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SCHOOL OF SCIENCES AND ARTS
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GRADUATION WORK:

**“MOST COMMON DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR TYPES IN AN ESL CLASSROOM
AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM”**

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I. INTRODUCTION

The present report is the result of a bibliographical research that can help not only teachers but also students to learn more about classroom management in a Foreign Language classroom.

The study was based on the most common disruptive behavior in an ESL class. This was studied because it is necessary to know which those disruptive behavior types are those. In order to respond effectively to misbehaving students, teachers need to be prepared to deal with them. The present work includes a brief description of the most common difficulties of discipline that can be found in the classrooms mentioned above.

The purpose of this material is to provide different ways to deal with these common situations in the classroom. It provides a variety of ideas based on some well-known authors, our own experiences as teachers in the daily life, in our classrooms and also the group own critical thinking.

This report includes in which a general description of the whole work is presented. Then the objectives that guided the research are described. Following, there is the justification. Here the importance and benefits of the work are explained. The fourth part includes the result of our research.

Finally it contains the methodology that was followed to guide our work, recommendations and the conclusions as well that will contribute with the entire work.

II. OBJECTIVES

General Objective:

- To carry out a bibliographical research based on most Common disruptive behavior types in an ESL Classroom and how to deal with them.

Specific Objectives:

- To find out what are the disruptive behavior types in an ESL Classroom expressed by experts.

- To find out what are the solutions of disruptive behavior types in an ESL Classroom displayed by experts.

III. JUSTIFICATION

A bibliographical research, on the most common disruptive behavior types in an ESL classroom and how to deal with was carried out to find out how experts understand disruptive behavior and also how to treat these kinds of problems. And the idea is not only to discuss disruptive behavior but also present solutions that can help teachers deal with students under a specific situation, and to choose the best way to overcome the problem.

As teachers, we have faced some of these problems ourselves, and probably the way we have dealt with the problem has not been the best one. Therefore, this work is intended to help teachers who are facing this kind of situations to deal with them in different ways.

On the other hand students can identify similar environment and probably they can find or have other solutions for these problems. At the end it is expected that students show a different attitude.

IV. Most Common Disruptive Behavior in an ESL classroom and how to deal with them.

The teacher passes through discipline problems during the English Learning Process. There are different factors that can cause students to show a disruptive or negative behaviour. Among those factors there can be mentioned these ones: Time of classes, student's attitude, two's company, a desire to be noticed the last one is divided in three: attention seekers, power seekers and revenge seekers. Experts offer different ways of dealing with all of them.

It is very important to take into account the time of classes because it affects students' participation and cooperation as well. Students sometimes are sleeping and they make the class less participative in the activities and at the same time they do not cooperate with the teacher and with their classmates. For instance Yanira, a Basic Intensive English student, was not an active learner; she did not cooperate as the rest of the students in the classroom. She was sleepy and she did not do the exercise she was asked to do. The teacher seeing Yanira's less cooperative and how this affected or influenced negatively the rest of the class, he decided to change this activity. She asked students to participate in an activity in which students had to be actively involved; suddenly, Yanira's attitude was totally different. Now she was interested in the class.

The solution of changing the activity could work as in this case because they were paying attention by including speaking activities. Jon Saphier Robert Gower (1997) explains: "Early morning classes may cause students to be sleepy; classes after lunch are often full of drowsy students." However, when classes are programmed at a hot time, teachers should

take these factors in order to make an interested class by preparing interesting dynamics and activities that can contribute to have active students. So being prepared for the classes is important because the use of different resources, extra material, extra activities and varied techniques can create produce a good learning environment for students.

The best way for students to learn is to be open to new knowledge and to be optimistic, but there are cases in which students have negative attitude, which is another very common problem teachers can find in their classes. Sometimes this students' negative attitude can be toward not just to the English subject but also to the teacher. However, that can be changed. Let's look at Laura's case. She was a Basic Intensive English student; she used to show a discontent attitude toward the dynamics the teacher conducted. For example, one day the teacher asked her to pass in front of the class in order to talk about their favourite actor or actress, but she refused to do it. The teacher talked to her and Laura explained to him that she was afraid of talking in front of the class. In this case the teacher stimulated her to get over it and he gave her another opportunity to pass in front. The teacher made an exception with her; she was sitting down until she felt better and she passed later on, so she did. If you make students feel comfortable, they will be open to learn without feeling frustrated toward the class.

Taking into account students' perceptions and feeling is a good and positive solution that can lead compatible classes. Let us remind students that you are there to help them as Jon Saphier Robert Gower (1997) said: "If students can become interested even against their better judgement a lot of problem will disappear". And H. Douglas Brown in *Teaching by Principles* said: "Ask students after class and quietly but firmly make your observation and let the student respond". Another solution is to give positive written notes to students, who

cause trouble by negative attitude, it should be understood the kind of body language response.

