A KEY TO CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: TEACHER REFLECTION

Sınıf Yönetimi İçin Bir Anahtar: Yansıtıcı Düşünme[1]

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Abstract

Voices of the novice teachers serve as the evidence that pure theoretical knowledge remains somewhere at the very top, superficial, and it does not always go hand in hand with the reality in the classroom. In the light of this information, this study aims to throw light upon the fact that there might be occasional gaps between the curricula of Language Teacher Education (LTE) programs, and real classroom applications, which can be abridged through constructivist approaches. The participants in this research are fifty novice teachers (twenty took part in further research) currently employed at schools. The majority of the teachers have been engaged in the profession for at least one year, the experience ranging from one to five years; in other words, they are already familiar with the conditions of classroom settings. The study indicates that these teachers sometimes encounter classroom management problems. The books that show how classroom management strategies can be improved may help the teacher to a certain extent; however, in some cases theory remains de-contextualized, for each classroom environment displays a unique feature. Under the circumstances, the teachers should be equipped with some constructivist approaches such as 'reflection' to cope with the problems arising in the classroom.

Key Words: Classroom management, teacher reflection, constructivism.

Özet

Mesleğe yeni başlamış öğretmenlerden alınan geribildirim, salt teorik bilginin yüzeysel ve zaman zaman sınıf gerçeğinden uzak olduğu yönünde kanıtlar sunmaktadır. Bu bilgi ışığında, bu çalışma, dil öğretmeni yetiştirme programları ile gerçek sınıf uygulamaları arasında fark olabileceğini ve bu boşluğun yapılandırmacı yaklaşımlarla kapatılabileceğini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, mesleki deneyimleri bir-beş yıl arasında değişen, bir başka deyişle, sınıf ortamını tanıyan elli İngilizce öğretmeni ile (bu öğretmenlerden yirmisi araştırmanın daha kapsamlı aşamasına katılmıştır) yürütülmüştür. Çalışma, az deneyimli öğretmenlerin zaman zaman sınıf yönetimi sorunları yaşadıklarını ortaya koymuştur. Sınıf yönetimi becerisinin nasıl geliştireceğini gösteren kitaplar öğretmenlere bir dereceye kadar yardımcı olabilmekte, ancak her bir sınıf ortamının eşsiz ve kendine has olması nedeni ile teorik bilgi bağlam dışı kalabilmektedir. Bu koşullar altında, öğretmenlerin sınıfta ortaya çıkan sorunlarla baş etmeleri için 'yansıtıcı düşünme' gibi yapılandırıcı yaklaşımlara gereksinimi vardır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Sınıf yönetimi, yansıtıcı düşünme, yapılandırmacılık.

Introduction

Unlike in the past, when language education was mostly in the scope of applied linguistics and basically theoretical, today Language Teacher Education (LTE) mostly relies on practice, classroom centered education and other teaching practices such as materials development, and curriculum development. Thus, LTE as part of the teacher education (TE) has made a shift from theory to practice, and this has an impact on the curricula designed for LTE programs. These programs now rely heavily on more humanistic aspects, seeing the individual as a whole. This enables researchers to focus more on the cognitive aspects of teaching practice. Such aspects bring about some basic changes in the concept of TE as a more general term, and the trend is towards a more process oriented, constructivist approach to bottom up practices, in which teachers can practice and understand the nature of teaching by more intellectual means.

Traditional teacher education views teachers as passive takers more than active givers, and it does not allow for any space for change, nor does it offer any opportunity to think and make decisions. The role of reflection has come to a stage where the basic competences of the teacher are considered to be more creative, humanistic and problem solving. A shift to a constructivist perspective in 'teaching' and 'teacher learning' makes teachers a primary source of knowledge about teaching, and the role of reflection in teacher development as well as the importance of research in ITE and INSET programs have begun to be the major issues in LTE.

Teacher roles place the teacher somewhere between the classroom and the student. This relative space varies according to the paradigm that the teacher feels he/she best fits. The changing attitudes and theories towards the learner profiles and learning styles according to different schools of thought have introduced different teacher paradigms: While Zeichner (1983) classifies teachers according to 'behavioristic', 'personalistic', 'traditional craft', and 'inquiry' norms, Wallace (1991) underlines different paradigms of teachers according to the 'craft model', the 'applied science model', and the 'reflective model' (cited in Roberts, 1998). That LTE programs, do not adequately prepare the teachers for the realities of the teaching world, and that there is not a smooth transition from school theory to classroom practice have begun to be a major concern for education authorities. Input from novice teachers also confirms the fact that theory remains somewhere at the very top, superficial, and in some cases, far from the reality of classroom settings. The unpredictability of classroom practice (Nunan, 1996) unfolds another picture before the novice teacher. This sometimes makes the situation unbearable and acts as a deterrent from the teaching profession.

