



CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES USED BY SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: A STATUS STUDY

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Abstract

The present study focuses on tackling issues related to the problems of discipline in the classrooms. To many teachers and to those who are novices in the field of teaching, handling such disruptive behaviour is a Herculean task. The investigator concludes that teachers are aware of various classroom management strategies and the techniques used by them.

Key Words:- Classroom Management, Strategies, Secondary School, Teachers



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Introduction :-

The classroom is a place where teaching and learning takes place. It comprises of learners which includes children as well as adults depending on the factors at what level and age the teaching – learning activities take place.

Students form the core essence of the classroom. No form of learning can take place without students.

A classroom comprises of students coming from diverse backgrounds, different learning abilities, linguistic differences etc. A teacher before entering the classroom plans out the work schedule, makes apt lesson plans, prepares worksheets, assignments etc. The role of the teacher is that of an able, efficient administrator, a controller, a demonstrator, a resource person and a manager of the classroom.

The teacher makes an entry in the classroom with pre- decided agenda to accomplish the educational goals within a particular time line. It is at this juncture that the teacher encounters various issues related to discipline in the class where the students move astray from the learning mode to disruptive behaviour. The teacher has to find out ways and means to manage and tackle the class in a very calm and composed manner.

Classroom Management is one of the most important components of effective teaching – learning process. Maintaining order in the classroom is one of the greatest challenges the teacher encounters in the class. Here the teacher has to devise various strategies to rule out such unexpected behaviour of the learners and work as a manager to find out ways and means to tackle the problems in the classroom.

Classroom Management is essentially the way in which a teacher creates a set of expectations that students must adhere to, it includes a set of routines, consequences and rules which help to create a learning environment in which students can thrive, (Twincl,n.d.)

Characteristics of effective classroom ;

The key indicators that would be more conducive to learning are :-

- A) Students must comprehend from their teachers the kind of expectations they are supposed to abide by .
- B) Rules should be clear and concise and must be displayed in the classrooms.
- C) The consequences of the students behaviour should be clearly indicated to them.
- D) Learners must be constantly engaged so as to get the best chance of success .
- E) Development of lessons must be based on the interest of the learners and their ability .
- F) Including a variety of activities such as group discussions, role play can meet the needs of the students with different learning styles
- G) Focus in an effective classroom is student
- H) Students in an ideal classroom are able to see the connection between what they are learning and real life.

Good managerial skills by the teacher helps to have control of the class thus making teaching - learning activity more interesting . It fosters positivity among the students achievement and their behaviour.

Need of the Study :

In a class of students with divergent kind of background, different behavioural patterns it becomes difficult for the teacher to go ahead with the pre – decided schedule due to discipline problems. The question of adopting appropriate strategies for providing learning experiences

and organizing teacher – pupil activities is crucial for the effective use of curricular content and achievement of curricular objectives. (Mathew T.K. 2013) It could be due to a single student or sometimes as a group that creates problem in the class. The problems could arise in the following manner

- Creating noise while the class is in progress
- Talking when other students are answering
- Non – adherence to the instructions given by the teacher
- Being lethargic and not doing the given work on time
- Moving unnecessarily in the class
- Trying to draw the attention of the fellow students
- Making the teacher more anxious

The investigator being a secondary school teacher felt the need to have a deeper insight of such problems and was struck by the following questions.

Are the Secondary School teachers aware about Classroom Management?

Are the teachers using any Classroom Management strategies in their classes to tackle any unexpected problems in the class?

Statement of the Problem :

To assess the existing status of awareness among secondary school teachers regarding Classroom Management and the techniques used by them for managing their classes.

Explanation of the Statement :

- A classroom is a mosaic with a variety of learners with different intelligent calibre, capability and behavioural patterns.
- The teacher in order to bring all the learners on a common platform has to engage the learners in various activities to attain the educational goals.
- The role of the teacher is that of a manager to maintain the decorum of the class.

Definitions of the Key Terms :

Conceptual definitions

- 1) **Classroom Management:** As per the definition given in ed glossary, classroom management refers to the wide variety of skills and techniques that teachers use to keep the students organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task and academically productive during a class.
- 2) **Strategies:** According to Oxford Dictionary, Strategy is a plan that is intended to achieve a particular purpose.

- 3) **Secondary School:** Dictionary.com defined it as a high school or a school of corresponding grade, ranking between a primary school and a college or university.
- 4) **Teachers:** According to Oxford Learners Dictionary, teacher is a person whose job is teaching, especially in a school.
- 5) **Awareness :** As per the Cambridge Dictionary, it refers to the mental state of knowing about something.

