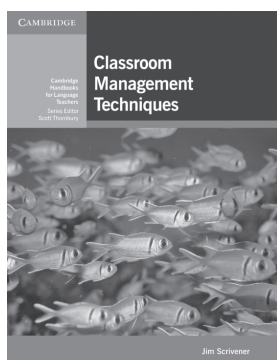


Classroom Management Techniques

JIM SCRIVENER

Cambridge University Press, 2012

REVIEWED BY ARIZIO SWEETING



Of the various roles a teacher can play in the classroom, that of the classroom manager is by far the most important. Developing classroom management skills is a complex process which can be a positive challenge for an experienced teacher, but a very daunting experience for those who are new or learning to organise the classroom setting. Classroom management requires a change of behaviour, an ability to take risks and a constant process of making decisions about how to organise, control or relinquish control in the classroom. For this reason, a book such as *Classroom Management Techniques*, another title in the extensive Cambridge

Handbook for Language Teachers series, is an essential resource for any language practitioner interested in creating an optimal environment for their learners.

Classroom Management Techniques is organised into seven chapters packed with useful and practical techniques for teachers in a broad range of contexts, and it offers a plethora of strategies for dealing with different classroom management issues. Each chapter, namely 'The Classroom', 'The Teacher', 'The Learners', 'Key Interventions', 'Facilitating Interactions', 'Establishing and Maintaining Appropriate Behaviour' and 'The Lesson', is divided into subsections, or units, and every unit starts with a question about a classroom management problem. This is then followed by the unit's aims, a discussion about the unit's topic and detailed and easy-to-follow instructions for related classroom management techniques. For instance, one of my favourite units in the book is 'Gestures and Facial Expression', which covers a range of different techniques to help teachers reduce unnecessary teacher talk when giving instructions or explanations. As Scrivener points out, 'gestures and expressions add a crucial element to instructions and explanations. They provide visual support that helps learners to understand what

is being said. They also allow the teacher to say less, which by itself may help to make the instructions or explanations clearer' (p. 56). In this unit, there are seven pages of illustrations as well as guidelines for showing teachers the usefulness of gestures and facial expressions. One of the techniques presented exploits the use of eye contact in the classroom such as making an undramatic shift of focus by looking at one student for a while and then moving on to another student when talking with them during pair or group work. Like other units in the book, this unit ends with questions for reflection encouraging the reader to use the material to evaluate their classroom practice by analysing each of the issues presented more closely.

Generally speaking, I find it difficult to fault *Classroom Management Techniques*. The book is a valuable teacher training tool and I would highly recommend it for teachers-in-training on pre-service programmes such as CELTA, where quick acquisition of classroom management skills within a short period of time is required. For example, one chapter of the book which is of great benefit to CELTA trainee teachers is 'Key Interventions'. It brings together 14 enormously helpful strategies to help teachers evaluate their classroom behaviour in order to better cater for their learners, such as recognising elements of an instruction. From my point of view as a trainer, simple things like being able to identify when one activity finishes and a new one begins can often be ignored or taken for granted by learner teachers. In *Classroom Management Techniques*, Scrivener offers a number of ideas for teachers to become more aware of certain important instruction elements, like giving learners a brief summary of the task and its purpose, clarifying task procedure, being explicit with the mode (spoken or written) of task completion, the timing for the activity, and much more.

In summary, *Classroom Management Techniques* is not a book which promises to resolve all the classroom problems which teachers could encounter in all teaching contexts around the world; rather, it is a guide which language teachers can refer to when they need techniques, strategies and approaches for a particular classroom situation. The book is very user-friendly and easy to read. At the end of the book, teachers will find an index for helping them easily locate information in the book as well as a classroom management booklist with references to reliable titles related to the topic. Having recently finished teaching on a CELTA course where I was able to share some of the valuable techniques this book provides with my trainees, I can confidently say that *Classroom Management Techniques* is a resource that any teacher who truly cares for the smooth running of their classroom must have in their library.

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A year of subversive activity for the ELT classroom

LUKE MEDDINGS & LINDSAY CLANDFIELD

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REVIEWED BY MICHAEL GRIFFIN

'This book is not for everyone' – this is what the authors of *52*, Lindsay Clandfield and Luke Meddings, write in the introduction of their new e-book, published by The Round. *52* aims to bridge the gap between what often happens in classrooms around the world and what is actually going on in the world, and to give students and teachers a chance to think and talk about real world issues in a critical way. In my view, the book was extremely successful in meeting this goal.

Billed as 'a year of subversive activity', the book is divided into 52 different sections with occasionally innocuous and vague titles like 'same', 'poem', 'school', 'running', and 'space' arranged alphabetically. This means that teachers will probably have to skim the entries as they try to find something suitable for their class. While it is stand-alone book,