

Teachers' Perception of Students' Misbehavior and Assertive Discipline in English Classroom

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ABSTRACT

Students' misbehavior has become one of the major problems in the English language classroom and affects the teaching and learning process. Therefore, this study aimed to identify the teachers' perception of students' misbehavior and if it really affects their teaching process and the students' learning process. The Qualitative methodology was used to collect data for this study. The main mode of data collection instruments used for this study was Teachers' Interview, Observation and Students' Interview, in which the data was triangulated to counter biases. The Interview questions focused on the teachers' perception of students' misbehaviour and how it disrupts their English language lesson. The teachers were also asked about their perception of assertive discipline approach. Observation was done, and a field note was created based on the happenings in the specific observed class. To round it up, the students' perception of their behavior and the classes' environment was collected. It was evident that the teachers' perception towards students' misbehavior was a disruption to their lesson. It was primarily based on the student's lack of interest and discipline towards learning English.

1. Introduction

English language is the language of International standards. The market demand for English language increases every day. Almost all the country in the world includes English language in their Education system, and therefore, the importance of learning the language cannot be ignored Hossain, (2018). English is the practiced second language in most countries. This is because English serves as a source and target language for more than one billion learners learning and practicing the language all over the world British Council (2020). There is a lot of process and skills one has to master before becoming even an average language practitioner. Hossain (2018), in his research study, stated that English language learning has a different structure, different rules and system in which the students would require a decent amount of time and determination to acquire the language. Hossain (2018) stated that when the students are exposed to acquire a new foreign language, their responses to the encounter vary, mainly because the foreign language differs from their native language. A language is unique and often different from the structure, applied rules, and style. Some students easily cope with the language, but most students will find it difficult and struggle to learn the language from the very beginning. This occurs because some students face learning disabilities. Students who find it difficult to learn the language without difficulties are more likely to be influenced by misbehaving characteristics (Debreli & Ishanova, 2019). Students' misbehaviour does not necessarily mean breaking the rules or disobeying the class teachers' instruction. Students' misbehavior can also be like daydreaming, sleeping during lessons, and not completing works (Rachel & Daniel, 2012). The researchers stated that students' problematic behaviours are often the cause for them to be unsuccessful in learning during the lesson. Students' misbehaviour disrupts the lesson and often causes distress to the other students and teachers. Students are often interrupted by the lack of motivation which eventually leads to behavioral problems that will disrupt the language learning process. Academic discipline is very important as per their argument because without it, the language learning process will be disrupted, leading the students to demotivation factors. Teaching not only focuses on the content delivered to the students, but it also focuses on managing the students' behaviour. This is essential as the students'

behaviour will determine the language learning outcome for the entire class (Fathimath Muna ,2019). Malaysia was under the colonization of the British in the 1800's. This was when it led to the onset of English language becoming the second language in the country. After independence, the Malaysian government had made changes to the National Education Policy many times. In the year 1970, Bahasa Malaysia has been set as the National and official language; English as a Second language. English was learned as a formal and important language alongside Bahasa Malaysia, starting from seven in the school. English has widely spread in Malaysia, as it is deemed the international language for communication (Darmi, 2013). English language usage became more important when the Government of Malaysia started its three foundational plans to create and emerge as a fully developed nation in year 2020 (Muneera & Shameem, 2013). However, despite the given exposure to English language, a lot of Malaysian learners are still repressed by social factor which includes the lack of motivation and interest to learn the language (Thang et al., 2012). It is reported that a big number of Malaysian students are affected psychologically and are misbehaving to unleash their anger or frustration in school (Malaysian Digest, 2014). This negative behavior of the students affects the teaching and learning process of the language. Malaysians in majority realize the importance of learning English language to achieve their future goals, so students are also integrated and instrumentally motivated to be proficient in English. However, some students who find the language as a tough challenge easily lose motivation to learn the language (Muneera & Shameem, 2013). The students' downfall is related to their negative behavior or low self-esteem which, in the long run, destroys their motivation in learning the language (Thang et al., 2012). It is very important to identify the cause for students' behavior problem to counter act this arising problem. This research aims to identify and confirm that the students' behavior has a big impact on language classes (English). This research study will analyze the teachers' perception of the importance of students' behavior in a language classroom. This research study will also identify and test suitable approaches, which will be applied in the classroom to improve students' behavior and motivation towards learning English. The students will be observed the changes in their behaviour to learn English language. This research study will guide future research on students' misbehavior in language classes. The objective of this research is to describe from a teacher's perspective how students misbehavior affects an English language classroom and a relatable research question which can be asked is "What are teachers' perception on the effects of students misbehavior in an English classroom?".