Operational definitions.

- 1) **Classroom Management:** In the present study, Classroom Management refers to the ways and means by which the teachers assess and have control over the students behaviour in the classroom based on the aspects of Classroom Management namely Seating Arrangement, Rules and Discipline, Time Management, Teacher Behaviour and Student Behaviour.
- 2) **Strategies:** In the current study it refers to the various activities planned by the teacher in order to achieve the educational goals.
- 3) **Secondary School:** It refers to schools affiliated to the SSC Board having standard IX and X.
- 4) **Teachers:** In the present study it refers to a trained person skilled in teaching in a school with specialisation in a particular subject.
- 5) **Awareness :** In the current study it refers to the knowledge that the teachers have about the concept of Classroom Management and different techniques used by them to have control over the behaviour of the students in the classroom .

Objectives of the Study :

- 1) To assess the existing status of awareness among secondary school teachers regarding Classroom Management
- 2) To find out the techniques used by them for Classroom Management in English Language Classroom.

Scope, Delimitations and Limitations :

Scope

- 1) The current study focuses on Secondary Schools.
- 2) The present study is concerned with Classroom Management Strategies used by teachers in their classrooms.

Delimitations

- 1) The current survey is delimited to the teachers teaching English Language to Std IX in schools affiliated to the SSC Board in Pune city.
- 2) Teachers from only English Medium schools affiliated to the SSC Board in Pune city were considered in this study.

Limitations:

- 1) The results of the study are based on the responses given by the school teachers.
- 2) The investigator had no control over the interest, motivation, fatigue of the respondents.

Research Method :

Survey Method

The researcher has selected the survey method in order to study the existing status of awareness among school teachers regarding Classroom Management and the strategies used by them for the management of their classes.

Significance of the Survey Method

The survey method gathers data from a relatively large number of cases at a particular time. It is not concerned with the characteristics of individuals. It is concerned with the statistics that result when data are abstracted from a number of individual cases. (Kahn & Best ,2010)

Each of these aspects covered five close-ended statements. Thus, total rating scale comprised of 25 statements. In addition to these 25 statement, there were two open – ended questions that featured on the following factors.

- 1) Different means to manage a language class effectively.
- 2) Ways to solve the problems of indiscipline in the class.

Population and Sample : Purposive Sample

Population

For the current study, the researcher, has selected 40 schools where English is taught as first language in Pune city and affiliated to the SSC Board.

Sample

33 schools were selected having English as the First Language in Std IX by the researcher.

Tools for the Survey :

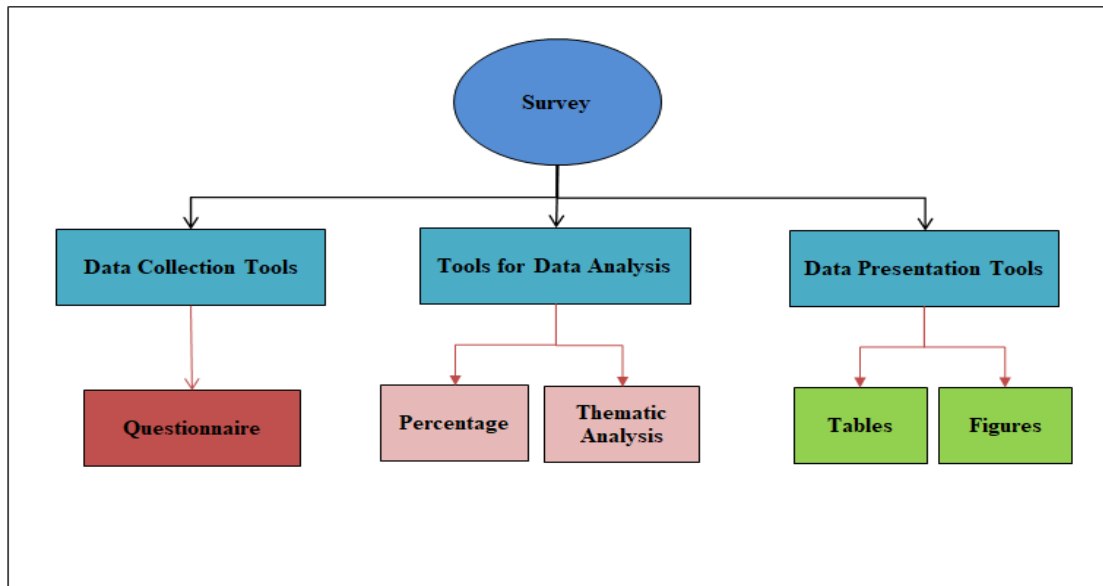


Figure 1 – Tools used for the Survey

Objectives of the Questionnaire :

The study was conducted to assess the awareness among Secondary school teachers regarding Classroom Management and the strategies used by them for managing their classes which was based on five aspects of Classroom Management.

