



Managing common misbehaviour problems of students

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Abstract

In this article the author has tried to explain that teaching and learning are complex processes. Effective teaching is possible when both teachers and students both understand the responsibility their teaching and learning. While teaching it happens that students, because of different reasons, misbehave in the classroom and that time teachers are not able to handle the situation. In this condition it's very necessary to understand the causes of misbehavior. Also the teacher should have competence to manage classroom and behaviours of students. Some suggestions are provided by the author, which can be applied in the situation of misbehavior of students in the classroom.

Keywords: student behaviour, teacher behaviour, classroom management, learning, teaching

Introduction

Teaching and learning are complex processes. Effective teaching and maximum learning occur in classroom when both teachers and students understand that teaching / learning is the responsibility of the student as well as the teacher.

The responsibilities of the student are obvious. Students prepare for class, study, ask questions to enhance their understanding and are on-task, but at the same time teachers control and reinforcement is necessary to assist students in accepting responsibility for their learning. Students more readily accept their responsibility when it is clear to them that the teacher is fulfilling his/her responsibilities.

These professional responsibilities are basic minimum competencies that all teachers must possess and they are considered prerequisites to appropriate classroom management. All too often teachers are quick to place total responsibility for inappropriate behaviour on the student without carefully analyzing their own behaviour.

The teacher behaviours that are pre requisites to appropriate student's behaviour are:

- The teacher should well prepare to teach. Prior to the class he/she should design specific learning objectives and effective strategies based on accepted principles of learning.
- The teacher should provide clear direction and explanations of the learning material.
- The teacher should use proper evaluation criteria.
- The teacher should clearly communicate and consistently enforce behavioral expectations.
- The teacher should demonstrate enthusiasm and encouragement.

Once these responsibilities are met, if control and enforce techniques are needed, they will have a much better chance of being effective in managing behaviour.

The typical behaviour problems teachers have deal with are:

- **Verbal interruptions:** Talking, humming, laughing, calling out, whispering.
- **Off-task behaviours:** Day dreaming, sleeping, playing with something, doodling.
- **Physical movement intended to disrupt:** Visiting, passing notes, sitting on the desk or on two legs of the chair, throwing paper.

Disrespect toward teachers and students

Arguing, teasing, vulgarity, talking back. (Huber 1984, Weber and Sloan, 1986)^[1].

These behaviours are called surface behaviours because they are typically not a result of any deep rooted personal problem but are normal development behaviours of children. Even so, they tend to be quite disruptive to both teaching and learning. They are usually readily observable by an experienced teacher. Some teachers have always been able to manage appropriately, surface behaviours, by using proactive coping skills. These proactive skills are:

- **Changing the pace:** Of classroom activities is necessary when the teacher begins to observe students are not taking interest. Rubbing eyes, yawning stretching and staring outside are clear signs that a change of pace is needed. This is the time for the teacher to restructure the situation and involve students in games, stories and other favorite activities that require active student participation, to refocus student interests. To reduce the need for on-the-spot change- of-pace activities, lesson plans should provide for variety of learning experiences that accommodate the attention spans and interests of student both in time and in type.
- **Interest boosting:** Is a better technique when students show signs of off task behaviour. If the teacher observes a student engaging in activities other than the assigned one, it is time for him/her to boost the interest of the off task

student. One way this can be achieved is to walk over to the student and show interest in his/her work by asking how he/she is doing or checking the answers of completed questions. Asking the student to write correct answer on the board is also effective. Whatever technique is decided on, it must be employed in a matter of fact supportive manner to boost student's interest in learning activity.