2. Literature Review

This chapter will discuss the past studies done by researchers who emphasized motivation and how misbehavior disrupts students' language learning process. One of the earlier studies done by Michael West (1960) stated that language learning is a part of behavior. The students' reaction as a whole, internally and externally, is essential to successful learning. This was proven even in the 90's that behavior towards language learning is an important factor. In a study conducted by Capel. Leask. M, Turner. & Routledge (2004) stated that the teachers refer a lot to the students' inappropriate behavior, such as extreme confrontation, being mischievous and disruptive behavior during lessons. According to Victoria State Government (2016), mainly in all institutions, behavior problem relates to challenging attitudes which hinder the teaching and learning in language classes. Alexandru Pop (2016), list down many different types of behavioral problems related to students being disruptive in language classes. The first factor he listed was the Psychological factor. Alexandru Pop (2016) stated that each student has their own way of learning a language. When a student is psychologically affected, it will disrupt their language learning ability of examples abilities such as self-regulating capacity, self-efficacy and self-direct learning is all dependent on the students' motivation. The second factor Alexandru mentioned was behavioral factors. Behavioral factors are highlighted when the students are being exposed to reinforcements, whether positive or negative. For example, if the teacher is only praising and encouraging one domineer students in a class, the other students will accept the situation as negative reinforcement. Their self-esteem would be deemed, and they will lose their motivation to learn the language. The next factor stated in his research study was the importance of the environment. Environmental factor covers the classroom atmosphere and the students who consist of it. According to North American Association for Environmental education (2012), the behavior changes accordingly depending on one's environment. If the environment is full of positiveness, the students are motivated in their lesson, and if the environment is negatively shaped, the students lose their motivation and are influenced by misbehaving. According to Capel. S, Leask. M, Turner and Routledge (2004), the referent of teachers' behavioural problem about their students is usually the case which is being referred to as the students' inappropriate behavior. The examples of inappropriate behaviors are like being anti-social, being extremely confrontational, always and off-task, feeling unwanted, naughty, acting out and displaying disruptive behavior. According to Victoria State Government (2016), mostly in all schools, and for most teachers, behavior problem is related to challenging attitudes which are implied as something that hinders the safety aspects and the efficiency of the learning system. At large, it affects the students who are displaying it, and it may also affect the other students around. Behavior problems also believed to be a hazardous atmosphere not only for the students but also for the schools' staff.

Types of factors related to behavioral problem

Psychological Factor

According to an article titled Psychological and Biological Factors Influencing Your Study Results by Alexandru Pop (2016), each individual has their own preference to comprehend learning and studying. The problem arises when the preference which is being followed by the individual faces problems by not always being the most effective strategy. There are a few learning methods involved through the psychological factors of influencing an individual's classroom behavioral.

- a. Self-regulating capacity: being positive towards academic absorption. The student can adapt, plan and express his/her behavior or learning process during the learning stages.
- b. Self-directed learning: has a positive correlation with academic excellence. The student can assess his/her learning requirements and set personal goals. iii. Self-efficacy is a stage that indicates the students believe in completing certain tasks. A person with high self-efficacy is considered to have a better confidence level in performing specific tasks.

Behavioural Factors

Behavioral factors arise when a student is being exposed to reinforcements, which serves as a consequence for the behavior displayed. A student will repeatedly misbehave in the class, if he/she knows the consequences of misbehaving will remove them from the particular class and hence can skip the lesson. This is because that student knows that he/she is weak in that specific lesson and would not want to get humiliated by staying in the class. This will eventually become a norm for those students. (Victoria State Government, 2016).

