom management strategy in today's schools.

#### **Establishing effective teacher-student relationships**

As the teaching process is complex the relationship between teachers and students should be well established. This undoubtedly may make the difference between old experienced teachers and the fresh ones. Teachers must "win their students' hearts while getting inside their students' heads" (Wolk, 2003, p. 14). As Haberman (1995) suggested, this winning of the hearts occurs through very personal interactions, one student at a time. This perspective is supported by research suggesting that teachers who develop such relationships experience fewer classroom behavior problems and better academic performance ( Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003).

Teachers, administrators, parents, and students report that misbehavior often interferes with the ability of a teacher to teach and with the ability of students to learn (Charles, 2002; Evertson, Emmer, & Worsham, 2003; Gallup & Elam, 1988).

Researchers have pointed out the importance of assisting students in positive behaviors. So, in planning classroom management, teachers should consider using an assertive communication style and behavior with their students They should always know what they want their students to do according to their interests and needs so as to involve them in the respective learning activities, under the general conditions of clearly and explicitly stated school wide and classroom rules.

Research indicates that teachers' actions in their classrooms have twice as much impact on student achievement as assessment policies, community involvement, or staff collegiality; and a large part of teachers' actions involves the management of the classroom (Marzano, 2003; Marzano & Marzano, 2003). Marzano, Marzano, and Pickering (2003), in a meta-analysis of more than 100 studies, reported that teachers who had high-quality relationships with students had 31% fewer discipline problems, rule violations, and other related problems over a year's time than did teachers who did not.

The characteristics of effective teacher-student relationships are not related to the teacher's personality or whether the teacher is well liked by the students. Instead, the relationships are characterized by specific behaviors, strategies, and fundamental attitudes demonstrated by the teacher (Bender, 2003) .This approach involves taking personal interest in students; establishing clear learning goals; and modeling assertive, equitable, and positive behaviors (Hall & Hall, 2003; Rogers & Renard, 1999).

Rogers and Renard (1999) asserted that we need to understand the needs and beliefs of our students as they are—not as we think they ought to be" (p. 34). Developing relationships with students who come from culturally different backgrounds can be challenging and requires

specific skills from new and experienced teachers alike (Nieto, 1999a, 1999b, 2008).

### **Problematic and Research Questions**

According to Nicholas Long & William Morse

*“No other topic in education receives greater attention or causes more concerns for teachers and parents and students than classroom discipline. The lack of effective discipline...is a major stumbling block to a successful career in teaching.”* So, failure to address classroom management issues leads to frustration, ineffectiveness and failure. Pre-service programs in teacher education programs rarely address these vital issues. Hence this problematic instance inspires the researcher to join ideas with researchers stipulating that a high incidence of classroom disciplinary problems has a significant impact on the effectiveness of teaching and learning. So, managing a classroom effectively means creating a positive environment where students can learn without distractions or misbehavior. In this respect, this paper tries to set some demarcation lines on class management, positive behavior and classroom discipline. The researcher believes Good classroom management reduces problems through careful design of lessons and classroom space, anticipates problems before they occur and uses positive reinforcement to reduce misbehavior. However, difficulty managing behavior in the classroom is frequently cited as a source of frustration for teachers and a common reason why new teachers leave the profession (Ingersoll 2001, 2003).

Inherent to the above research problems, the following research questions may be asked

1. Is there any difference between a well managed classroom and a confused one?
2. To what extent is the role of teachers paramount in restoring order and discipline?
3. How effective is classroom discipline on students' learning,
4. What strategies would be teachers use to succeed in maintaining order and discipline in their respective classes?

### **The Aim and Context of the Study**

- To encourage and establish pre-service trainees' self-control through a process of promoting positive student achievement and behavior
- To help create and maintain a positive, productive learning environment, to support and foster a safe classroom community,
- To reduce distraction from learning, to organize and facilitate the flow of learning activities and to help the students to manage themselves.

- To show to trainees how to develop proactive, positive behavior support strategies tailored to their own classroom, school, and district.
- To help trainees use classroom management guidelines and tips to be able to control their own classes , maintain discipline and teach without discipline problems.

