

Classroom Management Strategies in Secondary Language Education

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Abstract. Classroom management could be considered as one of the most demanding jobs to teachers. Effective classroom management is not only beneficial to teaching efficiency, but also conducive to the comprehensive development of the students. This paper aims to explore effective strategies of managing English classrooms for secondary school learners. Using a foreign language in the classroom may impede classroom management, as code-switching in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms may induce stress and discomfort among students. Long-term issues with the English subject compound over time, impacting learning outcomes and eroding students' confidence. But autonomous students are more likely to take the initiative to learn and explore outside the classroom. Generally, creating a classroom environment suitable for secondary school students is one of the main responsibilities of teachers. When they are guided to access a new language at this stage, it is particularly important to build their initial interest in further learning.

Keywords: Classroom management strategy; EFL teachers; Secondary education.

1. Introduction

Classroom management is pretty important in the field of education. The classroom is the primary and central unit of the school. Class management directly influences the quality of school education, and even the level of class management is indicative of the quality of the school. Secondary school children are at a crucial time in the progressive building of their thinking, and effective classroom management tactics significantly impact their learning and physical and mental health.

Management of EFL classrooms differs from geography, history, and music classes. Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) must be able to employ a variety of tactics to address each unique issue. Using a foreign language in the classroom may impede classroom management, as code-switching in EFL classrooms may induce stress and discomfort among students. And according to the Affective Hypothesis [1], low motivation and debilitating anxiety may form a “mental block” that impedes language acquisition. Therefore, effective tactics are required to produce a happy learning atmosphere, which could benefit students' education.

Before discussing the topic, it is necessary to clarify the definition of the terms. Richards, Platt, Platt, and Heidi defined language classroom management as “how a teacher organizes and controls student conduct, movement, interaction, etc., during a class to provide the most successful teaching.” In addition, Ogunu [2] stated, “Classroom management is a necessity for achieving instructional goals and ensuring the well-being of students, on whom the teaching and learning activities are based.” In conclusion, classroom management may benefit both the teaching and learning processes.

Therefore, there are two questions to be explored in this paper: 1) What are the principal challenges of English as a Foreign Language classrooms? 2) What strategies could language teachers apply to confront these challenges?

2. Classroom Management and Teacher's Roles

Classroom is the primary setting for educational activities, and improving both teaching and learning outcomes requires good management of the classroom setting.

2.1 Classroom Management

A well-managed classroom is beneficial for students learning. First, having a well-managed classroom can assist in the development of students' capacity for self-reliance [3]. Managers of classrooms cannot achieve successful classroom management by depending only on the rules and regulations that have been established. Students' independent consciousness, the most important component of a well-rounded education, can only be molded via the use of students' feeling of autonomy and by emphasizing the primary position of students. Students who have developed an independent conscience are more likely to study since they are motivated to do so by themselves, which benefits their academic careers. Students are expected to complete many subjects daily with only 45 minutes of instruction time for every school lesson. Before they have mastered the material from the previous lesson, students must move on to the next subject—long-term issues with the English subject compound over time, impacting learning outcomes and eroding students' confidence. But autonomous students are more likely to take the initiative to learn and explore outside the classroom.

Second, effective ways of managing classrooms contribute to an overall rise in the level of educational excellence [3]. Some students are less able to learn independently, and if teachers cannot provide timely assistance and encouragement to these students, their enthusiasm to study will decrease. The pressure that students undertake in English as a Foreign Language classes to master a target language is very high. It is impossible to improve their academic performance once they have become disinterested in their studies and lost all their motivation.

Third, effective classroom administration contributes to developing positive ties between the instructor and the pupils [4]. If EFL teachers can demonstrate a more significant concern for their students during the process of managing the classroom and develop a strong relationship with their students. students will like their teachers from the depths of their hearts, which will result in an elimination of the pupils' resistance to learning English. This can be quite beneficial to the teaching that takes place in the classroom as well as the subsequent academic pursuits of the students.