- Seating Arrangement
- Rules and Discipline
- Time Management
- Teacher Behaviour
- Student Behaviour

Each of these aspects covered using five statements. A rating scale using the following key was used to express the teacher's opinion. They were classified as follows: -

- SD – indicating Strongly disagree
- D - indicating Disagree
- A - indicating Agree
- SA - indicating Strongly Agree

Steps involved in preparing the Questionnaire

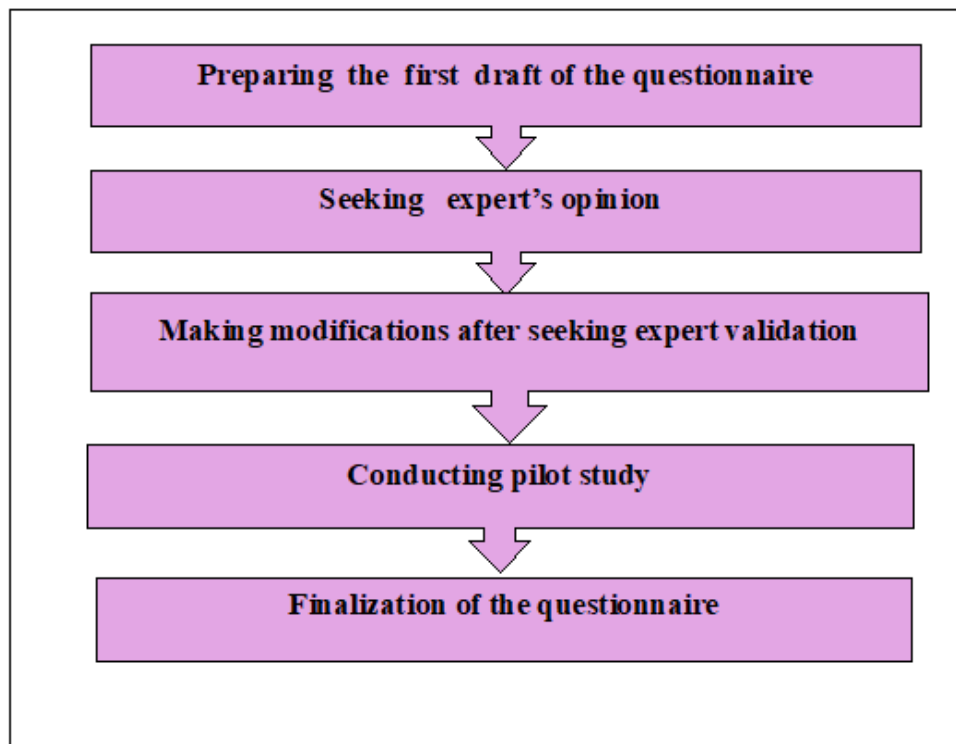


Figure 2 – Steps for developing the Questionnaire

Data Analysis :

Analysis of the responses regarding the awareness among secondary school teachers about Classroom Management and techniques used by them for Classroom Management (close-ended items)

Quantitative Analysis

Table 1

Aspect 1: SEATING ARRANGEMENT

Item. No	Statements	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
1	Seating Arrangement is important for effective Classroom Management			27.28	77.72
2	Face -To- Face Seating Arrangement facilitates smooth interaction between the students and the teacher.			45.45	54.55
3	Appropriate Seating Arrangement reduces distraction for better Classroom Management.			30.30	69.70
4	Seating arrangement helps in creating interest in students.		12.12	42.43	45.45
5	Seating arrangement results in orderliness in the classroom and eliminates individual differences by working together in groups.		3.03	51.52	45.45

Observation:

The above table shows that majority of the teachers 77.72% strongly favoured. the first aspect of Classroom Management that is Seating Arrangement in the classroom. 54.55 % of the teachers strongly opined that face- to- face interaction paves the way for better inter – action in the classroom. 69.70 % of the teachers strongly agreed that appropriate seating arrangement in the classroom lessened distraction in the classroom.