This study aims to throw light upon the fact that there might be occasional gaps between the curricula of LTE programs, and the real classroom application. The study has its roots in the conversations that the mentor had with student teachers already doing their practice teaching, and novice teachers with five years of professional experience at most. The reality is that the novice teacher suffers from some classroom management problems. The books describing how classroom management strategies can be improved may help the teacher to a certain extent; however, in some cases they remain de-contextualized, for each classroom environment displays a unique feature. For this reason, the teachers should be equipped with some constructivist approaches such as teacher 'reflection' to cope with the problems arising in the classroom.

Related Research on Teacher Reflection

Research in the area of LTE and teacher reflection makes a clear-cut distinction between the definitions of teacher education, training and development.

Teacher Education, Training and Development

To Widdowson (1997), 'teacher training' implies that teachers are to be given specific instruction in practical techniques to cope with predictable events, while 'teacher education' is problem-oriented, with the implication of a broader intellectual awareness of theoretical principles underlying particular practices (1997: 121).

On the other hand, Wallace (1991) highlights the distinction stating that training or education is something which can be presented or managed by others; whereas development is something that can be done only by and for oneself (1991: 3). The basic distinction is that, once self and cognition merges with the profession, then the language teacher begins a life-long process based on constructivism.

Out of the four perspectives of teacher learning (model based, person focused, reflective experiential, social constructivist), social constructivism includes the interaction and interrelation of all the concepts that arise from all sources in society. Therefore, a social constructivist teacher needs to combine such activities as access to new information, self awareness activities, direct personal experience, opportunities for private reflection on the inputs and experiences he/ she has, with the development of skills and attitudes which enables him/ her to get the most out of the other activities. The social dimension of language teaching is gaining more and more recognition, which builds up the distinction between the social constructivist and the reflective teacher (Roberts, 1998: 46).

The Social Constructivist as a Reflective Practitioner

In terms of teacher reflection in teacher education, there are different views. Dewey (1910) highlights such concepts as the value of self-determination, individual responsibility, citizenship in a democracy, and points out:

- Reflection is a disciplined, explicit, conscious and critical thought which contributes to the intellectual and moral development of a person.
- Reflection is an active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends. (Dewey, 1910:6, cited in Roberts, 1998)

Moreover, Schön (1987) states that teachers develop their sense of teaching through continuous reflections on their practice teaching and their interaction with the class. By questioning, discovering and reflecting, teachers reframe the understanding of themselves as teachers. Schön defines reflection as "professional artistry to describe the kinds of competence practitioners display in unique, uncertain and conflicted situations of practice" He mentions two dimensions of reflection: 'reflection on action', and 'reflection in action'. 'Reflection on action' is looking back upon an action some time after or before it has taken place. Teachers use this type of reflection before teaching when they plan their teaching along with the anticipated problems and solutions to them. After they have had their class, they think about any possible problems and weaknesses of the lesson and take some decisions for the classes to be held in the future.

On the other hand, 'reflection in action' means thinking over an action while dealing with it. Teachers pass through this period when they teach. They think about their practice, monitor the class and students, and when needed, adapt the lesson plan according to the need that arises while teaching. It is to some extent conscious; one can consider the 'does not fit' situation and what might have led to this through reflection-in-action. Such reflection questions the assumptions underlying the routine that has become disrupted, and leads to the restructuring of the strategies of action. This type of action leads to on-the-spot experimentation.

Schön rejects the idea that objective knowledge about the world is an adequate guide for action, but views the core of professional expertise as a capacity for rapid and creative problem-solving. Schön and Arygris et al. (1985) have argued that the most effective method of developing in the profession is through the ability to reflect on one's own professional practice, which assumes that trainees can be 'coached' in this ability. Such 'reflective practitioners' will be able to continue to develop their professional expertise by using theory mediated within their ongoing practice.

As long as teachers as practitioners reflect on their classroom performance and see classrooms as laboratories, they can see the relationship between theory and practice; thus, they can understand whether there is a gap between how they are teaching and how they should be teaching.

