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TESOL Class # 70

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**Essay # 2 – Armed with Skills, Techniques, and Methods**

“A goal without a plan is just a wish.”

- Antoine de Saint-Exupery (1900 - 1944)

There are many useful methods and classroom management skills that can be utilized when creating an effective language learning environment for students. Teachers accommodate themselves with such techniques in order to be more organized and well-prepared. These also help teachers deal with some unexpected problems that may take place with regards to implementation, enforcement and discipline of an institution’s policies. Three problems that might arise are as follows: you might have to implement and enforce a very strict “English Only” policy; deal with frequent tardiness and absences in the classroom; and help students conduct a lesson presentation. Each problem can be dealt with by making use of the classroom management skills that Jim Scrivener provides and by using reinforcements and punishments.

First of all, in order to implement and enforce a strict “English Only” policy, I agree with Scrivener that “inducements, threats, prizes, etc. can all have a limited success in creating an ‘English-only’ classroom” (101). Such way does not work effectively for a long period of time, so I will use some techniques that Scrivener suggests. For instance, I create an environment where students can use all their senses to learn and use only English. For example, I would continuously expose students to music with lyrics written in English and put English-language posters on the classroom walls. I will encourage students to openly state their minds by being positive and enthusiastic and by being patient and give them time to think and absorb. I will also remind and focus students on the reason they are in the classroom and emphasize why using English is important.

Another unexpected problem that I might face is frequent tardiness and absences of students. In order to prevent this from happening, I would have to make use of B.F. Skinner’s theory of reinforcements and punishments so that I can diminish the number of tardiness and absences and increase the rate of attendance. For example, I will have a strict grading policy regarding tardiness and absences but I will also inform the students that if the entire class is punctual and present for more than three times, I will treat them to pizza at the end of the course. I will also foster mutual respect by being a good example for the students. I learned that becoming a good role model is very important when enforcing strict regulations from Tae Lee, a professor in the English Department of Yonsei University. When I took the course entitled “Professional Writing” last semester, she had extremely strict rules regarding tardiness and absences. At the beginning of the course, she emphasized this fact and promised that she will never be late or absent. Throughout the entire semester, she kept this promise and even came to class when she was ill. By being a good example to the students, she gained respect and therefore prevented frequent tardiness and absences: only two out of 21 students were absent and merely three were marked late throughout the entire semester.

The third unexpected problem that I might have to deal with is helping students prepare for lesson presentations. In order to handle this situation wisely, I will organize my lessons so that I can provide the tools and techniques that can be used by the students. I will run specific activities that are tightly related and try to eventually lead the students to do a lesson presentation on their own. I will also try to create a safe, friendly, and respectful classroom where they would not feel anxious when they make errors in class. This will not only help students to play an active role in all classes but also lead them to be brave and take action on their own initiatives.

People, including teachers, do not enjoy being in a position where many unexpected difficulties may arise. However, since unanticipated occurrences are inevitable, teachers should equip themselves with classroom management skills in order to cope with and solve such unforeseen happenings. It is important to be fully armed with theories, methods, and the techniques that Scrivener suggests so that one does not panic when sudden problems arise.

Word Count: 685