

MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES FOR ELEMENTARY

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ABSTRACT: *Communication is a process in which people share information, ideas and feelings. The communication process is made up of various elements. These elements are: senders and receivers, messages, channels, feedback and setting. People get involved in communication because they have ideas and feelings they want to share. In most communications situations, people are receivers at the same time as they are senders: they are senders- receivers. The message is made up the ideas and the feelings that the senders-receivers want to share. Ideas and feelings are shared only if they are represented by verbal or non- verbal symbols. Every word in our language is a verbal symbol that stands for a particular thing or idea. Non-verbal symbols are anything we communicate without using words, such as facial expressions, gestures, posture, vocal tones, and appearance and so on.*

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Respect and setting high expectations are essential classroom management techniques in an elementary school class. Require students to show respect for teachers, peers and themselves. In return, show them respect. Children thrive on structure because rules put them at ease. They know what to expect and are eager to please in the primary grades but baby them not. Youngsters treated like babies act like babies. Make them an integral part of establishing classroom practices.

RESPECT- To begin, the term respect needs to be discussed and a common ground reached about its interpretation. Rules of the class should focus on this virtue and this virtue's characteristics should be encouraged on a continuous basis to foster a risk free learning environment. Safe academic atmospheres promote learning because students are more likely to voluntarily participate and take initiative. A certain comfort level is also established making student-centered activities possible.

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SETTING HIGH EXPECTATIONS-In order for children to learn, they need to feel a part of the class. Set appropriate high expectations for students and make sure they are given opportunities to succeed. Children rise to the occasion and meet those expectations, thereby increasing their self-esteem in the process.

ESTABLISHING TECHNIQUES- Certain best practices reinforce respect and expectations in the classroom. Review the student handbook at the beginning of the year as a whole class. Set clear expectations. Prepare with student assistance concise rules with consequences if broken. Establish routines for arrivals, transitions, specials, bathroom and water breaks, lunch, recess and dismissals. Post all rules and procedures reviewing them periodically throughout the school year. Model and practice expected behavior. Use positive language. Speak in a calm, soft tone. Give reminders via body language and close proximity. Be flexible. Provide students with individual attention. Show an interest in the class and its members. Maintain organization. Have a sense of humor. Take advantage of teachable' moments.

SUPPORTING TECHNIQUES- The classroom environment should provide easy access for students. Keep the room clean and organized. If space permits, seating and centers should be in open areas. Provide technology stations equipped with reachable supplies. Display student work. Make available curriculum-related books and magazines.

Create bulletin boards that promote unity and mutual respect. Put the teacher's desk off in the corner. Brighten up the room; let light in by pulling up shades and adding bursts of color. Most importantly, the classroom should reflect the students. Let them help.

ENFORCING TECHNIQUES- When students become involved and feel valued, they are less likely to misbehave. To misbehave would interfere with them meeting those high expectations necessary to become life-long learners. However, if a child decides to break from the classroom's rules, clearly stated and appropriate consequences should be consistently issued. Should the behavior persist, it is the teacher's responsibility to inquire as to the root of the misbehavior and resolve or meet the needs of the student immediately.

SPECIAL NEEDS TECHNIQUE- This type of classroom management may not be effective for students suffering with emotional disorders due to either a chemical imbalance or childhood trauma. In those instances, it is prudent for the teachers, the specialists and the parents to adopt a behavior modification plan meeting the student's needs that will be consistently adhered to by all parties interacting with the student.

Respect and setting high expectations have been successful classroom management techniques for me. However, educators are always coming up with additional best practices based on classroom management theories. Basically, do what works best for the class based on the makeup of the student body.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION-Below are brief synopses of classroom management theorists that may further aid in your quest for effective classroom management techniques.

ORAL READING is often done in a round robin type activity, and the students with the weaker reading skills can easily be spotted by the look of angst they have on their faces, while they are nervously awaiting their turn to read aloud. Because

their skills are lacking they feel humiliation during the entire time they are responsible for the oral reading. The fact that classmates will taunt them because of their slow speed or constant mistakes is mortifying. Of course teachers train their pupils to not poke fun at these lower level readers, but the sighs and moans of rest of the class when the slow readers turn finally arrives can be deafening to the poor child. As a self defense mechanism most of these students will do almost anything to avoid having to read aloud to the class. They often will "suddenly" become ill, or they will have an overwhelming urge to go to the restroom. Some even misbehave so badly that the teacher will be forced to send them out of the room, and this will allow them to not have to risk the embarrassment of having lower level reading skills than their classmates. Soon, many students who lack strong reading skills and are still having to read orally to the class acquire such a deep anxiety for this activity that they quickly build up a wall to reading in general. For a few it is less painful to risk the punishment of refusing to read than it is to try only to fail in the eyes of their peers.