### **Discussion**

#### **Pre-service trainers’ and trainees’ teaching / Learning objectives through classroom management plan**

##### **A) What strategies should trainers Provide their trainees with**

##### **1. On Teacher and student interrelations**

###### **Trainers need to**

- Get trainees to know how to explore students’ notion of classroom management and how their attitudes and past experiences influence their performance in the classroom as sharing experiences, group working and selecting their group leaders.
- Help them develop and apply methods to discover students’ basic physiological and psychological needs to know their interests and needs and know how to motivate them properly
- Show them how to develop the skills of supervising students’ behavior to ensure their success and prevent behavior problems and think of how to remedy this accordingly.
- Communicate positively with parents and be ready for contacts
- Create positive peer relationship among the students and encourage them to organize themselves into working groups in and out of the class

Trainers need to show to trainees the different types of teachers as an information guideline and ask them to adopt the most flexible one. These are clearly defined by Barbara Coloroso’s (2002) suggestions .Teachers’ management styles fall into three categories.

- *Brickwall teachers* are rigid, use power and coercion to control others, and teach what instead of how to think. They demand that students follow the rules without question.
- *Jellyfish teachers* provide little structure, consistency, or guidance and rely on putdowns, threats, and bribery to control students. Punishment and rewards are often arbitrary and inconsistent. These teachers are lax in discipline, set few limits, and more or less let students do what they want.
- *Backbone teachers* provide the support and structure necessary for students to behave creatively, cooperatively, and responsibly, which leads to inner discipline. They use clear, simple rules partnered with reasonable, purposeful consequences. Students

have freedom to pursue opportunities and solve problems within established limits.

## **2. On Classroom management skills and techniques**

### **Trainers need to**

- Show trainees how to organize the classroom physical setting and environment effectively and where the position of the teacher should be
- Show them how to create positive peer relationship among the students to avoid any cultural controversy and clash
- Demonstrate to them how to plan and conduct classroom learning activities effectively and smoothly by knowing how to grade their lessons and activities
- Involve students in the teaching learning process by shifting their own interest from teacher centeredness to learners' autonomy; this may sensitize learners and minimize disruptions
- Through practice make them understand the elements of classroom environment that are conducive to student appropriate behavior for the success of any lesson depends on the degree of their motivation, demotivation, disruption or good conduct.

## **3. On How to gain Students' motivation**

### **Trainers need to**

- amplify the effects of students' motivation on trainees' learning, behavior and feedback
- Explain and show them how motivation is important in the teaching learning process and how many theories were put for this case.
- Get them discover through practice how to gain learners' interest and motivation through instructional methods depending on the various levels

## **4. Approaches for managing student behavior**

### **Trainees need to**

- Develop psychology strategies on how to cope with different levels of discipline problems-how to treat the disciplined, the non disciplined, the violent, the non violent and the disruptive
- Show to trainees the different behavior management approaches in the classroom and explain to them each model with its assets whether assertive, instructional, constructive, behaviorist etc. Invite trainees to read and observe Kounin's principles on classroom management.

Kounin believed that some teachers are better classroom managers because of skill in four areas: "withitness," overlapping activities, group focusing, and movement management (Charles, 2002).

- **Withitness** is the skill to know what is going on in all parts of the classroom at all times; nothing is missed. "Withit" teachers

*respond immediately to student misbehavior and know who started what. A major component of withitness is scanning the class frequently, establishing eye contact with individual students, and having eyes in the back your head. “Withit” teachers don’t make timing errors (waiting too long before intervening) or target errors (blaming the wrong person and letting the real perpetrators escape responsibility for misbehavior). “Withit” teachers prevent minor disruptions from becoming major and know who the instigator is in a problem situation.*

- *Effective classroom managers are also skilled at overlapping. **Overlapping** means handling two or more activities or groups at the same time. Essentially, it is the ability to monitor the whole class at all times. It involves keeping a small group on task, for example, while also helping other students with their seatwork.*
- *Finally, Kounin notes that successful classroom management also depends on movement management and **group focus**—that is, the ability to make smooth lesson transitions, keep an appropriate pace, and involve all students in a lesson. Moreover, effective managers do not leave a lesson hanging while tending to something else or change back and forth from one subject or activity to another. They keep students alert by holding their attention, by holding them accountable, and by involving all students in the lesson.*

#### **4. On Teacher and students’ discipline**

Of all of the activities that comprise the role of a teacher, classroom discipline is one of the most significant and is clearly of concern to many parents and teachers (Langdon, 1996). Trainees need to get aware that teaching is not a monster job but with a little bit of know how , good teachers can manage their classes easily.

- By making signs to positive responses through praises for good acts should not go unrewarded—a smile, a good word of encouragement ,an acknowledgement, an additional mark
- By indirectly accepting wrong answers with claims as try again, this is not the right answer but thanks for the attempt, think of the answer another time or simply have another go.
- In case of constant disruptions from the part of specific students, measures need to be taken on the spot so as not to give a chance to the virus to degenerate.

