

TEACHER'S STRATEGIES IN GETTING STUDENTS' ATTENTIONS DURING TRANSITION (A CASE STUDY ON AN ENGLISH TEACHER IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN BANDUNG)

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Abstract: This article focuses on the teacher's strategies in getting the students' attention during transition. Since students could not proceed classroom activities without paying attention to the teacher's instruction, various strategies in getting the students' attention are necessary. This study employed a qualitative research method, particularly a case study design. The data were collected through five observations and two interviews. The participants of this study were an English teacher and a class of third grade students in a state elementary school in Bandung. The findings revealed that the teacher used desisting, chant, sound, clapping and singing a song in getting students' attention.

Keywords: *Transitional strategies, classroom management*

Introduction

Effective classroom management is important in all teaching and learning processes, including English; however, some teachers find it difficult to do. Effective classroom management is relevant with effective teaching and learning process since effective classroom management lets the students know what behaviors are expected, what goals are to be achieved in the end of the process, and what possible factors minimize any disruptive actions. On the other hand, effective classroom management also relates to students' achievement because it allocates students with sufficient time to understand the materials and do the task.

One of the most crucial things in classroom management is the transition. A classroom transition is defined as "the time and routine involved in changing from one activity to another" (Steere, 1988, cited in Geffers, 2007). Transition is the

changing from one subject to another, one class to another and one activity to another activity. Since scaffolding requires teachers to set up several activities within process, transition occurs several times and it is challenging for teacher since behavior problems and time wasting are likely to occur. To deal with problems in transition, getting students' attention cannot be denied. Students' attention is crucial because students cannot learn or follow teacher's instruction if they do not pay attention. Considering those reasons, this study tried to elaborate what strategies the teacher uses to get the students attention during transitional time.

- Classroom management

There is no exception that effective classroom management should be successfully carried out in elementary schools since students in elementary schools have different characteristics. Elementary students are easier and better in learning language compared to older students especially in imitating accent (Cameron, 2001) but they have difficulties in following direction, keeping prolong attention, and keeping themselves from distraction; they are so easily distracted. With effective classroom management, teacher could manage the students and have smooth teaching and learning processes.

To teach elementary students with characteristics above, Bruner (1983, cited in Cameron, 2001) presents theories on how children learn language. Bruner suggests one of the teaching strategies for children is using scaffolding by setting up several routines or activities during the process of teaching and learning in the classroom.

- Transitional Strategies

The transition process does not take place easily since elementary school students have different characteristics compared to other levels of students. They naturally love to play, speak, (Halliwell, 1992) and not yet able to focus on their attention and remember the whole task (Cameron, 2001). Transition is not easy for

elementary school teachers because transition is challenging (Sprick, Garrison, & Howard, 1998 cited in McIntosh et al, 2004) and tends to be more stressful and a hard moment especially for elementary classroom (Gallick and Lee, 2010) because during transition behavioral problems are likely to arise (Sprick, Garrison, & Howard, 1998 cited in McIntosh et al, 2004; Kounin, 1970 cited in Lewis, 2009) and potentially consume instructional times and teacher's energy.

To have smooth transition teachers need to develop strategies and ideas to overcome students' behavioral problems and to save time. One of the best ways is by getting students' attention. To get students' attention, teacher's voice sometimes is not the best tools. Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering (2003). Geffers (2007) states that the best way to get students' attention is by using signal.

Methodology

The research was qualitative research and designed as a case study. Case study explores in depth a program, event, activity, a process, and one or more individuals. Case study is bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time (Stake, 2010)

The research was conducted in a public elementary school in Bandung. The participants of the research were a class of third grade students and their English teacher. It was a big class with 47 students, which consisted of 25 female students and 22 male students.

To find out the teacher's strategies, interview and observation were used. The data are collected in three steps. The first step was interviewing the teacher's experiences in teaching the class. The next step is observing the teaching and learning process in the classroom by videotaping.

While the process was recorded, the field note also taken. The process was recorded so that it could be reviewed to get better understanding. First of all, the data from observation sheet and field notes were transcribed, afterwards it was coded and

categorized. The data were categorized into two categorizations: the teacher's strategies and students' responses. After the data were categorized, it were interpreted and discussed.

Similar process was applied to the interview. The interview which was recorded was replayed and transcribed. After the data were transcribed, it was coded and it was categorized. The data from interview were also categorized as the teacher's strategies and students' responses. The data then were added to previous data from observation. Finally, it was interpreted and discussed.