The teachers are using more and more small reading groups and creating interesting activities to help struggling readers gain improved reading skills.

These approaches will help the child keep his dignity, too. The only time a teacher should actually use an oral reading program is when the class is ability grouped with students who have equal level reading skills. This method means that students will be less likely to taunt their classmate, and their anxiety level will not skyrocket, each and every time they must read. Teacher can use pairs for oral reading rather than whole class. This way the students still have the abilities developed by oral reading.

In business, the people, who are able to work with a group of people in a team, tend to communicate well others. In order to complete a sophisticated task, individual must work together, each sharing a part of the whole task in order to achieve the results. The team must interchange their ideas during each process in the form meetings and discussions. Each one tries his/ her level best to give a better idea to make the process more time-efficient. Skills for each member of team work will perk up. For example, teamwork will advance the communication skill. In addition, work in group will develop the ability of dealing with/ different people. Furthermore, team work will pick up the talent of dealing with problems by dissimilar ways. As we can see the skills will improve and also we will see the effect of the competition

Competition between the members of team work is more important to success the work. For instance, work in group will create many/different ideas for the excellent work. As a result, teamwork will finish each part of the work in the best way. Consequently, work in group can make many tasks of work in short time.

There are many advantages of working in a group than working alone. Teamwork provides with a worker a cooperative, enjoyable and friendly work environment. The team can also be helpful in responding to worker's problems and questions, therefore increases the work efficiency. The team work can also challenge one's abilities and he/she can acquire valuable experiences from it.

A language teacher must make decisions all of the time. Some of your decisions are relatively minor ones- should homework be assigned that particular day, for instance. Other decisions have more profound implications. What should be the goal of language instructions? Which language teaching method will be the most

effective in reaching it? What is the best means of evaluation to see if it has been reached? There is no single correct answer to questions like these. Each teacher has to answer them for himself. A teacher informed about some of these possibilities, will make better decisions.

To many people, foreign language learning is essentially a question of grammar. In the description of various methods of teaching foreign languages, some of the disagreement very clearly stemmed from the attitude of the teachers toward grammar. Some of them support the idea that it is tremendously important that the students know grammar rules, while others maintain that the person learning a foreign language can speak and write with ease and assurance, without knowing any grammar.

In the course of time, the approaches used in teaching foreign language had to take into consideration several other factors:

1. The purpose of mastering a foreign language, the materials available and the priority objectives;
2. The development of the linguistic theories, the findings of psychological research;
3. The socio- historical conditions of the times that triggered a particular interest in foreign languages.

The question of the methodology appeared as an issue only in the 19th century, with the integration of foreign language teaching into the secondary- school curriculum. A chronological attempt to look into the history of methods used in teaching foreign languages will point to a plethora of hypotheses, theories, approaches, methods, procedures and techniques (the concepts are often confusedly defined), out of which the most important, still use or recently evolved, are presented during the present chapter.

ORAL PRACTICE

In order to help teachers evaluate different types of oral practice activities from the linguistic point of view we have to find the language needed to handle a variety of oral practice activities in the classroom, to give practice in different elicitation techniques that can be used at the practice stage in the classroom.

We will see the way to use each section:

a. Preliminary discussion

The aim of this preliminary discussion session is not necessary to find answers for all the questions at this stage. It is to add here experience, exchange ideas and to bring problems to light.

Teachers need to:

- List the types of activity suggested in the textbooks which can be used to give the student practice in speaking English;
- Decide how far these activities are designed to help the student and how far to test him;
- Develop any useful techniques to give the students practice in spoken English;

- ❑ Take notice that activities based on “information gap” between two speakers, guessing games are often more motivating than drills or exercises;
- ❑ Realize that students need practice in recognizing the meaning of the new item and in using it in appropriate situations- in short, they need practice in FORM, MEANING and USE;
- ❑ Make an inventory about the visual aids to make the some of the activities more interesting and meaningful.

b. Dialogue practice and lesson extract

- ✓ Dialogues are short enough to be practiced and learnt thoroughly, comparing pronunciation with that of the teacher on the tape.
- ✓ The lessons, longer than the dialogues, are designed to give controlled practice in use of language as well as pronunciation.

The teacher will play the tape and practice and repeating the teacher’s part. Then she will underline in the text all the ‘‘marker’’ words. The teacher uses to make the class pay special attention, when something different is going to happen. Then play the tape again, repeating just the phrase with marker words in.

c. Classroom language

This section is designed primarily for the non native- speaker teacher of English by some extra linguistic analysis practice, analyzing the forms, meaning and use of suitable teaching items.