2.2 Teacher's Roles

In order to manage the classroom well, EFL teachers are expected to take multiple positions in the classroom, including learner, facilitator, and manager [5]. First, teaching as a learner. The process of teaching and learning is continuous. Students can receive knowledge without any difficulty when it is presented from the learner's perspective. Second, teaching as a facilitator. EFL teachers should cultivate a conducive learning environment that reflects their students' intellectual and linguistic development and participation in society. Teachers should also encourage students to become self-directed learners. Finally, teaching as a manager. An experienced teacher can manage time and space well according to different situation. Teachers must plan in advance to handle the curriculum in the allotted amount of time, incorporating academics, interpersonal skills, and a range of teaching techniques. Teaching as a manager will lead to successful teaching-learning approaches through flawless classroom management. Teaching as a learner, facilitator, manager, which means centering around students, is different from traditional teacher-centeredness education.

In a conventional teacher-centered classroom, teachers are responsible for structuring the learning tasks. They put most of the time demonstrating the content of the courses through the blackboard or the powerpoint. And students are required to listen to teachers and take notes [6]. However, in a student-centered classroom, instructors need to provide a learning setting to the pupils. Instructors don't transmit the knowledge directly; instead, students are given opportunities to work together to complete the given tasks, reinforcing student-to-student interaction [7]. Not only will this language

pedagogy develop students' critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills, but it will also enrich democratic society because the execution of discussion-oriented activities build a community of dignity for diverse ideas [8].

It should be mentioned that students are incapable of acquiring, and constructing skills or knowledge through themselves. According to Mascala, Fischer and Pollack, the zone of proximal development will be created only when students are instructed by professional teachers. Therefore, the teachers play indispensable roles in students' learning [9].

Ineffective classroom management may suggest ineffective teaching. In this situation, it is the responsibility of EFL teachers to ensure that classroom interactions promote successful and efficient language acquisition. Teachers should follow these guidelines: First, teachers should create a conducive environment for language learning. As we all know, converting source code to the target language can induce significant anxiety, hindering learning. To put students at ease, teachers are permitted to use humor and fun in class. Second, teachers should demonstrate the objectives and goals of the class to students so that they feel more confident and share responsibility for achieving the intended outcomes. This conduct will promote student motivation by increasing the expectation of reward and decreasing the expectation of work required [10]. Third, when questioning other students, teachers should utilize a variety of questioning tactics and voice tones. Teachers might, for instance, ask thin and thick questions in reading instructions and assign students to answer questions in various ways. Teachers should also use a more elevated tone while discussing the articles' main ideas.

3. Strategies create an effective classroom and its corresponding challenges

Generally speaking, creating a classroom environment suitable for students is one of the main responsibilities of teachers. Secondary school students who are young and energetic often paying attention to new and unexplored areas. when they are guided to access a new language at this stage, it is particularly important to build their initial interest in further learning. Since the most direct route for secondary students to acquire knowledge is from the classroom, the English teacher plays an irreplaceable role in designing and managing the class.

Nevertheless, potential issues are likely to occur during managing classroom. Although classroom management involves teachers' efforts in creating democracy in the classroom and a positive atmosphere where students own absolute rights to share ideas and opinions, and effective learning is facilitated, creating a well-managed learning environment could be an undeniably demanding task.

3.1 Challenges

In response to question 1, during the course of managing a classroom, instructors may encounter a variety of issues, including varied behavioral, instructional, and other minor issues. These issues will hinder instruction and maybe even cause unhappiness.

When considering behavioral problems, the problem of noisy and naughty learners was another challenge. While classroom management issues are clear in this kind of setting, the unorganized environment might have disastrous impacts on students. There are often some tardies in most classes. They come and provide the same justifications: I'm sorry, there was a traffic congestion, I was quite busy, etc. The teacher try to be lenient at first and show objection with a serious tone. Apart from this challenge, some students will show reluctance to communicate with teachers and other students or express their thoughts and ideas, which was another annoying problem that result in many difficulties including the inefficacy of learning and creating a monotonous class. Maximizing willingness to communicate is considered as one the strengths of an English teacher. Although class engagement and learners' eagerness for communication are seen as desirable aspects of a successful language learning environment, the class can occasionally get quite loud and students may interrupt one another to speak or move around the room without permission. To control noisy learners, the teacher can use eye contact when they are very talkative instead of shouting, stop teaching for a while and remain silent for a few minutes.