Student Group Dynamics

Students tend to get into groups often in school for various purposes. Mostly the reasons for them to get into groups in the classroom are to solve specific task set by the teacher. In groups, students have the confidence to solve their problems in a logical and orderly manner. Communication and cooperation are normally present within the group, which can stimulate each student to work effectively, but there are problems of individual behavior that might affect the whole group moral. (George. E, Mathes, 1968).

Environmental factors

The atmosphere of the classroom can be effective and not effective for learning, depending on how the teacher is managing the classroom and how well the students obey the teacher's instructions. The space being provided plays a vital role in controlling the students. The other environmental factors like noise or distraction from outside of the classroom also is important to be noted, because the students can be distracted on the context of their classroom and the atmosphere surrounding it. (Ministry of Education Guyana, 2016).

Classroom Organization issues

A well-run classroom begins with its layouts, including desk, working spaces, cleanliness, attractiveness, and appealing factors like bulletin boards. A classroom's environmental preference is also very essential to be accounted into consideration. Environmental factors like temperature, lighting and noise level can all be a behavior influencing factor. When the teachers respond to students' preferences and adjust the environment, the students' academic performance will be better and well-behaved (Shalaway. L, 1999).

Teachers Behaviour

Teaching can be an intimidating process for both expert and experienced teacher as well as for beginner teachers. Teaching is a profession that requires the skill and ability to be a respondent for the new demands and changing needs. (Kathleen P. Allen, 2010). According to Mohammad Salem al-amarat (2011), teachers play a major role in creating classroom problems when they do not explain their objectives clearly to the students. Problems also arise when the teachers do not plan their teaching methods earlier before conducting the lesson. Some teachers still stick to their traditional teaching methods, which leads to boredom among students and stresses them. All these factors trigger stimulating behavioral problems among students, interrupting and collapsing classroom management.

Assertive discipline approach

The assertive discipline approach was founded and developed by Lee and Marlene Canter. It is an approach that allows the teachers to interact with their students in a calm, controlled and effective environment. The Canter's have popularized the concept of rights in the classroom, in which the students and teacher both have their own rights that can be practiced in the classroom environment. They explained that students' wants and unfulfilled needs to limit their proper conduct and it is the teacher's duty to set and enforce those limits. (Charles. C.M, Senter.G.W, 2005). The teachers should set up a systematic discipline plan and discuss the expectations they anticipate from the students and the consequences of their behavioral action at

the start of the school year. (Langa. 2014). According to another research done by Aliakbari & Bozorgmanesh (2015), Teachers who are well organized in setting classroom strategies, teacher students' relationship and teacher reward-punishment consequence are known as assertive teachers. These teachers clearly expect their needs and firmly express them to the students, having a positive outlook from the students and are generally fair to all. On the other hand, teachers who are less assertiveless assertive teachers appear to be undecided and fail to make their needs known to them. In the earlier stages, the Canters focused more on teachers' strong leadership in the classroom, but then, they realized they importance of both parties equality and now places more emphasis on positive recognition by which the students will be able to build good relationship with the teacher (Charles & ,Senter, 2005).

3. Methodology

Two teachers were interviewed in a semi structured based interview session. Before the teachers were interviewed, they were explained on Assertive Discipline approach and its benefits to be used in a language classroom. The teachers were asked questions mainly on the students' misbehavior in their English class and their lesson. The teacher was also asked question on the effectiveness of assertive discipline approach. Next, one of the teachers' class was observed and a field note was reported according to the students' behavior in the class, the teachers approach and the level of students' participation in English lesson. Lastly, two students' form the same class were interviewed and asked question on their behavior, their classmates' behavior and their perception on a successful teaching and learning session. The data collected was analyzed based on the data triangulation method to avoid biasness and was explained in a thematic table module.

3.1 Instrument

The instruments used for this research:

1. Interview with the Teachers
2. Classroom lesson observation
3. Interview with the Students

Triangulation of data has been done to collect data in this research to avoid biases

3.2 Participants

This research participants were two English teachers from a private independent Chinese school from Ipoh. The teachers are both degree holders in TESL and have been serving in the school for more than five years. The next sets of participants were two students from the same private independent Chinese school.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of the study based on the questions.