The teacher will select the language which relates to the type of practice activity to be used in class. She will adapt it where necessary to suit the students.

Exploitation and teaching skills

- ✓ Exploitation gives the opportunity for less controlled practice in classroom language, before the free oral production required.
- ✓ Teaching skills required are eliciting, correcting, checking understanding to write a material and prepare visual aids to supplement the present textbooks where necessary.

These goals can be fulfilled through:

1. Conversation drill

The purpose of using a two lines dialogue for structure practice is to give students practice in using the new structure in a natural way in a meaningful situation.

Supposing you wanted your students to practice the structure ‘‘should have done’’ using the following examples with picture cues to produce sentences like:

- ✓ You should have gone to bed earlier.
- ✓ He should have driven more carefully.
- ✓ She should have bought some more bread.
- ✓ He should have tried it on before he bought it.

2. Substitution labels

3. Discrimination exercise

4. True/ false statements

5. *Indirect questions (to elicit question forms).*
6. *Playing a game related to the issue.*

Role play and teaching practice

Give the opportunity to put together the language and skills that you have been practicing before, during the previous sections; the practical work is planned in groups, executed, then discussed and evaluated.

Planning

The aim of the teaching practice in this unit is to examine and supplement, if necessary, the practice activities suggested in the textbooks and to practice teaching them.

There are a few useful hints:

- ❑ Work in small groups, each teaching a different unit or lesson from the textbook used in the class
- ❑ Prepare any necessary flash cards or plan blackboard sketches to help contextualize the language being practiced and as cues or prompts for pair works
- ❑ Suggest the stage at which these activities might fit into a lesson.

Teaching practice

At least one activity should be introduced and carried out by each teacher.

- ❑ Begin by introducing the activity to the class or peer group;
- ❑ Remember to check the students understand what it is they are saying;
- ❑ Vary the pace if possible, and also vary the pattern of teacher/ student interaction by using massed pair work as well as individual responses.

Evaluation

Discuss which activities you think would be most useful in your teaching situation.

If there is a number of practical suggestions that are not included in your textbook arrange them to be typed up and circulated for the benefit of all teachers, a note of the aim each activity and rough idea of how to make it work effectively in class.

Optional activity

The teacher will plan a longer lesson around the extract. It should include some other types of practice activities, and one or two less controlled types of practice to follow on after the extract.

f. Further reading

The teacher will instruct students for further reading.

ORAL PRODUCTION

The purpose of this section is to make teachers aware of the importance of the production stage of the learning cycle, to give teachers ideas for language activities which will encourage students to speak English more freely and use the language they have learnt in meaningful situations. She will also teach the class the language needed to direct production activities.

a. Preliminary discussion

- ❑ By “production” stage we mean the stage or stages of the lesson where students are allowed to speak or write in English with less guidance from the teacher or textbook.
- ❑ This stage is one step nearer to real life situations where students will have to communicate without the help of the teacher.
- ❑ It is important to choose topics that the students will like and situations that they will find worthwhile.
- ❑ The teacher will find texts which are appropriate for the interest of their students or adapt existing texts from the book.
- ❑ The teacher will introduce the themes to the students, then explain, demonstrate, act, in order to be clear for the students what is expected from them.
- ❑ The teacher will discuss with the students the steps needed to set up the activity.
- ❑ Teachers must select any other material or activity that she could adapt for use at the production stages of the lesson.

TEACHING ONE TO ONE

Most teachers at some time in their career have to teach one to one classes. They find a very different, challenging and special learning context, with unique possibilities and unique problems. One to one teaching is made more special by the fact that many teachers have to develop their own strategies, approaches and materials; one to one work is common the world over but discussion, support and resources are not. In this article we will look at what exactly makes these classes so different from teaching groups, identify the advantages and disadvantages of learning and teaching in this way, and review some possible approaches and techniques to help effective learning.

Classroom management- It may seem that there is little or no classroom management required in a one to one class, but there are still key decisions to be made about how the classroom is set up, where you and your learner should sit, how you should manage the physical resources etc.

Materials- Aside from the fact that you almost always have to adapt existing materials extensively to suit a one to one class, many teachers find that they can use material that the learner has produced or that they have found together.

Timing and structure- One to one classes, especially private ones, often move at a pace decided by the learner and their needs rather than an institution’s course/term structure. There is also flexibility in the length of classes, which can be timed around learning aims rather than a timetable. Often there is no need to think about an exam or other formal evaluation.

Roles and relationship- The normal roles of a large group often change in a one to one class, where the intimacy of interaction can mean that you become much more of a friend to the learner – or an enemy. There is often a shift away from a teacher-centred dynamic and as a result the learner takes on a much more equal role in making decisions about the class.