Loughran (1996) adds another dimension to teacher reflection stating that, reflection does not occur by only 'training the student-teachers', but rather by 'probing, inquiring, and challenging' when they are experiencing how to teach. The model Loughran suggests has three different time layers. Anticipatory reflection occurs when the teacher plans the lesson, during the teaching process contemporaneous reflection takes its place, and retrospective reflection comes after the lesson has been taught. Through these three layers, teachers are expected to be reflective in their preparation for teaching processes. Thus, it can be said that reflection does not have a specific time layer; it is multilayered and may cover a longer period. As Schön (1983) suggests, a lawyer in a court case can be likened to a teacher in the classroom.

The Reflective Practitioner and Classroom Management

However rich the theoretical knowledge in terms of teacher reflection may be, the decontextualized behavior cliché the teacher is asked to mould into does not always match the real context. The books related to classroom management can help the teacher to a certain extent. They cannot go any further than prescribe solutions:

> "If in doubt, ask for advice from more experienced teachers. The problem may be a common one for which a solution exists" (Gower & Walters, 1983).

> "The teacher should try to understand or analyze the physiological, physical or psycho-social factors that may contribute to misbehavior" "You can evaluate the severity of the misbehavior by factors such as appropriateness, magnitude, intent, etc." (Burden, 1999:15)

> "The teacher is the primary custodian of the classroom and decides when and how to intervene into the flow of activities to repair disorder." (Burden, 1999: 24)

"It is helpful to discuss with the student to clarify it both from novice teacher's perspective and the student's and to consider the possible   interventions." (Burden, 1999: 26).

As it can be seen, each teacher confronts a unique situation, and has to tailor his/ her own teaching to it, which means having some reflective ways to create innovative means. Some teacher educators suggest a further model of 'the teacher as researcher', an orientation to action research, which implies that trainees should be trained in research methods so that, as teachers, they can become their own researchers. This kind of research is different from other types of research in that it is directly and immediately related to professional action in some way. As Chaudron (1988) states, the fundamental goal of research has been to determine which variables best lead to academic achievement. To Nunan (1996), the novice teacher tries to make sense of the real world by reconsidering and reformulating the problems to avoid new difficulties. Therefore, these teachers need a hand in order to solve the current problems to prevent the others to come. This hand, though abstract, is 'teacher reflection' as suggested by Argyris and Schön (1974): " when someone is asked how he (or she) would behave under certain circumstances, the answer given is usually his espoused theory of action for that situation. This is the theory of action to which he gives allegiance, and which, upon request, he communicates to others. However, the theory that actually governs his actions is this theory-in-use." (p. 7).

In our case, the researchers have already pinpointed a problem through the accounts of the candidate and novice teachers; therefore, in the light of the findings, the study aims to suggest courses of action, which novice teachers can use to solve their problems of classroom management. On this ground, the aim of this study is twofold: both to trace the teachers' espoused theory, and to disclose their theory-in-use to help them gain classroom management skills through reflective activities.

Methodology

The participants in this research were selected out of the novice teachers (twenty have been included in further research) who graduated from Mersin University Education Faculty. The majority of them have been engaged in the profession, the experience ranging from one to five years; in other words, they are already familiar with the conditions of classroom settings.

The background of the research is based on personal communications with the novice teachers working in the field and teacher candidates who were already taking school experience course in the ITE program to become teachers. Since these two groups sometimes shared the problems they faced, and asked for a course of action in terms of classroom management, the researchers identified that their accounts signaled the lack of classroom experience, and the solutions suggested served as the contextualized knowledge that are not normally included in books.

As for the procedure, since the research is based upon two research paradigms, as qualitative and quantitative, research tools have been developed to collect archival data under the concept of mixed-methods research (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; Dörnyei, 2007).

First of all, because the homogenous purposive sampling procedure was used (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003, p. 440) on the principle that all members who possess a certain trait or characteristic could take part in the research, the researchers sent e-mails to all the

graduates of Mersin University Education Faculty ELT Department, and asked for the participation of the volunteers. Secondly, a semi-structured questionnaire was e-mailed to the fifty voluntary participants appointed to disclose their cognition of 'classroom management' as well as their teaching experience (See Appendix 1). Under the light of the content analysis 'to obtain descriptive information about a topic' (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003), the researchers prepared two questionnaires (See Appendix 2 and Appendix 3) to reveal the cognition of 'competency' and that of 'classroom management' from the participants' point of view. As the next step, twenty participants from the group of fifty were asked to respond to the questionnaires, after which time, they were invited to give answers to the hypothetical situations of classroom management (See Appendix 4). This served as a tool to reveal the teacher's attitude towards the management problem as well as identifying the teacher in terms of teacher paradigms. Finally, five core participants were invited to a more detailed interview to find out what triggers teachers' decisions of reflection in action and reflection on action.