Research Question 1: What are teachers' perceptions of students' misbehavior in an Englishclassroom?

Table 1: Teacher's Interview

Evidence	Theme
"not interested or disciplined in learningEnglish" - Teacher A	Lack of Interest
"Misbehavior. the lack of discipline" -Teacher A	Lack of Discipline
" Lack of assertiveness. students to misbehave" - Teacher A "very important to counter their disruptive behavior"- Teacher B	Importance of Assertiveness

Table 2: Classroom Observation

Evidence	Theme
"the class was not concentrating"- Field Note	Lack of Interest
"Some of them were sleeping. Just staring at the whiteboard begun disturbing their friends"- Field Note	Lack of Discipline
"..class became very noisy... control the misbehaving students...students' were Simply not interested with the lesson.."- Field Note	Importance of Assertiveness

Table 2: Classroom Observation

Evidence	Theme
"always very noisy..and students alwaysvery naughty.. They like to play a lot" - Student A "very naughty in class. discipline staffcome in they are not afraid" - Student A - " my friends in class are very playful" -Student B	Lack of Discipline
"if they are controlled by teachers rulethen they will listen properly"- StudentA. "set of rules so that the rebelling studentswill listen and abide"- Student B.	Importance of Assertiveness
"very playful and misbehave because they are not interested in studying"- Student B.	Lack of Interest

Theme	Theory and Approach Structure
I. Lack of Discipline	Discipline - (Assertive Discipline Approach)
II. Lack of Interest	
III. Importance of Assertiveness	Assertiveness - (Assertive Discipline Approach)

Based on the data triangulated from the interview with teachers, observation's field note and Interview with students, it was mentioned that the English lesson classes conducted by this teacher had been under, lack of interest in learning English language, the lack of discipline and assertiveness, which were categorized into three themes; Lack of Interest, Lack of Discipline and Importance of Assertiveness as of students misbehavior.

Lack of interest

1. *Teachers Interview Question 1: What do you think about the students' discipline during English language learning? Please describe.*

According to the teachers' description, it shows that the students are not interested in learning English. This is because of their misbehavior showed in the class during the English lesson.

"..some of them are not interested or disciplined in learning English and ..so they will try to entertain themselves by chatting or playing, some will be sleeping.."-Teacher A

"My students are very naughty in the class and it affects my teaching drastically.."- Teacher B

These statements from the teachers show that students' misbehavior disrupts their lesson. This is actually supported by Michael West (1960), who stated in his study that learning is a portion of the students' behavior. When the students' behavior is not supportive towards the learning process, disruption occurs. The findings from this interview with the teachers are similar to the report of Leask, Turner and Routledge (2004). Teachers from their research connected a lot to students' inappropriate behavior such as being mischievous and disruptive in the classroom, making it hard for them to conduct English language lessons.

The teachers' statement was further supported by the observation done on one of the teachers' classes. The observation field note is also in support of teachers' statement;

"..some of them were sleeping and them were just staring at the white board while the teacher was teaching. After around 5 minutes, the students who were not concentrating earlier, started to feel restless and they begun disturbing their friends. Soon the class became very noisy.."

"The teacher was trying her best to control the class but it was not fruitful because she had entertain those students who were learning and at the same time control the misbehaving students. The teacher tried asking some questions to the rebellious students in order to engage them into the lesson, but the students were simply not interested with the lesson.."- Observation's Field Note

Based on the observation's field note, it was evident that the students were very disruptive and showed a lack of interest in learning English. The students lacked motivation, which directly affected their discipline in the classroom. This scenario also took place in Alexandru Pop (2016) research, in which he stated the importance of discipline in learning. His statement stated discipline is the key for learning and the individuals control their own preference on how to grasp the learning and studying style. It was very clear through the observation's field note that the students have their own perception of learning English. It has its perception of learning English and mostly skewed towards the negative side. Lastly, to triangulate the data and diminish bias input, the students were interviewed. Based on their information, it was confirmed that the students' misbehavior affects the teaching and learning process terribly.

Students' Interview Question 1: What do you think about your classroom students/friends discipline during English language learning? Please describe.

