**TESOL-Young Learners Class #65st Weekends**

**Second Essay**

**Due Date: 22th July, 2013**

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Title : Sailing across the Classroom Sea

* Strong reasons make strong actions. (by William Shakespeare)

Going to school, have you ever wished that your teacher were changed with another teacher? In my case, yes. When I was in fifth grade in elementary school, I liked the teacher who was next to my class. Her classroom was always orderly and clean, and her students were obedient to her. In addition, the average scores of the examinations of her class were even higher than those of the others. Those good results, I thought, were because she had managed her class very well. Now, I wonder what is her secret of good classroom management.

Generally, classroom management is defined as a set of organizational skills and techniques designed to make the classroom run smoothly and efficiently. Although this definition looks brief, it involves complicated and various aspects: creating a climate of learning, providing appropriate instruction and feedback, managing student work, and anticipating unexpected classroom management situation. So a good classroom manager has to be able to make the classroom comfortable, arrange seating properly, and use a blackboard and other equipment in the classroom skillfully. Besides, to create a positive classroom climate, teachers have to establish rapport and balance praise and criticism. Last but not least, classroom rules and teacher’s discipline are also necessary for classroom management. And the following will deal with them in detail with two cases of attendance and tardiness, and an English only policy.

First, if a student is often absent or tardy, how would you manage him or her? Traditionally in Korea, tardy students have been punished by writing a letter of apology, standing in front of the classroom or staff room, running several laps around school ground, or paying a fine and so on. These punishments can be effective in the short term but they can’t basically change the students’ attitude about absence or tardiness.

Attendance and tardiness are one of discipline problems. So teachers’ attitude and instructions are important. That is, they have to state clearly and explicitly to their students what their expectations are regarding tardiness and absence policy. But don’t forget to gain the respect of your students by treating them all with equal fairness. Of course, teachers should preserve the dignity of their students, no matter how frustrated they are with their students. Therefore, I think that instead of the public punishment, it is important to meet the student outside of the classroom and find the source of the problem rather than treating absence or tardiness. If its cause is removed, the problem will resolve itself.

Second, if you are an English teacher, how would you implement and enforce an English only policy? Most English teachers want their students to speak only in English in the appointed areas such as a classroom and a corridor. Some teachers suggest that competition and rewards are techniques to limit students’ using their own language. For example, every time students speak their own language, the teacher gives a red card to them, and the student with the fewest red cards at the end gets a gift card. Others think punishment or threat can be effective. If students talk in their own language in the corridor, the teacher makes them stand up there like an iceman holding their tongue. Another way is, I often use, to take the student’ most precious thing like a cell phone away and keep it until the whole classes are finished. While these methods look easy for teachers to apply and students might speak in English to get the rewards or to avoid the punishments, they don’t last for a long time. After rewards or punishments are done, students come back again like a spring. This tendency to talk in their own language seems to be worse in monolingual classes, regardless of their age.

These consequences show teachers have to consider students’ situation, not teachers’. At first, we should figure out why students use their own language. That might be because it is easier to speak their own language, they don’t want to get it wrong in front of others, or they think the teacher can’t hear them. Knowing the cause of the problem, we can prescribe the right medicine. If students find speaking their own language easier, teachers could divide some sections into English zone and native language zone. In the second case, lots of pair and small-group activities will be helpful without the loss of face of getting it wrong in a bigger group. In addition to them, if students can make decisions, it will be good to negotiate the ground rules with the students or let them set rules completely by themselves.

In conclusion, teachers have to play multiple roles in classroom management and in turn, they should be an authority figure, who knows their limitations and strengths and is confident. However, effective classroom management has to be considered not only in teachers’ position but also in students’ stance. If your classroom turns out like you intend, ask yourself and then your students. Although you can’t get an answer from yourself, your students can give the answer no matter how young they are. Finally, classroom management techniques will be useless without their consistency. In other words, teachers should be consistent in all their dealings with students. If they lose their balance, their students will shake together. I think classroom management is sailing because both of them go through unexpected and hard process but all of their members(captain/teacher and crews/students) get to their destination in a body and unshakenly. Let’s work together and keep our way across the sea of the classroom.

**Reference**

Jim Scrivener. *Learning Teaching* (2009), Macmillan Books for Teachers

H.Douglas Brown. *Teaching by Principles* (1994), Prentice Hall Regents