As for the data analysis procedures, the data of Appendix 1 have been processed using content analysis, in which inductive approach has been followed parallel to the steps determined by Fraenkel and Wallen (2003). The basic aim being to use pieces of data in order to come to a theory; first, the units of analysis have been specified, followed by the development of recurrent themes that teachers use to define the classroom management. Open coding as suggested by Strauss and Corbin, (1998) has been used to 'uncover', 'name' and 'develop' concepts by 'opening up the text and exposing the thoughts, ideas and meanings contained therein'. The recurrent themes have formed the basis of the items of Appendix 2 and Appendix 3. Sequentially, the data of Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 have been processed, referring to the teacher paradigms proposed by Roth (1991) and Wallace (1991). Under the light of these paradigms, the traditional and reflective norms have been determined as categories, and teachers' responses to the items of the two questionnaires (Appendix 2 and Appendix 3) and hypothetical situations (Appendix 4) have been classified according to their frequencies under these two categories (see Table 1). As the last step, samples from the core participant responses have been included in the study as interviews (Appendix 4) to display the possible mechanisms that trigger the decision of the teacher reflection 'in action' and 'on action', depending on the nature of the problematic situation as well as the age factor.

Preliminary Findings, Discussion and Educational Implications

The results from the analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data (See Table 1) reveal that novice teachers basically tend to be reflective practitioners, and depending on the situation, they choose to be traditional, perhaps because of their experiences of the same situations with their teachers. In some cases, they are left undecided, and sometimes inconsistent with their responses, when the espoused theory is in conflict with the theory-in use.

The bottom-up data, generated by the research tool used to reveal teachers' beliefs, attitudes and actions towards classroom management issues, show that novice teachers sometimes experience difficulties when managing the class:

1. The novice teachers' espoused theory may be in conflict with the theory in use:

    1.1. When given the following item in the questionnaire: "I think a teacher should ignore potential individual differences while teaching", the teacher disagrees with

the idea. This can be interpreted as the belief that every student is an individual, and should be dealt with individually.

1.2. But when the same teacher (p.10) is given the following question: "What would you do in the following situation-would you deal with the problem on the spot, or later?

"You have a student who is a constant source of disturbance for you and class members. While you are teaching something important, he/she pulls the hair of the girl at the front, and she cries. All the children are distracted, and the lesson is violated", the teacher's response to the situation is: "I would   punish the student with a harsh word or action." (as it can be seen, the   teacher's espoused theory and theory in-use do not coincide). On the other hand, another   teacher tends to be reflective and constructivist:

"In line with the advice of my mentor while I was doing my MA, I would not confront with my students through some challenges; in these situations, I generally write notes on a piece of paper inviting him/her for a meeting after the class, and leave it on the desk. This has always worked as a solution." (p. 9)

2. The teacher, though a novice, can use creative means of management if given the chance:

2.1. "What would you do in the following situation; would you deal with the problem on the spot, or later? "You want your students to keep their notebooks neatly, but a teenage boy shows a messy notebook to you rather rudely."

The teacher's response to the situation is: "I would hang a paper on the bulletin board in the class so that everybody can see the marks and I would write the students' names on that paper, and would give high marks to those whose notebooks are really neat." (p.2).

3. The novice teacher asks for an external help to settle the problems in the classroom:

3.1. The teachers ask for help from the school administration: "What would you do in the following situation; would you deal with the problem on the spot, or later? "You are writing on the board. Upon finishing, you see a noisy group at the back of the class throwing pieces of paper at each other. You stare at them, but they do not care."
The teacher's response to the situation is: "I would deal with the problem on the spot, I cannot ignore such behavior. I cannot tolerate that. I would certainly report it to the principal and the discipline committee" (p.5).

3.2. The teachers ask for help from families: the teacher's response to the situation is: "I would not let a problem get so serious, but in this situation, I would ask the students to inform their parents about that event, and I would ask the parents to visit the school". (p.8).