"..Sometimes they want to..how to say..disturb you.. I mean the teacher when teacher teaching. They like to play a lot.."- Student A

"They always talk when teacher is teaching..and ahh they also yes like to play and eat in the class when teacher teaching"- Student B

The students themselves agreed on the lack of interest of the students. The students shared their misbehaving acts in the class which they do during the lesson period and it was very much relatable with the teachers' perception and observation input. It was proven that the students have some behavior problem. It is supported by Alexandru Pop (2016) research. He mentioned that the students' behavior can only be changed based on their own perception of learning and studying.

Lack of Discipline

Teachers Interview Question 2: Is misbehavior results from the lack of discipline implemented in the classroom?

From the teachers' statement, it was also evident that the students lacked discipline in the classroom. The student was interested in learning English and was also very disruptive towards the lesson, teacher, and students.

"Misbehavior of the students is waged err.. from the lack of discipline from the very start. If... disciplined is maintained then the students would not be misbehaving.."- Teacher A.

"..if you ask me is discipline important, of-course I agree..ahh that discipline is the key for behaviour. The students who misbehaves are actually the ones whom are lack in discipline obviously.."- Teacher B.

Capel supported the statement of the teachers. S, Leask. M, Turner. & Routledge .R.H, (2004), in which they stated in their studies that the students' behaviour problem is the biggest problem for the teachers to conduct their lesson. The lack of discipline is the main contribution towards students misbehavior, stated Victoria State Government (2016).

The teachers' statement was further supported by the observation done on one of the class which the teachers are teaching. The observation field note is also similar to the teachers' perception;

"After 20 minutes, now around 50 percent of the students are not concentrating in the lesson. This happened because the earlier rebelling students influenced the students. The students who were studying earlier, some of them joined the rebellious students and started to chit-chat, play around and the remaining others actually lost interest and motivation to participate in the lesson anymore"

"The lesson became very disruptive up to the level the teacher had to call the discipline staff to the classroom to bring back the class under control"- Observation's Field Note.

The students' lack of discipline interrupted the teachers' lesson and disrupted the overall lesson learning process. This affects not only the students self-learning process, but as well as the other students' learning process. Capel also supports this statement. S, Leask. M, Turner. & Routledge .R.H, (2004), where they said this would largely affect both the student who displays disruptive behavior and those others participating in the same lesson period. As stated in the literature review, Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013), also stated that discipline is the structure towards proper learning. If students' misbehavior disrupts it, the learning process will suffer failure.

Students Interview Question 2: Is misbehavior results from the lack of discipline implemented in the classroom?

" My friends is now also very naughty in class..even when discipline staff come in they are not afraid of them so if no discipline then confirm they all will be even more naughty in class and with teacher"-Student A

"..misbehavior is a result from less disciplinary actions. If a student is misbehaving it means the discipline ahh..the ..the discipline in that class is not good.."- Student B

Even the students agreed that if the discipline level is worsening, definitely it will be a failure for the teaching and learning process. The students also admitted the lack of discipline level in their classroom and how it is actually disrupting the lesson period. The triangulation of data was evident and synchronised between all three methods. The students were indeed misbehaving in the class due to lack of discipline and it was disrupting the teaching process for the teacher and the learning process for the other students.

Importance of Assertiveness

Teachers' Interview Question 3: In your opinion, is assertiveness useful in your class during English language teaching?

The teachers agreed that Assertiveness is a very important aspect and it is required in a classroom to maintain and build a healthy relationship between them and the students. They also stated it is a good way to build the classroom discipline as well.

"..it is very important in my opinion. Some students really misbehave in an extreme manner and following ahh.. Nowadays rules and regulations, we teachers.. should not punish them..ahh but we should come up with a strategy to control their misbehavior.."- Teacher A.

" It is a very important way that all the teachers should consider using. I say this because I have used assertiveness rules in my class and it worked. The students will be morally pushed and positively shaped.."- Teacher B.

Mohammad Salem al-amarat (2011) also shared the teachers' perception. He stated the teachers need to have some set of rules and explain them from the very beginning to be aware of their responsibilities, discipline, and self-motivation from the very beginning. Observation's Field Note also reports the teacher having some control over the students when they try to have some assertive rules in the classroom.