Techniques -Although many techniques we use in a large group are applicable to a single learner, they will always change either in how they are applied or why. For example, you may find that extended listening or reading texts are not the best use of

time and need to be adapted. Other techniques may be more suitable to a one to one class, such as reading aloud to the teacher to focus on the features of connected speech.

Pressures- The fact that both teacher and learner are alone together for the duration of the class means a different kind of pressure – sometimes greater, sometimes less. For example, there is considerable pressure because both are ‘always on’, and the need to achieve results can be much greater for the teacher, but the learner may feel less pressure because there no others in the class.

Motivations- Many learners decide that they need a one to one class and then seek out a teacher, organise materials, schedule times, and agree cost independently. They are often highly motivated to learn. For the same reasons, you may be much more motivated to teach. In addition, you may feel a much higher degree of responsibility for one learner than a large group where many learning factors are outside their control.

Advantages- The learner has the undivided attention of the teacher. This means more opportunity to engage in real communication, more feedback and better understanding of the learner’s needs.

The learner often has more control over the aims of the class, the pace and the materials.

The learner has more opportunities to use the teacher as a resource – to ask questions, to see models of language, and to practise skills.

The learner can develop a real and productive relationship with the teacher

The learner’s needs can be addressed more fully because there is more flexibility in timing and structure

The teacher has a greater opportunity to engage in real interaction and to learn

The teacher does not need to worry about the problems of large groups – mixed ability, group dynamics, early finishers, late arrivals etc

The teacher can make more money and work independently of an institution

Disadvantages- Many learners feel more comfortable practising new language – and making mistakes - in a group dynamic rather than in front of a teacher

Classes can be physically and mentally exhausting for learner and teacher

The class may become boring if the teacher does not find new approaches or the learner does not respond to the class

There are no opportunities to interact with other learners, develop a group dynamic and to receive support

There may not be enough time given for the learner to do silent study – important in the processing of new language

The learner and teacher may not get on.

The teacher may feel pressurised to achieve results because of a greater degree of responsibility.

The teacher may find it difficult to find suitable materials and activities, and to structure an effective syllabus

The learner may exploit the opportunity given and a captive audience – to check work not related to the aims of the class, to have a shoulder to cry on, or to merely chat. This can of course also apply to the teacher

The teacher may find it difficult to measure the learner’s progress or level without the framework of a syllabus or other learners to compare with

The teacher may feel that they do not have the experience, training or resources necessary for this kind of class and that they are only effective working with large groups.

Approaches- As I have mentioned above, many of the tools I use with a large group are adaptable to a one to one class, but the methods or aims may change. Other techniques are more suitable precisely because of the one teacher – one learner dynamic. Below are some recommendations:

Discuss your learner's needs and get agreement- It is very important that you know exactly what the learner wants from the class. Agree on a list of priorities. Later you may find that their needs are different – this too needs to be discussed.

Explain what you are doing and why- A one to one class is a great opportunity to explain why you do the things you do. Tell your learner your aims and how the work you are doing supports them, for example when you set homework or correct speaking. Encourage your learner to ask questions.

Be very flexible- You will need to be flexible over time, lesson and course aims, and material. Be ready to change if your learner asks you too.

Try a range of methods and techniques- Much of what you do in group classes will work with one learner – try it. For example, songs, games, chants, pair work, jigsaw listening and reading may all be applicable – with participation from you.

Set your limits- One to one classes can become very intimate. Decide how far you want to go. Humanising your class can be productive but don't get into personal areas that make you or your learner uncomfortable.

Give feedback- Find a range of methods for giving feedback to your learner. You can for example use immediate feedback when they are speaking, or a hot sheet, or just keep data for another class. Spend time working on errors – they are a great opportunity to make substantial improvements.

Use homework to support learning- Learners like homework, it adds value, and teachers often forget how good a tool it can be. Use homework to get your learner to do things you wouldn't in the class, for example extended writing, research or more controlled practice.

Push your learner- Without the dynamism of a large group it is easy to lose sight of this, especially if your learner likes to talk a lot. Take advantage of the dynamic to push your learner – with the language you use, for example, or when correcting.

Know when to stop- One to one classes can go on for a very long period of time indeed, especially if you form a close relationship, but you should constantly evaluate the progress of your learner, albeit informally. There may come a point where you feel that a group would be a better place for your learner to be.

Conclusion- One to one classes are not easy and they deserve more attention from material writers, trainers and employers. Successful teaching in a one to one class may be a case of finding out what you can use from your own bank of tools, and how these can be developed and changed to suit each new learner – at least until a more complete methodology is developed to support teachers in this challenging but potentially hugely rewarding area.

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