The bulk of the issues raised for obstacles linked to instructional components include incomplete homework and take-home tasks. Sometimes students do not complete their homework assignments, and this occasionally breaks the classroom routine. Additionally, completing homework helps learners see if there is any problem with the lesson covered, so when the learners do not do their homework, they might not have a clear picture of their learning and performance. Unfinished homework is also a problem that leads to waste of time and a slow rate of teaching. Another issue that most teachers face is that the lack of consistency in the students' proficiency levels within the same classroom. It turns out that, this challenge frequently leads to confusion and dissatisfaction in teaching and has made teaching and task selection more difficult, as some tasks are easier for learners at a higher level of proficiency and the same tasks are extremely demanding for learners at a lower proficiency level.

For marginal and contextual challenges in classroom management, they are related to the mismanagement of the physical layout of the classroom and class time. Sometimes a large number of the learners are cramped into a small room and this causes some trouble in terms of the physical distance and or the lack of enough space for the learners. To meet this obstacle, students must be separated into groups and/or a larger classroom for the students is explored. On the other hand, some students might fall behind their schedule and are incapable of moving in accordance with their lesson plan and syllabus, which is caused by the uneven level of learning capacities of students in the same classroom. Since their comprehension and the speed of learning new languages vary, it is almost impossible to unify the class schedule for each student when their background condition varies.

3.2 Classroom Management Practices

In secondary education, teachers face a complicated teaching environment. Teachers have to deal with both knowledge and emotional problems. In this situation, multiple classroom management practices are necessary for teachers to enhance students' learning efficiently.

First, activate students to participate in the class. This is the most important part. Almost the whole lesson includes some tasks and activities. They should be encouraging and diversified to raise students' interests. Meanwhile, they should not be too easy or too hard. Besides, it will be better if we consider learners' age, grade, character and gender to make different teaching programs.

Second, speak clearly. Teachers' pronunciation should be standard with emotions, cadences while teaching lessons. It's important for teachers to be a good example for students. We can't be too nervous or incoherent. If the class is monotonous, teachers perhaps lose the attention of the students.

Third, create a warm and friendly environment. A strict classroom discipline is indeed necessary. However, managing students is not treating them as opponents. A favorable environment is good for students' mental health and it also contributes to teaching quality. As teachers, our priority is to love students and know more about them. After that, we can figure out how to teach students separately with different features.

Fourth, observe students in the class. Teacher should witness all situations in the classroom. In the class, teachers should observe students' appearances their moods, perhaps by walking around the classroom, looking down from the platform. Therefore, teacher can be aware of what is going on and what will happen to make sure that the whole teaching progress is in order.

Fifth, manage the time and space. Teacher only has about 45 minutes a lesson. The rhythm of teaching must be proper and every part of the lesson, brainstorming, homework explanation, dictation, and teamwork should be in order and meaningful.

3.3 Establishment of a Well-mannered Classroom

Effective classroom management is one of the key factors in determining a teacher's performance. Effective classroom management also improves student learning. The importance of classroom management and several practical methods have been discussed in the following.

However, teachers must be aware that some methods may not be successful because they are just strategies. However, we may still expand our toolbox so that we have options to test in each situation.

To answer question 2, some of the following tactics could be used by modern school instructors to control their classes.

As soon as students enter the classroom, instructors construct an entry routine that continues throughout the day. Examples of entry routines include setting up learning materials, assigning seats, collecting homework, or doing a quick physical "WARM-UP" activity. This method can prevent the chaos and lost time that can mark the start of a class period. Time is therefore restricted, and teachers and students should complete each part of the class on time. Additionally, it helps them develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities that are incredibly helpful for their entire lives. It is probably possible to organize it alone or in a small group that fosters camaraderie and cooperative learning. Additionally, each minor assignment should be prepared before the session and take between 2 and 5 minutes.