3.3. The teachers ask for help from other disciplines: the teacher's response to the situation above is, "I would deal with the problem on the spot. I am afraid I would send him to the counseling service". (p.14).

3.4. The novice teacher considers experience, which he/she yet lacks, as a significant teacher competency. "I would ask my colleagues more experienced than me, because they always suggest good solutions." (p.17).

4. The novice teacher is aware of teacher reflection, but it is not multilayered as Loughran (1996) suggests. In addition, in terms of reflection, many skip 'reflection on action', which makes it difficult for them to identify long lasting and effective solutions to emerge on their agenda in the years to come.

5. The novice teacher may not be aware of the underlying beliefs that might change the root attitudes. Under the circumstances, the novice teacher might need a confrontation to develop an awareness of the espoused theory and the theory-in-use. In ITE programs, this confrontation could be achieved by challenging the trainees through exposing them to alternative practices to show them that there is a conflict between the espoused theory and the theory-in use. This challenge can be realized effectively in real classroom contexts during the teaching practice experience, where candidate teachers will obtain more chance of observation, practice, discussion and reflection.

Preliminary findings throw light upon some issues to be handled as milestones to serve as precautions in ITE and INSET programs that prepare the teachers for the classroom reality.

- The novice teacher may not be aware of the underlying beliefs that might change the route of attitudes.
- The novice teacher's espoused theory might not realize as the theory-in-use.
- The novice teacher might need a confrontation to develop an awareness of the espoused theory and the theory-in-use.
- This confrontation could be made by challenging the teachers to mirror to them that there is a conflict between their espoused theory and their theory-in use.
- To trigger a more conscious self image as a result of mirroring, a reflective practice is necessary.

Novice, or candidate, the teacher should be allowed to evaluate the self. This evaluation can be done through a reflection on micro teaching classes in contextual environments, through peer evaluation, mentor evaluation and self evaluation during reflective practices.

Conclusion

Research conducted by teacher educators or teachers themselves breeds new situations in which teachers can reshape and reformulate their assumptions, and enhance their practices to increase the standard of their professionalism. As Chaudron (1988) states, careful evaluation of results can lead to well-informed decision making at all levels of educational planning: development of the curriculum, preparation of materials, training of teachers, preference for classroom teaching activities and techniques, decisions about individualization of instruction, and even teacher's modifications of speech in explanations.

The research based on the collaboration between novice teachers and the researchers is expected to yield results, which will help both to improve the reflective practices of the participants as teachers, and to share implications for the other teachers who consider teaching as a lifelong, constructivist profession. Teacher reflection in broader terms will serve as a key for many classroom applications, for it will free the teacher from the

dependency on some other authority to find solutions for the daily problems she/he encounters in the classroom; in addition, the teacher will become more autonomous in decision making and, it will contribute to the administration of schools. For this reason, the programs of initial teacher education (ITE) should be revised with such a solution as the objective. The curriculum of ITE should be based on courses that will invest in the teacher as an independent agent. School practice lessons need to include such issues as teacher roles and the reflection of these roles in the school environment.

The research aims to describe the current situation of classroom management from the teachers' point of view, and it aims to pinpoint that this problem can be solved through 'reflection' by educating teachers as action researchers. The studies to come can be grounded on the reflective practices and their effects on the issue of classroom management.

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TABLES

Table 1. The Distribution of Participant Responses on the Basis of Teacher Paradigms

No	Reflective Constructivist	Traditional Craft	Undecided	Inconsistent	Reflective on Action
1	14	0	1	7	0
2	14	0	1	2	3
3	10	5	0	7	1
4	14	0	1	2	2
5	12	2	1	6	2
6	14	0	1	6	1
7	14	1	0	6	1
8	11	3	1	5	0
9	14	1	0	0	4
10	15	0	0	7	1
11	15	0	0	1	1
12	11	3	1	5	0
13	15	0	0	0	0
14	9	3	3	3	3
15	14	1	0	2	2
16	15	0	0	0	2
17	11	3	1	2	2
18	15	0	0	1	2
19	14	0	1	2	8
20	10	2	3	4	2

APPENDICES

Appendix 1
Dear participant,

This form will be used for the purpose of research. Please elaborate on your answers.

Name/nickname: Teaching experience:

1-What does classroom management mean to you? What does this concept evoke in your mind?

2-Do you find it difficult to manage your classes?
a)If yes, please tell about your problems, giving specific examples.
b)If no, please tell how you can manage, giving specific examples.