The views about Seating Arrangement helped in creating interest in the learners, some teachers were not in favour of this aspect. This featured 12.12% of the teachers. Views regarding maintaining orderliness in the classroom and eliminating individual differences 51.52% agreed. There were a few disagreements on this aspect and this contributed to only 3.03%.as they were used to a particular pattern of placing students in the class.

Interpretation:

The teachers have a favourable opinion about the seating arrangement in the classroom which is an important aspect of Classroom Management. Only 3% of the teachers who have some fixed notions and unclear about allotting seats in a particular way among the learners have a different opinion. as they are used to the stereo- type pattern of assigning seats to students in the classroom.

Table 2
Aspect 2: RULES AND DISCIPLINE

Item. No	Statements	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
6	Laying down rules for discipline helps in monitoring the activities of the students		3.04	48.48	48.48
7	It is important to assign task to every student for better Classroom Management		3.03	39.40	57.57
8	For better Classroom Management, teachers should supervise the students and abide by the rules laid down		3.03	33.34	63.63
9	Students should be involved in making rules for discipline in the classroom.	3.03	3.03	36.37	57.57
10	It is essential to display the formulated rules in the classroom.		6.06	45.46	48.48

Observation:

Pertaining to the second important aspect of Classroom Management, Rules and Discipline forms an essential core for the smooth functioning in the classroom. The above table shows

that 48.48 % of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that rules and discipline help in keeping a vigil on the students in order to monitor their activities 57.57 % of the teachers strongly opined that rule should be formulated by the students too thus creating a conducive learning ambience. 63.63% of the teachers strongly agreed that during the activities the teacher’s role is crucial so as to ensure that the learners abide by the rules formulated by the learners as well as the teacher.57.57% of the teachers strongly agreed with the view that assigning tasks to every learner was essential as if will make them do their tasks abiding by the rules laid down in the class. 48.48% of the teachers strongly agreed that it was essential to display the formulated rules in the classroom which will be a constant reminder to them to abide by the rules.

Interpretation:

The teachers have a strong opinion that rules that form an essential core of Classroom Management. It involves both the learners as well as the teacher who are involved in formulating them and displaying in the classroom.

Table 3
Aspect 3: TIME MANAGEMENT

Item. No	Statements	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
11	Students completing their task on time is a feature of Classroom Management	3.03		57.58	39.39
12	Teachers should provide appropriate timeline for completing timely assigned tasks			36.36	63.64
13	Sufficient wait-time for students to complete the activities is necessary for effective Classroom Management	12.12		42.42	45.46
14	By laying down Golden Rules in the classroom, students are expected to work within the time limit		3.03	60.61	36.36
15	In an effectively managed class, students learn to be accountable for completing their tasks within a stipulated time			48.48	51.52

Observation:

In relation to the third aspect of Classroom Management - Time Management which plays a significant role the views by the teachers were 57.58 % agreed students must complete their assigned task within a stipulated time. 63.64% agreed that learners must be provided appropriate timeline for accomplishing their assigned work. 45.46% of the teachers strongly

agreed that it was necessary to give the students wait time to complete their activities .60.61 % teachers agreed that it was imperative to lay down Golden Rules for the smooth functioning in the classroom so that the learners abide by the rules and complete their assigned tasks on time .51.52% of the teachers strongly agreed that in an effectively managed classroom, students learn to be more organised. `

Interpretation:

The teachers have a favourable opinion regarding the third aspect of Classroom Management -Time Management. Managing time judiciously enables the learners to be accountable and responsible in attaining their educational goals.

Table 4
Aspect 4: TEACHER BEHAVIOUR

Item. No	Statements	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
16	Preparing materials in advance is an essential feature of Classroom Management			24.24	75.76
17	Teacher provides opportunity to every learner to speak out his opinion for effective Classroom Management		3.03	42.42	54.55
18	Reflection by the teacher results in better Classroom Management.			42.43	57.57
19	Teacher is flexible and remains alert for the unexpected behaviour of the students in the classroom.			42.43	57.57
20	Clarity in explanation should be made by the teacher for effective Classroom Management			9.10	90.90

Observation:

Pertaining to the management of the classroom the Teacher’s Behaviour plays a significant role. 75.76 % of the teachers have strongly expressed that the teacher should be well equipped with proper teaching material in order to make his /her class too effective. 54.55% supported the fact that the teacher should initiate in giving every learner a golden chance to express their views while the topic is being discussed upon. 57.57 % opined that the teacher should introspect and find better ways and means in case they encounter any kind of unexpected behaviour in the classroom. Teacher should be clear and precise in his / her explanation so as to avoid any kind of ambiguity was strongly favoured by 90.90 % of the teachers .