**B) - What strategies should trainees adopt for their future teaching career?**

**1. How to develop their Self awareness related to classroom content Plan**

Research had shown that effective managers employed different strategies with different types of students (Brophy, 1996; Brophy & McCaslin, 1992). So, teachers with effective classroom management skills are aware of high needs students and have a repertoire of specific techniques for meeting some of their needs (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). Rogers and Renard (1999) asserted that we need to understand the needs and beliefs of our students as they are—not as we think they ought to be" (p. 34). By making every trainee teacher realize the importance of setting objectives, you will certainly succeed in guiding your trainees adopt the best strategies with expected outcomes. Accordingly, the questions that trainers want their trainees to ask are:

- A. What kind of classroom climate will they personally try to create?
- B. How will they define classroom discipline? What is the purpose behind this?
- C. What desired behaviors are they seeking to promote and encourage their students to adopt?
- D. What will be their role in motivating their students? And what factors best contribute to gain learners' confidence and motivation?
- F. which approach will they use—a behaviorist, a constructivist, a permissive, an authoritative or an eclectic approach? And on what basis?

## **2. How to manage their proper conduct through different classrooms in relation to**

### **a) - their own teaching**

1. A good teacher is the one who respects his students as much as they respect him by avoiding confrontations and negative comments.
2. To have an overwhelming mastery of the whole class, a teacher should move around, help and check and observes those who work and those who play.
3. He should discover through experience his students' needs and tries to satisfy them by involving the weak students in mixed abilities groups.
4. A sound teacher needs to call students by their names as a sign of interest in them so as to ease evaluation and promote progress
5. An adept teacher needs to adopt ethical principles that promote trust, self-confidence and civility in the Classroom

### **b) – to their students' behavior**



1. As there is no perfect classroom in what concerns discipline, a good teacher should always think of the students' behavior whether this is positive or negative. He should develop his own and personal system of discipline for all his classes.

2. He should take some proactive steps to prevent the occurrence of misbehavior in the classroom by explicitly teaching his learners how they are expected to conduct themselves in the classroom under the presence of the teacher or during his absence.

3. If the teacher promotes appropriate behavior in positive ways and in a productive manner he will positively invite learners to enjoy his teaching sessions than withdraw from by maintaining their cooperation in every endeavor.

In his book, *Beyond Discipline: From Compliance to Community*, Alfie Kohn (1996) believes *rules are of no practical value in the classroom; rules blind teachers to what students can achieve. Instead of using classroom "discipline," teachers should work to develop a democratic classroom community that recognizes the needs and interests of both teachers and students. A classroom community is a place where students are cared about and care about others, are valued and respected, and think in terms of we instead of I. Students are involved in the decision-making process and are continually brought into making judgments, expressing their opinions, and working cooperatively toward solutions that benefit the class, which will have a positive impact on students and eliminate behavioral problems.. When problems arise, the teacher should ask the student, "What do you think we can do to solve this problem?" Class meetings are forums for addressing questions that affect the class, including problems of behavior.*

### **3. Results**

The researcher unveiled the truth that his accumulated experience had given fruitful results all the years of probationational training and there was no denial that in certain occasions there were some mismatches or misunderstandings between trainees and their students concerning some misbehavior namely with teenagers but soon they were overcome. Hence, what was beneficial was the trainees' sense of duty in trying to apply the rules stated and the way they behaved with students. The first days of their teaching were not so easy at all for some students wanted to show off and put the teacher to test but as teachers were psychologically equipped they answered the students' questions confidently and with certitude. And though students did not show resign on asking pertinent questions, the teachers did show bravery and perseverance-an act that soon shut up the mouths of bold faced and talkative students.

In fact, the study showed that most of behavior problems came from the degree of control teachers showed right from the beginning-rigor and rigidity should make way. Teachers should start their school year with a planned repertoire of drastic measures not of punishment but of good order and moral conduct. Sayings said that you can kill the devil with silence; here we can rather say teachers could kill learners with hard work or right acute answers. It is a matter of to be or not to be. Once the students passed their test on you, they will become good friends and get closer to you; then at the moment make them your friends but within closed limits.

Results also showed that whatever linguistic competence trainees may show to their learners, the personal touch, confidence, personality traits and sense of fun and humor is a must. Since we are teaching humans, there must be a kind of social interrelationship between teachers and learners. Experience had shown that learners learnt better from a funny teacher rather than from a serious one. So teachers may pass thousands of messages through play and fun and learners would find themselves learning and enjoying lessons and any misconduct or misbehavior will soon fuse into :serious and hard work. Competent teachers then would soon discover the serious from the trivial and remedy students' discipline through acts of shared work.