3-Your other remarks on classroom management (please specify)

Appendix 2
Teacher cognition of "competency"

Name/Nickname: Gender: Teaching Experience: I think a teacher should…	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. lay the rules, and students have to obey them					
2. allow for the learning to take place by arranging the classroom					
3. let students feel free to raise a question					
4. treat all students indiscriminately					
5. attract the student attention by doing activities and tasks					
6. be competent at deciding on the pedagogical content of the lessons for learner needs					
7. consult other people in the higher rank to establish the discipline in the class					
8. be authoritative in the class to earn the respect of the students					
9. ignore the potential individual differences while teaching					
10. have spent many years in the school environment					
11. set a relaxed classroom atmosphere to facilitate a good communication					
12. be competent at teaching the lesson					
13. know all the theoretical suggestions for the effective classroom management					
14. prevent students from concentrating on other things in the class					
15. let the students discover themselves and realize that they are unique					

Appendix 3
Teacher cognition of "classroom management"

Classroom management involves ...	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. controlling the class as the boss.					
2. facilitating the classroom conditions.					
3. creating a relaxing atmosphere.					
4. suppressing such extreme feelings like love, hate, etc. to avoid bias					
5. making the lessons enjoyable for the students					
6. designing the syllabus appropriately for the students' needs.					
7. asking for help from the school authorities.					
8. being strict and harsh to gain respect.					
9. treating the students as if they were all the same in character.					
10. being experienced.					
11. facilitating the classroom for effective communication.					
12. being good at transferring the knowledge to the learners.					
13. holding many cases in your repertoire.					
14. managing to direct students' attention to the lesson.					
15. considering the students as self agents					

Appendix 4

The response of a young learner teacher (P.2) and an adult teacher (P. 6) to the situations and to the interview

A. What would you do in the following situations? Choose one of the options, and write your possible action in a few sentences, also stating what triggers you to take that action.

Teaching experience: 2 years   Learner type: Young Learner
    a. I would deal with the problem later, and ...
    b. I would deal with the problem on the spot, and ...

1. Having written something on the board in English, you see that some students have started studying for another exam with their books open in front of them.

I would remind them of importance of my lesson, and I would ask them not to study for my exam in the other lessons. I feel that I should guide them in that case.

2. You have got a student who is a constant source of disturbance for you and the class members. While you are teaching something important, he/ she pulls the hair of the girl in the front, and she squeaks. All the children are distracted, and the lesson is violated.

I would change the student's seat, and invite her/him to the front desk. I think that this will give the message that he is doing something wrong.

3. One of the students in your class is older than the others, and forces the others to obey him. You warn him a few times, but he does not seem to care for this.

I would talk to the other students who obey him and warn them. In this case, I think I can solve the problem for the longer term.

4. You are writing on the board. Upon finishing, you see a noisy group at the back of the class throwing pieces of paper at each other. You look at them, but they do not care. When the paper hits you on the head, you cannot help getting angry.

I would tell them to stay in the classroom until the lesson ends. I would act in this way, for I think this will help me in the future.

5. When you enter the class, you see that silence has fallen in the class, which is not usual. You learn that the students do not want to learn English that day, for they are in trouble with the school management, and they will be sent to the discipline board altogether.

I would not care. I keep teaching my course, and let them think the problem is serious. If you give importance to your students more than they deserve, they may get spoiled.

6. One of the students is late for the class, knocks at the door, and comes in without waiting for your permission.

I would tell the student to go out and knock at the door. I would solve the problem on the spot, because I cannot delay it, and the other students should see it.

7. You are teaching teenage students, who are vulnerable to any adult comment. You have a student who speaks Turkish in-group work, and thinks that you do not see him.

I would talk to student about the subject, but the student would feel that I particularly talk to him/her. When we raise the problem, students understand that we are aware of everything.

8. Despite reminding the school rules, you see a student chewing a gum in the class, accompanied with bubbles.

I would tell the student to throw the gum to the rubbish bin. The students should learn to be respectable to others.

9. You catch one of the students cheating in the exam using his mobile phone, and your eyes meet.

I would take the student's exam paper. This action on the spot would prevent other problems to come.

10. You want your students to keep their notebooks neatly, but a teenage boy shows a messy notebook to you rather rudely.

I would warn him. I would not ridicule him, because treating students with respect will let them gain this notion.