Nobody else notices the call of attention. Also, these written notes could be given to praise students when they work hard. To have a good environment in Learning English process, it is important to set the limits of what is or is not permitted to be done in class by taking into account the different types of student's personalities. Sometimes within the class it is very common to see some students disrupting classes. That behavior always affects others and gradually influences the whole group by imitating the same behaviour. This means they laugh during classes, and they talk a lot. This kind of misbehaviour is called Two's Company, which in common language simply misses "a rotten apple spoils the rest".

The ability to control a group of students when things get out of hands depends on the teacher's personality. Sometimes, teachers take too much time in solving the problem probably because the teacher may think that by calling their attention will be enough and the teachers always has to take into account the students' personality to know how to deal with it. If the teacher makes a clear warning to the students, this probably will not happen again in the class. Also it depends on the group of students that the teacher has. There are students who are rebel, stubborn, quite students. According to R. Gower and S. Walters "Students have a number of reasons for behaving badly: they cannot always be easily controlled and much will depend on the particular group and the particular teacher". But, sometimes the way the teacher deals with is difficult to handle it or is not the correct way to do it.

Based on what it is mentioned before a teacher can react immediately and decide what to do firmly toward two's company behaviour. As it is observable in Basic Intensive English courses with groups around 25 students, there are a lot of problems with this inappropriate conduct. For example; at the beginning of the class, the teacher brought some lyrics of a famous song so everybody in the class could listen to it and also could sing it. Karen and Delia were saying that they did not like the song and they did not like the singer either, because it was boring. Then everybody started to be agreeing with them. So the teacher stopped the class then he said: "This song is about learning English not about if you like the singer or not, please fill in the spaces and Karen and Delia will help us too with the answers". From next day on, the teacher presented dynamics daily in which everybody was asked to sit in different places. The researcher group thinks that it was a good solution to control students who convince others to act against activities or the teacher as well.

There are remarkable solutions that teachers can apply toward inadvisable behaviour. First of all, stop the class immediately; this is a clear sign to all students that something is not going right. The teacher may then tell the students who are behaving badly what is wrong. Also sometimes teachers refuse to re-start the class until the student is not in a different place; reseating is an effective way of controlling a student. Certainly where the troublemaker is sitting together they should be separated. As R. Gower and S. Walters expresses: "Any punishment that hurts a student physically or emotionally is probably dangerous and harmful in many ways, its effect cannot be measured". This helps us understand that no matter students' behaviour, there are no acceptable teachers' reactions. Therefore; the only way that will be the best solution is to talk with them firmly and clearly.

Besides the previous disruptive behaviour problems mentioned before, there are other ones that are not less troublesome. A desire to be noticed is another of the most common difficult problems found in classrooms not only with adolescents but also with adults. They need to be noticed and have a desire to be recognized, they try to do these in different ways. Most teachers are familiar with students in their classes who demand attention and who are quite prepared to be disruptive in order to gain the recognition they need. These kinds of students are divided in different forms by experts; they are recognized as: attention seekers, power seekers and revenge seekers. These three groups are the most common one in classrooms.

There is a description of the problems mentioned before where the professional Simon Munford helps us to describe them. Attention seekers are called the clowns because they make others laugh in the class. Let's see Albert's case, in a Basic Intensive English course of 30 students in the University of El Salvador; there was Albert who though acting this way he would get more friends but he made others to laugh at some of their classmates mistakes and these students were getting frustrated also he always made fun of others' pronunciation, for Albert he though, he knew more than the rest.

The solution for this problem is a combination of solutions among authors and the researchers. One of the ways to deal with this situation is to pay less attention to them and set a limit; be firm and talk with him or her out of the class. Ignore any misbehaviour from your attention seeker. If you respond to it, you will only reinforce the negative behaviour. Another one is to be firm but do not show annoyance, give lots of attention at any other time. Get in close to students and use a quiet or whisper voice to talk privately with them about any behaviour issues, also use your voice, your facial expressions and your body

language to encourage all your students to engage with the learning process and sometimes use humour too.

On the other hand, there are the power seekers. Some of the characteristics they may show are: arguing, bad mood, refusing and provoking. Many teachers say “she/he makes me” lost my patient”. An example could be the typical power seeker student who always likes to discuss with the teacher and he is observing at all times every little thing the teacher does in the classroom. Let say if the teacher misspelled a word this student will tell you in front of the class so everybody can notice that he knows more than you.

There are possible ideas that could work to deal with these power seekers and are offered by experts and self experiences. These are the following: Try to discuss every doubt the student may have. The teacher can tell their students that everybody is there to learn and if you do not have the answer you will find out. Do not show annoyance; and demonstrate confidence, and give a lot of attention to what they say. Also do not argue or fight; the teacher should try to be patient with him or her, catch students’ good qualities, actions and reinforce those. These kinds of students use to show that they have the same capacity than the teacher. Besides, let them express their ideas with freedom and ask to the group if they are in agreement with him or her. Place them in a leadership role in the group or class. Finally, it is a good idea to validate the knowledge of these students by saying such expressions likes these: “You’re right, I can’t make you do that” to gain cooperation instead of confrontation, use humour to defuse tension, do not use verbal attack with the student, stay in agree, or change the subject.