Interpretation:

Teacher plays a crucial role for effective Classroom Management. Teacher at times have to be flexible and adaptable when unexpected behaviour is cited in the classroom. Only 3.03 % teachers feel that all students may not get an equal opportunity in the class to participate as they have certain fixed notions about only a few dominant students participating actively in the classroom. The teacher’s words of praise, encouragement will always make the learners do their work more efficiently and with greater dedication.

Table 5
Aspect 5: STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

Item. No	Statements	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
21	Students’ active participation is an indicator of good Classroom Management.			33.33	66.67
22	Students remain focused on tasks			45.45	54.55
23	By working in groups, students help in developing communication skills for better Classroom Management			24.24	75.76
24	Students learn to assess their own performance.			60.61	39.39
25	Students learn to take responsibility for their learning			51.52	48.48

Observation:

Pertaining to the aspect of Classroom Management , Student Behaviour too is significant for the smooth functioning in the classroom. 75.76 % of teachers have strongly agreed that working in groups helps in fostering better communication skills. 66.67 % of them have strongly agreed that learners participate in all the activities of the class enabling them to overcome their inhibitions.

Interpretation:

The teachers have a very strong opinion about the behavioural aspect of the learners. They tend to overcome their shyness as working in groups enable them to be focused towards their assigned tasks. It allows them to introspect themselves as they are capable of assessing their own performance by trying to improvise upon the errors made by them and also learn to shoulder the responsibility for their own learning. They are also able to interact confidently thus enabling them to communicate better.

Qualitative Analysis of the Open-Ended Questions :

1) Different ways to manage a Language Classroom effectively

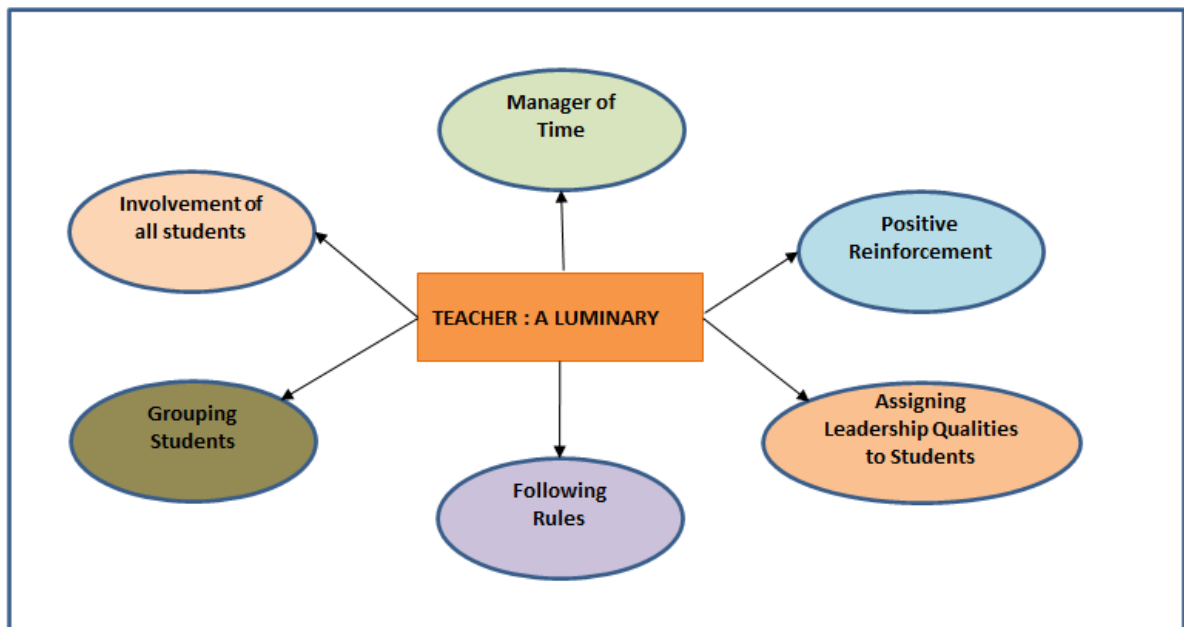


Figure 3 – Teacher’s ways to manage a Language Classroom

DISCUSSION: A classroom comprises of various types of learners. No two learners are unique in intelligence and behavioural patterns. The teacher devises various strategies to bring all the learners on a common platform. These include