"It was a little successful when the teacher asked the students to complete their work and they will be given merits and the students were a little attentive towards the lesson, but it did not last long as the rules stated by the teacher were not very clear to the students".

Students' Interview Question 3 : In your opinion, what do you think about the use of assertiveness the in the process of English language learning?

"..this is very very important because..now our class ..no one listening and when the monitor scold them or report to teacher, they become angry..they fight and don't want to talk with the monitor. So if they are controlled by teachers rule then they will listen properly.."- Student A

"..it is very important ahh..to set ahh..a set of rules so that the rebelling students will listen and abide.."- Student B

The students also agreed that assertiveness would better help the lesson and learning process. He stated that it will be a good way to control the class and the students even more effectively.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion, it was evident that students' misbehavior was indeed the main problem in the English language classroom. Two main themes identified were lack of Interest and Lack of Discipline. It is as said by Alexendru Pop (2016), in which he stated that students' behavior could change according to their interest and wants. It was clear that the students find it not comfortable in the class with the English lesson and the basis of discipline was very poor, which even more triggered them to misbehave during the lesson. As said by Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013), the student's discipline should be in line with the language teaching so that they can be controlled and monitored by the teacher without much difficulty. The students were also disrupting the process of other students who were trying to learn the language. It can be concluded that the students are disrupting and demotivating the teacher from teaching and disrupting and demotivating other students. This is even worse because it will bring down the class's motivation as a whole. The teaching and learning process would be a complete failure if this continues. The teachers' perception of Assertive Discipline approach was welcomed wholeheartedly. They agreed on a set of rules which will positively shape the students' behavior has to be created as a basis for discipline in a language classroom. Their perception towards Assertive Discipline approach was the same as Langa (2014), who stated that a set of systematic rules which was positively developed would shape positive behavior among the students.

5.1 Implication

This study was important because it proves the importance of a good behaviour from the students to learn English language. The misbehaving students' behaviour, character and need were also traceable through this study. There is a clearer picture of what the misbehaving students are seeking, and a possible approach was agreed (Assertive Discipline approach) to be applied for improvement.

Problems Encountered

Although it was relatively successful research, a few shortcomings hindered the process. First, it was the students' language proficiency. The research was being conducted in an English class. The students of this school are below average in their English language proficiency and it was a little problematic when it comes to explaining to them about the process of this research. Secondly, this research's time frame was due to pandemic situation. Lastly, the English subject schedule always collided with the cancellation of classes and online classes. This caused problem in conducting the research efficiently because it spoils the observation process.

5.2 Recommendation

This research was based on one class consisting of 24 students. The suggestion for a better behavior can be made if the observation takes place in two or three classes at the same time. The classes' involvement should be based on the good, average, and below-average classes. This will result in a more reliable outcome of the research and the effectiveness of Assertive Discipline can really be tested and evaluated. Involving more than one class also will bring to light more about the hidden problems which serve as a barrier for the students to misbehave in the language classroom. This research was only conducted during one subject which was English. Indeed, this research focused on improvising students' behavior in learning English. It will be better if this research can be done on all the subjects conducted with the classes involved. This will bring a very in-depth study about the students and the changes in behavior they display. There was only one observer for the observation process. If two or more teachers can observe this research, the result would have been even more justified. It is suggested that the school teachers also take part in being an observer and give their review to be an observer and review the progress of the students' behavior and classroom management. This is because the school teachers are exposed more thoroughly to the classroom situations and can better review the change. These suggestions are very basic improvements that can be done in order to achieve a greater depth in this research. However, all these suggestions are based on a particular setting where the research has

been conducted. It may vary according to different locations and pupil. Nonetheless, it is believed the Assertive Discipline approach that was being asked perception in this research will definitely improve the students' behaviour and classroom management if it is applied. The approach in this research has been proved on many occasions and discussed in chapter two. In conclusion, it was a great experience and exposure to the changes that were proved to occur when a class is being directed in the teacher's right way with authentic approaches. It will be even more justified in the future when the studies for the betterment of students' behavior and classroom management being conducted by other researchers and the improvement shall always be achieved as long as the process is well planned and monitored.

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