There is a third group, the Revenge seekers, they act disobedient; many teachers think of changing these kinds of students to another place to isolate them. Also they do not want to follow instructions to the teacher and they are negative people as well. For instance, in a classroom of 18 in a Basic English Course students between 15 and 17 years old was Flor, who refused to fill in the exercises in the workbook and she always ask their friends for the answers. But one day the teacher told all the class to do the exercises on the workbook individually but she always had an excuse to avoid the task.

This problem affect the teaching learning process and atmosphere and based on what has been read and the own experience of the researchers, the following solutions are offered to have a useful idea on what to do in this case. The best way to solve this is to tell him/her about the behaviour in the classroom, be firm and consist, “Do not yell” then speak softly, not with a loud voice, and this has a calming effect. Find the student doing something good, smile and commend that good behaviour, explain consequences’, convince the student that he/she is liked (It’s what they’re doing that you don’t like). Revenge students whose misbehaviour is connected to revenge are probably the most difficult to manage and potentially the most explosive.

Teachers can avoid discipline problems by creating positive relationships with students that are built on mutual respect and dignity. Stimulating instruction that actively involves students in learning process is prevention to misbehaviour. To establish a firm base for positive discipline, teachers must communicate their expectations to students concerning rules and consequences. Those teachers whose characteristics are sensitive to the physical, social, and emotional have less problems in the classroom.

In general, students and teachers can work together to create a written code; this can help to develop a positive relationship or use cooperative activities that help the revenge student deal with their emotions. In the case the behaviour persists let students be aware of a possible suspension. It becomes clear that good teaching and effective classroom discipline management is a team work. Teachers should observe their students and look at their behaviour constantly to help them accomplish their goals. Teacher should be patient, friendly, confident and firm on what they say and do.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

- ☞ Based on what we have learned, we realized that disruptive behavior is considered one of the most important single factors which influence language learning. Although the teacher is ultimately responsible for establishing the rules of behavior in the classroom, it is advisable to negotiate these with the students and listen to their views.
- ☞ Although the teachers can use their authority to control, they have to be careful on that respect.
- ☞ They can handle students that way, but they can also make students hate school and learn less. Sometimes in the classroom, students break the cycle of teacher control and create behavior problems related to discipline. Teachers need to find solutions to treat these kinds of difficulties in the class by adopting strategies that can help them solve the problematic situation.
- ☞ The teacher should create a productive learning environment, when a disruptive behavior happens. The students appreciate that; they feel accepted as individuals. It can create more class participation, self-discipline and higher expectations by both the students and the teacher.

- ☞ Teachers who manage democratic, cooperative classrooms enjoy students who are more involved, responsible and academically successful. The teachers will get to like their students and enjoy the class with them without indiscipline problems.
- ☞ Teachers could structure classes in such a way that students feel some ownership and control of what goes on, and that could reduce disruptive behavior.
- ☞ Teacher should find time to praise the good work of students do; they should also encourage even the worst student by saying. “Well done”, “good work”. It said in front of their friends, it will motivate the rest of the group too.
- ☞ Teacher should promote meetings together with their students to find out the cause of the behavior and explain that it is not helpful for a student to behave this way; also teacher should explain the consequences of the wrong behavior. They could suffer a suspension or warning from the class or school. All these should be done with the purpose of coming to an understood between teachers and students.

VI. METHODOLOGY

To carry out the present bibliographical research a variety of steps were followed. Next you will find those steps described one by one in a general way.

First the topic was selected among a variety of topics; all of them related to the English teaching-learning process. Also it was delimited according with the main purpose that is, to research some disruptive behavior types that can be found in an ESL classroom.

The next step consisted on selecting and discriminating different sources. This provided us, support for our research and for organizing the data. Some reading techniques such as cards, scanning, skimming and keep data that would support our written report were used.

The third step was to develop thesis statement or claim that would guide the work. In this part also other techniques were used like outlines and free writing to start organizing ideas.

The fourth step was it consisted on assembling, synthesizing and analyzing the data to write the argument on the topic. Surveying literature creates a logical and defensible set of conclusions that can be provided the bases for addressing the research topic.

Before writing the final paper many drafts were written in order to get the final product. As final step was to write final report then was an oral present as part of the final work.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

- ☞ Reorganize the new implemented graduation program by modifying the modules, make them shorter and choose varied and adequate topics.
- ☞ The evaluation system should be based more on students' practice and analysis than in memory evaluations, because the evaluation system.
- ☞ Teachers could plan classes in a way students can be active in the activities developed.
- ☞ The program should include not only the starting time of classes but also the ending time of classes
- ☞ The teacher should have a daily or weekly grades' control.
- ☞ The attendance list control should be an important factor in the evaluation system because students can reach everyday class goals.

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