



Factors that Affect Classroom Management in English Classes with Reference to Gore High School, South West Ethiopia

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Abstract

This study focused on identifying factors that affect classroom management in English classes and tried to give suggestions for the identified problems. The data were collected from Gore High School grade nine students, and English teachers who teach grade nine. The sample consisted of 213 students, and four English teachers. Then the data were collected and interpreted using qualitative and quantitative data analysis method. Especially, observation, questionnaires/open-ended and close-ended/ and interview were used as data gathering tools. Lastly, based on the result, conclusion and recommendations were made. Some of the findings were identified as negatively impacting on classroom management activities were large number of students in the classroom, poor ability of the teachers in managing classroom activities and school management that did not take satisfactory measures on misbehaved students counted as some factors that affect classroom management. To minimize these problems the researcher recommended that the school should request the society and different organizations to build additional classrooms; taking satisfactory measures on students who always misbehave in the classroom.

Keywords: *Classroom; Management; Misbehave*

Introduction

When thinking about teaching –learning process, classroom management cannot be ignored. Small class generally provides more opportunities for feedback and discussion than large class. Large class is usually measured in terms of the number of students per teacher (student-teacher ratio). According to Harmer (1991), 25-30 students per teacher is considered large, while in some countries this is seen to be normal or even quite small. On the other hand, teachers' perception on large class may vary for different reasons. These are, due to large number of students there will be no space for teachers to walk around students, students are unable to see the blackboard, and a lot of noises distract some students during group work. It is true that class size and problems related with managing class can in one way or another, influence classroom management.

Men Weyelet M. /2005/notes that classroom management couldn't be effective in large classes. He emphasizes that if the class size is not suitable or proportional with the number of students, it is impossible to manage the classroom activities. Smaller classes in other words, are found more effective when the lesson involves higher –level cognitive skills including application analysis and synthesis. Therefore, the lessons which are given at high school level need higher level of cognitive skills. That is the reason why smaller classes are more effective than the large ones.

Atkins et al. (1995) say that classroom management is a crucial issue in English Language Teaching (ELT) Class in Ethiopian school where the average class size likely to be between 60 and 90. That means when the class size is not proportional with number of students, it is difficult to manage classroom activities .The same is true of Gore High School, especially in grade nine where there are 80 students assigned to each selection ,it is very difficult to manage class room activities in English classes . So, this problem needs immediate solution after conducting a study.

Statement of the Problem

Nowadays, classroom management seems to be the crucial issue in many parts of the world, especially, in developing countries. Atkins (1995) notes that creating healthy conditions of learning in large classes is a serious challenge for the teachers of English as Foreign Language. In addition, Harmer (1950:235) notes the following:

Classroom management includes the role of teachers, student grouping in and disruptive behaviour. This will show that classroom management skills are important since to ensure the success of the teacher and the activities that used. The best effective activities can be made almost users if the teacher does not organize them properly and disruptive behaviour can spoil the best classes if it is not checked.

Similarly, the researcher has observed and experienced from his long teaching experiences when students misbehaved and disrespect their teacher while he or she teaches, especially, where a large numbers of students exist. This makes classroom management too complex to manage. When we think of the classroom situation in local schools in Ethiopia, classroom management demands the application of effective strategies which create conducive and healthy environment since a number student in each class in average 60 or more than that.

Thus, study tries to address the major factors that hinder classroom management at Gore High School, and attempts to answer the following basic questions:

what are the major factors that affect classroom management in English classes in Grade Nine?

what should English teachers do to manage classroom activities effectively?

what should be done to solve the basic problems of classroom management in English classes?

Objectives of the study

General objective

The purpose of the study is to identify the major factors that cause difficulties in classroom management in English classes, with special focus on grade nine in Gore High School.

Specific Objectives

The study attempts to;

- ✓ digout factors that affect class room management in English classes;
- ✓ identify sources of factors that hinder classroom management in English classes;
- ✓ give some possible solutions for the problems.

Research Design

In this study, the researcher used descriptive survey in which both qualitative and quantitative methods were applied.

Subjects of the Study

The subjects of the study were grade nine students and grade nine English teachers at Gore High School. Among the total number of 710 students, 213 students were taken by simple random sampling technique. This was chosen to make the study free from sampling biases. In addition, out of nine English teachers, four of them who have many experiences were included in the study.

