**Teaching is meant to be helpful for students to achieve their goals**

*“I am not a teacher, but an awakener."*

*- Robert Frost*

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Over the past week I have learnt about classroom management. When you lead a class it is not always going to be like how you expect, there might be some times when you have to face unexpected problems. How to deal with these wisely not making students feel too pushed but feel necessary for their studies is what a teacher has to focus on.

For learning English, one of the best ways is to continue to speak the language, but for the beginners and in a non-English environment, especially most of the students are from the same country, "English only" policy is difficult for teachers as well as students to keep on. When I was in UK for a 6 months English course from Sep 1999 to Feb 2000, my teacher Hillary also asked students to speak only English in the class. Some of us including me found difficult to keep the promise. So when the teacher was not around, we used own our language. Later on, she found it out, so then she suggested if we all keep the English only policy well, at the end of every week she will bring some snacks and have a short break time during the class. In the break time, she showed her personal pictures and shared about her stories. Actually she intended to use the snacks and the break time for introducing the cultural things this was also a part of study of the language. Unconsciously we were learning and being exposed to English. Even though it is a simple method that anyone can think of, but I still think it is really a brilliant idea for a teacher and students both sides with reducing stresses in a way to keep the policy. In addition to this, I suggest writing a personal evaluation is also a good way to motivate students to speak the language. Before starting the class, every student writes their goals for a certain period of time and how you are going to study to achieve them, for example, I will use 10 English sentences with 3 different friends each day. If you have done as what you wrote down, you can give high points and the teacher also should give comments on that. Comparing those comments the student can step forward with further goals for the next period of time.

There is another challenge for a teacher is to get students be on time for the class. Dealing with frequent tardiness and absent is really a tough job. When I was at university in China from Sep 2002 to July 2006, tardiness and absences were big problems for foreign students, because most of the classes were started from the early morning at 8 a.m. But I guess because the students were from different backgrounds, some were very struggling with attending classes on time. Those who were late or absent for the class were always late. So our teachers made rules that if students were late more than 5 minutes they would mark it and late for 3 times it would be regarded as one day absent. 5 days absent over the one semester, students were not able to attend the exam which means you are failed and need to take the same subject again in the next semester. So this rule encouraged students to attend the class properly. I personally think that it was a good way to make the students to have a good attitude and respects for the class and teachers. Somehow it looks like too compulsory but to control many students to focus on what they have to do, it is necessary.

At the Beijing Foreign University, there were many presentation assignments when students had to present things that they had learnt. One of the times we went on a trip to factories to see how machines and systems were going on, and also the representative of the each company gave us a brief presentation. After we came back from the trip, we as a group had to choose one company that we were interested in the most and make our own presentation to summarize what we have seen and learnt. For this assignment, a teacher was assigned for an each group to help out. Luckily, our teacher was very involved in our preparation, she always welcomed us whenever we needed check-ups and gave us her experiences and advices on the subject, she even searched for the important information that we might not catch on. Her attitude made us feel comfortable and confident going forward with the presentation. Additionally, she also checked the gestures and pronunciations during the rehearsal. The way she did for us was a good example for me to follow when I am in the same situation. To keep in mind that a teacher needs to draw a line how much you would be involved in and which parts should let students to do by themselves. The assignment is meant to be for the students re-arrange their thoughts, not the teacher does every parts of it namely the teacher is a guider for the students.

When you make rules for your class, first, we have to think whether it is really an effective way for students to carry on, is it the only way to do? As well as we need to consider the level of students. If your instructions could harm or insult even one student then we should not push for it, the teaching is not for making students to look how bad they are, is to let them know how to get achieved their individual goals with effective ways.