- The strategies used by the teacher to get the students' attention

Based on the data gained from the observations and interviews, the teacher applied variety of strategies to get the students' attention. These strategies were categorized based on their characteristics and it is shown that the teacher applied 5 different types of strategies to get the students' attention during the teaching and learning process. These strategies were desisting, sound, chant, clapping and singing a song. The kinds of strategies applied by the teacher and their examples can be seen in the following table.

Table 1 The Strategies that the Teacher Used to Get the Students' Attention

Strategies	Examples of the strategy
Desisting	1. The teacher said "Hey....hey...hey" 2. The teacher said "attention please"
Chant	The teacher said " <i>tutup mulut</i> " and the students replay with "hap"
Sound	The teacher hit the board with marker or ruler to make some sound.
Singing a song	The teacher started to sing and the students sang along.
Clapping	The teacher said " <i>tepuk semangat</i> (spirit clap)" out loud, and the students followed the teacher's instructions by doing the clap

The application of the strategies above varied from one observation to another. The teacher's application of each strategy is presented in the table below.

Table 2 Distribution of Each Strategy in Every Transitional Phase and Observations

Transition Number	Observation 1	Observation 2	Observation 3	Observation 4	Observation 5
Transition 1	Desisting 1 Desisting2 Desisting 3	Desisting 1 Desisting2 Desisting 3	Sound 1 Desisting 1	Desisting 1 Sound 1	Desisting 1 Desisting 2
Transition 2	Desisting 4 Desisting 5 Desisting 6	Desisting 4 Chant 1 Chant 2 Sound 1 Chant 3 Chant 4	Sound 2 Chant 1 Chant 2 Clapping 1	Desisting 2 Singing 1	Desisting 3
Transition 3	-	Desisting 5	Desisting 2	-	Sound 1

The table shows that, in observation 1, the teacher only applied desisting strategy, both in transition 1 and transition 2, while in transition 3 the teacher did not apply any transition strategies.

In observation 2, the teacher started to use and combine different kinds of strategies. As it is presented in the table above, in observation 2, the teacher applied 3 types of strategy, namely desisting, chant and sound. The teacher applied the chant strategy three times and applied sound strategy once.

In observation 3 the teacher added another strategy. In this observation, the teacher applied clapping strategy in transition 2. Clapping strategy was applied once, and so other strategies such as desisting and chat were dominated in observation 3.

The teacher also applied 'new' strategy in observation 4. In observation 4, the teacher applied singing strategy to get the students' attention. In transition 2, the teacher asked the students to sing along with him, as it is shown in the table, the teacher and the students sung 'one, two, three' song.

There was no new strategy in observation 5. In observation 5, the teacher only applied two types of the strategy, namely desisting and sound to get the students' attention. The teacher also did not use clapping or singing in this observation even though these strategies were used in the earlier observations. During the five observations, the teacher applied total of 19 desisting strategies, 5 sound strategies, 5 chant strategies, 1 clapping strategy and 1 singing strategy.

It has been proven in this study that one of the classroom management strategies is transitional strategy. This phenomenon supports Fox (2009) theory stating that transitional strategy plays an important role in classroom management. As it has been mentioned earlier that third grade students cannot focus on something in a long period.

The most applied strategy by the teacher in this research is desisting. It is also found out that, this strategy is the most often used strategy in all phases. As a reminder, desisting is any actions the teacher takes to restrain behavioral problem in order to continue the lesson. The usage of desisting as transitional strategies was also in line with Steere (1998, cited in Geffers, 2007) who stated that teacher can use desisting to deal with students who do not follow the transition process. On the interview, the teacher also confirmed that he often used desisting to get the students' attention. Desisting can be in the form of verbal or non verbal ways. In this case, the teacher used verbal desisting such as by saying "hey...hey" or "pay attention, please"

Other strategies that the teacher used such as sound, chant, clapping and singing a song were in line with Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering (2003) and Geffers (2007) who stated that the best way to get students' attention is by using signal. The signal could be in the form of audio or visual. In this case, the signal the teacher used was audio signal such as in sound, clapping, chant and singing a song.

The use of clapping, chant and singing a song were also suitable strategies for children, since Halliwell (1992) stated that the children loves to sing and play. By using clapping, chant and singing the students' attention were gathered unwittingly and the students were also happy.

Conclusion

For teachers, developing fun transition strategies is necessary. Fun transition strategies not only help teachers to put students in order, but also work as students' refreshing activity in classroom. Teachers can develop strategies based on young learner's characteristics who love to have fun. Teachers can also add some other types of strategies to make it easier for them to deal with chaotic transition.

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