11. Did you have classroom management problems when you first started your profession?

Classroom management skills can be gained later in the profession, because when I first started teaching, I had difficulty managing my class, and I benefitted from my colleagues, who had been working at the same school for years. Also, it is important to ask people of that environment, because every class and every individual is different. I often keep in touch with the classroom teachers in charge of a class, because they know more about their students, and in this way I can produce more effective solutions when I understand my students better.

12. How do you define yourself as a teacher? Are you traditional or reflective? Why?

I think I am not a traditional teacher, and I am trying to be reflective since I deal with problems to produce solutions.

13. What do you generally do to establish classroom management?

When I cannot manage to overcome the problem, I ask school authorities for a solution, but this does not often happen. Instead, I resort to solutions such as raising the pitch of my voice, warning students through looks, changing their seats, or giving them tasks to involve them in the learning process.

B. What would you do in the following situations? Choose one of the options, and write your possible action in a few sentences, also stating what triggers you to take that action.

Teaching experience: 3 years   Learner type: Adult Learner

    a-I would deal with the problem later, and …
    b-I would deal with the problem on the spot, and …

1. Having written something on the board in English, you see that some students have started studying for another exam with their books open in front of them.

I would deal with the problem on the spot, and I would remind the student that I am teaching an important subject. Probably, I would joke not to break his/her heart while I am warning him/her.

2. You have got a student who is a constant source of disturbance for you and the class members. While you are teaching something important, he/ she pulls the hair of the girl in the front, and she squeaks. All the children are distracted, and the lesson is violated.

I would deal with the problem on the spot, and I would give him/her a task to be completed with his/her friends. I would assign him the leader of the group, because these students generally want to attract attention, and they enjoy being a leader in every type of situation.

3. One of the students in your class is older than the others, and forces the others to obey him. You warn him off a few times, but he does not seem to care for this.

I would deal with the problem later, and I would tell him that he cannot be an authority over his friends, and that he needs to change his attitudes since he is older. I would convince him that he should be a role model, and he should act like a role model because of his age.

4. You are writing on the board. Upon finishing, you see a noisy group at the back of the class throwing pieces of paper at each other. You look at them, but they do not care. When the paper hits you on the head, you can't help getting angry.

I would deal with the problem on the spot, and I would just keep silent until I have left the class. Silence would let them understand their mistake.

5. When you enter the class, you see that silence has fallen in the class, which is not usual. You learn that the students do not want to learn English that day, for they are in trouble with the school management, and they will be sent to the discipline board altogether.

I would deal with the problem on the spot, and I would ask what their problem is. I would try to be objective while dealing with their problem.

6. One of the students is late for the class, knocks at the door, and comes in without waiting for your permission.

I would deal with the problem on the spot, and I would joke at him "thanks for asking for my permission"

7. You are teaching teenage students, who are vulnerable to any adult comment. You have a student who speaks Turkish in group work, and thinks that you do not see him.

I would deal with the problem on the spot, and I would tell him/her that this is not a Turkish lesson, and that if he continued to speak Turkish, he would be sent out of the classroom.

8. Despite reminding the school rules, you see a student chewing a gum in the class, accompanied with bubbles.

I would deal with the problem on the spot, and I would want him/her to stop chewing his/her gum. Maybe, I can chew a gum like him/her, and I would show him/her that this is not a kind thing in a classroom.

9. You catch one of the students cheating in the exam using his mobile phone, and your eyes meet.

I would deal with the problem on the spot, and I would take the paper and the phone. I would tell the problem to the manager.

10. You want your students to keep their notebooks neatly, but a teenage boy shows a messy notebook to you rather rudely.

I would deal with the problem later, and I would convince him to be neat.

11. Did you have classroom management problems when you first started your profession?

I did not encounter any problems while I was working in a language course. Since the students had intrinsic motivation to learn English, they were ready for learning, and I was happy in the course of teaching. However, when I started to work for this institution, where the students have extrinsic motivation to learn English, I have encountered many problems.

12. How do you define yourself as a teacher? Are you traditional or reflective? Why?From my point of view, I am a typical reflective 21st century language teacher, who is interested in finding solutions for the problems by conducting researches in her own classroom setting.

13. What do you generally do to establish classroom management?

Due to the problems, I began to establish the rules with my students at the very beginning of the year. I told them things I cannot tolerate, and they told me the things they asked me to do. In this way, at least in my third year, I have not experienced any problems so far.