- **Redirecting the behavior:** often refocuses attentions back to learning activity. Students who are prozing notes, talking or day dreaming may be asked to read, do a problem or answer a question. For instance, if the teacher calls on the off task student to answer a question and the student answers a question and the student answers a question and the student answers correctly, teacher should give him/her positive feedback. On the other hand the student doesn't answer who or answers incorrectly, reformulate the question or call on someone else. A teacher who causes the student embarrassment or ridicule invites further misbehaviour. The "get back on-task" message the teacher is sending should clearly be received by the off-task student.
- **A nonpunitive time out:** is in order for students who show signs of encountering or provoking, painful, frustrating asks the student if he/she wants a drink or invites him/her to go outside and have some fresh air. This gives student time to regain his/her control before reentering the learning environment.
- **Reinforcing appropriate behavior:** of other students communicates to the off task student what is expected. A statement such as "I am glad to see sudha and Praveen have their books open", "good, Suman and Sohan have submitted their assignment in time" etc. serves as a reminder to others of what is expected.
- **Removing seductive objects:** from students with the agreement that they will be returned after class, may be done with little, if any, pause in teaching act. Teachers who find themselves competing toys, magazines or other objects may simply walk over to the student, collect the object and quietly inform him/her that it will be available to him/her after class.

The masterful use of these proactive skills diffuses many surface behaviours, causing minimal disruption to the teaching act. However, no method is hundred percent effective. There will still be classroom situations that induce misbehavior or students who continue to display disruptive behaviour. When such situations occur more systematic control can be called for they are hierarchy of nonverbal coping skills, consists of four techniques: Planned ignoring, signal interference, proximity control, touch control (Levin, J. and Nolan J.F. 1996).

- **Planned Ignoring:** Planned Ignoring is based on the reinforcement theory that if you ignore a behaviour it lessens and eventually disappears. It seems so simple but is very difficult to implement. That is why planned is stressed. When a student whistles, interrupts the teacher, instinctively the teacher turns or looks in the direction of the student, thereby giving the student attention and

reinforcing the behaviour. In contrast, planned ignoring is intentionally and completely ignoring the behaviour this needs practice.

- **Signal interference:** Signal interference is a type of non-verbal behaviour that communicates to the student without disturbing others that his/her behaviour is not appropriate. Signal behaviour must be clearly directed at the off task student. There should be no doubt in the student's mind that the teacher is aware of what is going on and the student is responsible for the behaviour. Examples of signal interference behaviours are making eye contact with the student who is talking to a neighbour, pointing to a seat when a student is wandering around, head shaking to indicate "no" to a student about to throw a piece of chalk or any thing else and calling up. Students name doing such mischievous in the class. Psychologically speaking, signal interference behaviours may be hierarchically ordered, depending on the type, duration and frequency of off-task behaviour.
- **Proximity control:** Proximity control is any movement toward or taking up a position in the vicinity of the disruptive student. When signal interference doesn't work or the teacher is unable to gain a student's attention long enough to send a signal because the student is so engrossed in the off task behaviour, proximity control is used. Often just walking toward the student while still conducting the lesson is enough to bring the student back on task. For student who continues to be off task, a very effective form of proximity control is for the teacher to conduct the lesson in close proximity to the student's desk. This works extremely well during question and answer session. Proximity control combined with signal interference results in a very effective nonverbal control technique. If proximity does not bring about the desired behavioural change, the teacher is in a position to implement the next step that is, touch control.
- **Touch Control:** when a teacher takes a child's hand and escorts the child back to his seat and when teacher places a hand on a student's shoulder, he/she is using skill of touch control. Touch control is a light, non aggressive physical contact with the student. Without any verbal exchange, this behaviour communicates to the student that the teacher disapproves of the disruptive behaviour. When using touch control, it is important to be aware of its limitations and possible negative outcomes. Certain students construe any touching by the teacher as an aggressive act and in turn react with aggressive behaviour. To lessen the chance of such an occurrence, the teacher needs to be sensitive to its use. As with all control techniques, the teacher must be aware of the situational variables as well as the students characteristics.

Teachers who want to be proficient in classroom management should be experts in the use of variety of proactive coping skills. He can systematically employ these techniques to be effective in managing surface behaviour.

References

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