Teachers who were scared the first days of their presentations were asked to double efforts in avoiding linguistic mistakes at the level of spoken and written English and would better articulate and ameliorate their pronunciation. They were also encouraged to show their strong personality in what concerns their confidence in themselves, in what they know, in how to deliver their lessons, in the way they would answer the questions, correct the wrong answers and namely in the way they would treat their learners. That was the knack and the key factor-How to prove ONESELF on the stage in relation to a group of students of mixed abilities, of different attitudes and behavior , of various intellectual degrees, of different cultures and ethical consideration. Really, that would be a hard and tedious work but certainly, a sound teacher with sound background knew which method would better do.

## **2. Recommadations**

This is an accumulated sum of experimented strategies the researcher wanted to issue as guiding principles for effective classroom management and a good way of ethical conduct for would be teachers.

### **1. On establishing Classroom norms**

#### **The teacher should**

- Set and agree on some rules of conduct at the beginning of the school year

- Prepare his lessons well and does not leave voids for students to play in and against. There must be always an activity to do in case the lesson finishes before it is expected
- Show a strong personality with an excellent linguistic competence
- Be consistent in his teaching objectives and with his learners' learning outcomes
- Preview expectations and reinforce them accordingly
- Manage his class and control students' behavior

## **2. How to Handle Discipline Problems with Effective Classroom Management**

1. Teacher comes to class well prepared with lessons and plenty of activities for the day .
2. Starts each session with a positive attitude and high learning outcome and mind his/her behavior and attitudes
3. Has an eye glance at students' faces when entering the class to get an idea about their temper-encourages and sets the mood for a working atmosphere
4. Whenever the teacher feels tension in the class, he gets ready to apply measures and meets confrontations with a good reasonable mind-does not hurt learners directly; draws them apart, talks to them separately, sets the matter and resumes his work.
5. He needs to be cautious and does not lose his temper; for his irritable manners may sometimes create anarchy.
6. The teacher need not try keep the bad moments and takes them to heart-He need to work out the saying- today is today and tomorrow will be another day .These are his students and he should show them a kind of apology but a strictly measured one.
7. Finally, a good teacher should bear in mind that he need to start his school year with severity to cultivate among his learners a sense of strict moralistic and ethical spirit that everyone is to obey to let them realize that what they are doing is the right for their future.
8. Get elder students to help you manage your classroom as group leaders, involve parents, the supervisor and other teacher coordinators through shared experience.
9. As managing students' behavior is not an easy operation to achieve, teachers need to be multi skilled, talented and able to deal with range of behavior. Hence, many strategies were incorporated by various teachers. Corporal punishment was mostly favored in the past decades. But, it was not allowed to be used or became the last resort in many countries all around the world. Therefore, corporal punishment has been replaced by alternative forms of discipline, which ranges

from detention, extra written work, time out, removal of privileges, behaviour contracts or agreements, in-school suspension and community service to exclusion and expulsion (Youthlaw, 2003 as cited in Krause, Bochner, & Duchesne, 2003).

### **Conclusion**

Teachers play various roles in a typical classroom, but surely one of the most important is that of classroom manager. Effective teaching and learning cannot take place in a poorly managed classroom. Effective teachers appear to be effective with students of all achievement levels regardless of the levels of heterogeneity in their classes. If the teacher is ineffective, students under that teacher's tutorship, will academically achieve inadequate progress .

Experience has shown that effective teachers create a positive learning environment through actions and deeds. The creation of a positive climate is the interaction created between the teacher and students. This operation will certainly encourage students to be excited to use their school experience in a practical way. In fact, classroom management is the key component in any educational setting ; hence, if students are in a safe environment, then learning can take place; taking of course, the students' needs and goals far from behavior problems.

Classroom management strategies and techniques can be implemented and taught. Beneficial courses and lesson plans with well put objectives are essential to the process of teaching and learning. And as the development of interesting lessons takes a great deal of time and effort, the researcher recommends new fresh teacher to invest in this respect.

To have a successful school year ,fresh teachers need to understand and practice the behaviors expected of them. They should be models of good conduct for their students in terms of seriousness, hard work, absenteeism, reasonable thinking, positive interaction, civility and mutual reciprocal respect. Eisner, (2002 p:48) said "*When manner in teaching is brought under intelligent control and when it is sensitive and appropriate for the individual student or class, it is artistic in character .* To conclude, let's quote Maria Montessori claiming that "*The greatest sign of success for a teacher . . . is to be able to say, "The children are now working as if I did not exist."*

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