Sampling Technique

Among the total number of 710 grade nine students, 30% of them were taken as a sample using simple random sampling techniques, especially, lottery method was used. The researcher assigned 24 chances for each nine sections and the students assigned in each section were between 68-70. Among these students the researcher put 24 rolled papers which had number 'ONE' on them and 55 zeros also written on them. Each student in the section drew the paper and students who took number one taken as sample students, whereas students who took zero excluded from the sample students. On the other sides, four English teachers were selected based on their past experiences.

Data Collection instruments

The study employed three kinds of data gathering methods. These were questionnaire, interview and observation.

Questionnaire

This was administered to both students and teachers. The questions were designed using simple language. Open ended and close ended questions were included in questionnaire.

Interview

This was used to collect necessary information from English teachers. It was also used to crosscheck whether what teachers and students' said in the questionnaire was the same or not. The guideline was prepared based on the literature.

Observation

This was an additional method the researcher used to collect data. In was relevant and reliable since the researcher proved some problems through his observation. He used checklist during his observation. This checklist was prepared based on the literature.

The researcher observed six different sections and four grade nine English teachers while teaching different sections. In this way six sections continuously observed for months.

Data Collecting Procedure

To collect data, the researcher prepared questionnaires for students and teachers. Then he arranged the questionnaires sequentially from close-ended to open ended way. After arranging, he distributed the questionnaires for sample students and teachers. Next he continued gathering data through observation and interview. Finally, he brought the collected data altogether to organize and analyse.

Data Organization and Analysis

After collecting, arranging and organizing the data, the researcher analysed and checked the questionnaires for completeness. Finally, the organized and analysed data were presented in the form of percentages in tables, and were followed by textual descriptions.

Results and Discussions

Students' Responses

Table -1 the ability of English teachers in managing classroom activities

No	Item	Alternatives	No of respondents	Percentages (%)
1	How do you rate the ability of your teachers in managing classroom activities?	Very good	10	4.7
		Good	81	38
		poor	122	57.3
		Total	213	100%

According to the above table, 10(4.7%) of the students replied that the ability of their English teachers in managing classroom activities is very good, 81(38%) of the students said that their teachers' ability in managing classroom activities is good. The remaining students i.e,122 (57.3%) of the students said that their teachers' ability in managing classroom activities is poor. Thus, the above data shows that the students think that the ability of the teachers in managing classroom activities is poor.

Table- 2 Information about disciplinary problems

No	Item	Alternatives	No of respondents	Percentage(%)
2	How of often does the school management inform you about the disciplinary problems (if any)	Always	-	-
		Sometimes	43	20.2
		Rarely	159	74.64
		Never	11	5.16
		Total	213	100

From the above table, we can see that no one said that the school management always informs them about disciplinary problems. But 43(20.2%) of the students said that they are Sometimes informed. And the majority of the students 159(74.64%) answered that the school management rarely informs them. On the other hand, 11(5.16%) of the students said that the school management never informs them about disciplinary problems. The above table shows that students are rarely informed about disciplinary problems by the school management body.

Table- 3 The most problem that affects classroom management

No	Item	Alternatives	No of respondents	Percentage(%)
3	Which one do you think that affects your classroom management mainly in your class?	Students' behaviour	59	27.7
		Ability of teachers	17	7.98
		In sufficient classroom furniture	9	4.22
		Large number of students	113	53.1
		Weather condition	15	7.0
		Total	213	100

The above table shows that 59(27.7%) of the students answered that students' behaviour most often affects classroom management. On the other hand, 17(7.98%) of the students said that classroom management is mostly affected by teachers' ability, and 9(4.22%) of them said that classroom management is negatively influenced due to insufficient classroom furniture.

Contrary to the above ideas, 113(53.1%) of the students replied that large number of students most affects classroom management. As to 15(7.04%) of the students, weather condition is the most serious problem to affect classroom management.