Praising each student's behavior to promote their willingness to study rather than concentrating on particular individuals also matters, it is a good method to avoid saying "don't" as well. Clear reasoning in instructions increases the likelihood that students will pay attention to them. The act of publicly acknowledging and applauding pupils who have done something admirable. The method aims to create a group culture where learning successes and constructive behavior are socially appreciated and rewarded. Additionally, it may provide kids the motivation they need to acquire new things and to reason quickly and accurately. The teacher must keep in mind that when there is commotion or noise, there is insufficient focus or appreciation. Since they are still young, they have a heart and mind that can focus on anything. Therefore, teachers must learn to value all of the efforts and activities of students.

Furthermore, instructors must have the capacity for leadership, which is a necessary quality. Because throughout the session, the instructor takes on a leadership position rather than acting as a mere server or a boss. They should start paying more attention to themselves, not only the students, in order to create the ideal learning environment [2].

Firstly, select activities and teaching methods that can motivate pupils. This is the most important component because practically every class comprises activities and procedures that shouldn't be overly simple or challenging. In addition, it would be excellent if they were divided according to the age, knowledge level, personality, gender, and even religion of the students. Methods should be stimulating, topical, and engaging for the students.

Secondly, use plain speech. When discussing the concept, instructors' fluidity should be appropriate, yet with the right emotions, intonations, and moods. If the discourse is monotonous and dull, the teacher risked losing the audience's attention. Thirdly, be welcoming and kind to the students. The first step in becoming a teacher is to love and comprehend children. Because nothing can develop without love. Teachers should be inviting and kind in the classroom and even behind the door since one of the goals of schools is to foster friendships between students.

Fifth, practice pacing your lecture to match the time allotted. "Time management" is intrinsically linked to every field. A 45-minute class may only be divided into three sections, each of which must be explained in detail and have some significance. Every step of the class, including brainstorming, reviewing homework, describing a new subject, unwinding, and assessing, should take place on time. Last, move about the classroom and be "mobile." The movement is noted in that situation. While teaching, the instructor should stroll about the classroom and examine everything from the pupils' attire to their attitudes. He or she can observe all situations in the class, including what is happening and potential changes so that every individual could be in control [2].

4. Summary

In conclusion, classroom management is fundamentally a basic skill that improves the quality of teaching and enables teachers to manage the class well. With high learning capacity, students in secondary school are in the best stage of English learning. At the same time, they are interfered with nervousness, sensitivity and irritability and they are also facing the increasing academic stress. Under

great pressure, every word and action of teachers will significantly influence students' behaviors. During teaching progress, teachers not only need to improve their scores, but also need to be concerned about students' mental health. In conclusion, classroom management is an influential unit of school education. And it's also fundamentally a basic skill that improves the quality of teaching and enables teachers to manage the class well.

In secondary education stage, creating a suitable classroom environment is one of the most important and challenging parts for teachers to manage the class well. It would definitely bring multiple benefits but it's also difficult for teacher to play a proper role in teaching process. With high learning capacity, students in secondary school are in the best stage of English learning. At the same time, they are interfered with nervousness, sensitivity and irritability and they are also facing the increasing academic stress. Under great pressure, every word and action of teachers will significantly influence students' behaviors. When teachers are too harsh, they might be depressed or spiritless. When teachers are too weak, teachers might be unable to manage the classroom discipline. Therefore, it's necessary for teachers to create a suitable environment to promote students' interest of learning English.

English classes are different from mathematics, physics and chemistry classes. Teachers don't need to teach numerous theoretical knowledge and changeable question types. Teachers can combine the history, traditions and myths to have fascinating classes. It contributes to attract the attentions of students give them a better understanding of language while learning knowledge.

Classroom management effectiveness is one of the important criteria for assessing teaching effectiveness of teachers [2]. During teaching progress, teachers not only need to improve their scores, but also need to be concerned about students' mental health. Instead of doing test papers all the time, teachers can employ various strategies to improve both teaching and learning quality.

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