- Dividing the class into smaller groups and assigning tasks to all the members of the group.
- While the students discuss in their groups, they are designated a particular seating arrangement so that they do not leave their place in between.
- Rules are formulated with the help of the learners as well as the teacher and put up in the classroom.
- Students are given assignments to be completed within the time limit so as to inculcate the value of time and are rewarded points, merits after accomplishing the desired goals.
- Working in groups fosters healthy and competitive spirit among the members of different groups
- Students learn to appreciate each other’s views without criticising one another.
- Students learn to share the responsibility and accountability as a team.

2) Ways of solving the problem of indiscipline in the class

The researcher classified the problems of indiscipline in the class as expressed by the school teachers into two different phases.

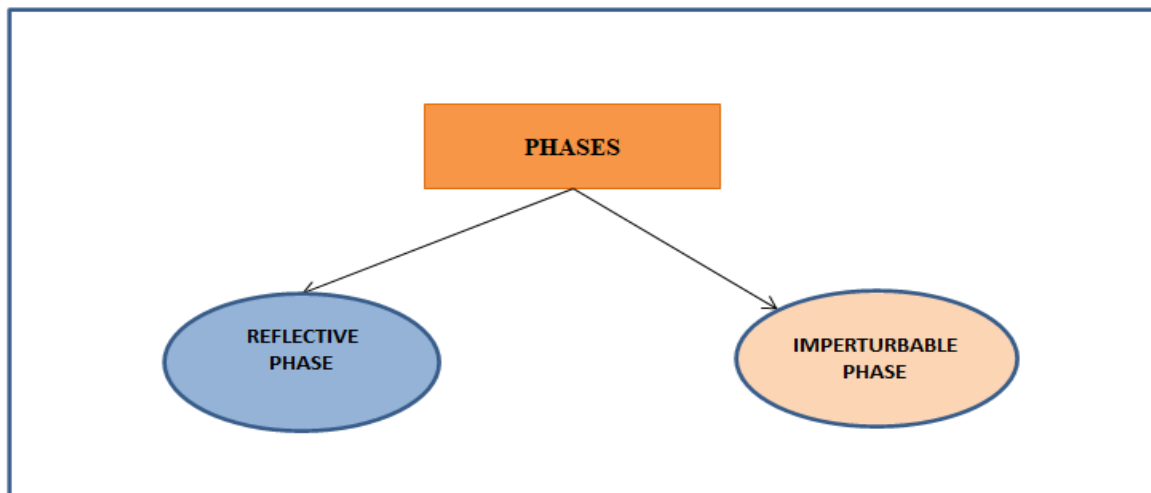


Figure 4 – Teacher’s ways to resolve indiscipline in the Classroom

➤ **Reflective Phase**

- Probing the root cause of indiscipline.
- Engaging students with interesting activities.
- Adopting new strategies of teaching such as puzzles, crossword, word building, forming word registers and quiz
- Refrain from labelling the students in a negative way.
- Teacher as a mentor

➤ **Imperturbable Phase**

- Taking the students into confidence
- Addressing the students by their names fosters closeness between the teacher and the taught. (Vedanayagam 1989)
- Constructing the bridge of trust.
- Formulating rules in the class with the help of the students.
- Making students accountable and responsible for their behaviour.
- Organizing interesting activities.

Findings as per objectives based on the following factors

1) Awareness

- a) The school teachers are aware of the disturbances in the classroom so divides them into small groups and organizes puzzles , games ,crossword , word register etc to divert the minds of the learners from distractions.
- b) Teacher is friendly , but remains consistent with the actions of the behaviour of the learners .

2) Techniques used by the teachers

- a) The teacher formulates the rules of the class with the help of the students by accepting their inputs too and engages the students in group activities.
- b) The teacher shoulders the responsibilities of the class to those who are indulged in creating problems in the classroom .

Conclusions as per the objectives

1) Awareness

Playing the role of a facilitator helps the teacher to actively involve all the learners to get focused and be engrossed in the inter- active learning process.

2) Techniques used by the teachers

Structuring the class into small groups and assigning role to every student helps the teacher to elicit responses from the students and ensures that the tasks are completed within the time line.

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