Table -4 Measures of school management on disciplinary problems

No	Item	Alternatives	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
4	Does the school management take any measure on students who have disciplinary problems?	Yes	49	23
		No	164	77
		Total	213	100

According to the above table 49(23.0%) of the students answered that the school management takes measures on students who have disciplinary problems. In addition, they said that the school sometimes avoids them from school for a year or two years based on their bad actions. Contrary to them, 164(77.0%) of the students answered that the school management doesn't take any measures on students who have disciplinary problems. Therefore, we can understand that the measures that the school management takes on students who have disciplinary problems are not satisfactory.

Table -5 Teachers' advice on disciplinary problems

No	Item	Alternatives	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
5	How often do English teachers use advice to prevent disciplinary problems?	Always	25	11.7
		Sometimes	56	26.3
		Rarely	103	48.4
		Never	29	13.6
		Total	213	100

As we can see from the above table 25(11.7%) of the students said that English teachers always use advice to prevent disciplinary problems. But 56(26.3%) of the students reported that English teachers sometimes advise students about disciplinary problems. Majority of the students 103(48.4%) reported that their English teachers rarely use advice to prevent disciplinary problems. Therefore, one can conclude that English teachers rarely advise students about disciplinary problems.

Teachers' Responses

Table-6 How Pupils are organized during the lesson

No	Item	Alternatives	No of respondents	Percentage (%)
6	How do you organize your pupils during the lesson?	The same ability and interested students together	-	-
		Mixed ability and interested students together	4	100
		The same sex together	-	-
		Total	4	100

As it can be seen in the above table, none of the teachers organize the same ability and interested students together during the lesson. Contrary to this, 4(100%) of the teacher respondents organize mixed ability and interest students together. Again none of the teachers organize the same sex together during the lesson. Based on responses given by English teachers, we can say that English teachers organize their pupils during the lesson who have different abilities and interest students together.

Interview Results

One of English teachers answered that large number of students in the classroom, teachers' attitude; behaviour and ability are major problems that affect classroom management in the school. In addition, he pointed out that school itself does not stress on the discipline areas.

To solve the problem of large number of students in the classroom, the school should build additional classrooms and to change teachers' attitude, behaviour and ability there should be staff meeting from time to with teachers.

For question number three, the researcher got two different answers. One of the English teachers said that he makes the misbehaved students present their parents. Till then, he does not allow them to come to his class. Another teacher said that he takes to school management body when students misbehaved in classroom.

One of the English teachers responded that he sometimes discusses about classroom discipline with students and he sees some changes in his classroom atmosphere and on students' behaviour.

As we can see from the result of the above interview, teachers pointed out large number of students in the classroom, teachers' attitude, behaviour and ability as well as poor management of the school were major factors that affect classroom management in the school.

Finally, the researcher tried to compare and contrast the results of questionnaire, observation and interview. He agrees to many the responses given by English teachers and students. But he disagrees with few of the responses given especially, on questionnaires and interview with teachers. For instance, there is contradiction on questionnaire and interview for teachers on the same question which says, 'When students misbehave in the classroom, what measures do you take?' The researcher got two different answers on this single question from the same teachers respondents.

Conclusions and Recommendation

Conclusions

The main concern of this study was assessing the factors that affect classroom management in grade nine English classes at Gore High school.

Thus, after the data were interpreted the following conclusions were arrived at:

- Most of students (121) indicated that the ability of their teachers in managing classroom activities affects their classroom management endeavours;
- The majority of the students i.e. 159 indicated that the school management rarely informs them about the disciplinary problems encountered in the school;
- One hundred thirteen of the students and all teachers respondents responded that large number of students in the classroom most often affects classroom management;
- The study also demonstrated that 164 of the students revealed that the school management does not take satisfactory measures on students who have disciplinary problems;
- The results of the observation showed that English teachers neither establish a position nor keep register up-to-date in the classroom;
- The results of questionnaire, observation and interview indicated that the school management doesn't advise the students and discuss with the teachers on problems of classroom discipline,

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were forwarded:

- The school management should discuss with teachers and also should inform to students about disciplinary problems from time to time.
- In order to solve problems related to large class size, the school should request the society and different organizations to build additional classrooms and should give short-term training for English teachers.
- Further, the school management should take immediate actions, for example, giving or assigning some work such as cleaning toilets and classrooms that can be good model for others not to repeat the same problems.

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