The Significance of Classroom English for the students of English Teacher Trainings

(Setting Standard for TEFL profession and practice)

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Why Classroom English?

When English teachers or any classroom teachers are doing their job, that is, teaching in the real classroom situation, whatever method or approach is being implemented, they have to be aware that the method or approach has some classroom procedure that should be put into words; it has to be verbalized. In other words, teachers need to give instructions, to form groups, to set time limit, to ask questions, to confirm students’ answers, to maintain discipline etc. The language for this classroom purpose is known as Classroom English, that is English used by a teacher in managing his or her classroom.
Why classroom English?

- We should be aware of the existence of the prime medium of interaction in the classroom, namely the language used for doing the interaction between students- teachers. Most important is the language of the teachers as the learning facilitator which helps students do the learning procedures minute by minute.

- The quality of our language teaching in this case, would certainly be affected by the quality of the medium. The quality of classroom language can be seen from its clarity, organization, and whether students understand it correctly. Classroom language should also sound pleasant in students’ ears, not too soft or too loud, for it certainly can create classroom atmosphere conducive for learning.
“What is classroom English?"

Hughes (1990):
“a wide range of accurate, authentic and idiomatic classroom phrases“. It is the language required by the teacher of English in the practical day-to-day management of classes”

Nunan (1991)
Teacher talk is of crucial importance, not only for the organization of the classroom but also for the processes of acquisition. It is important for the organization and management of the classroom because it is through language that teachers either succeed or fail to implement their teaching plans. In terms of acquisition, teacher talk is important because it is probably the major source of comprehensible input the learner is likely to receive.
The Significance of Classroom English in English classes

- In language classes, classroom language has a more central role in students’ learning. In these classes, the prime medium is also playing another role, that is as the exposure or the input for the learning. This input qualifies for comprehensible input which encourages learning in three ways.
  1. It is contextual
     Classroom English focuses on things students are familiar with in their daily lives at school.
  2. It is continuously repeated
     Classroom English which some experts often call teacher talk is used over and over again in a period of time.
  3. It is the only tool for students to share classroom experiences
     The students’ motivation to understand classroom English is higher because they want to share the classroom experiences with other fellow students.
The Significance of Classroom English for students of teacher training

1. No priority has been given on this specific speaking skill
2. It has been taken for granted that they are already familiar with and comfortable in conducting classroom activities in English.
3. Their training does not put the competence in classroom English as their first priority. Therefore, the oral competence focusing in how to use English for classroom management and instructional purposes is not adequately developed throughout the curriculum.

Hughes (1990) also suspects that even experienced teachers in the field use recurrent inaccuracies in their classroom English and even are unwilling to use English for classroom management purposes.
In short, how can we let our teacher training students graduate without being equipped with such an important tool? Classroom English is a tool as well as the learning source for their future students. As Hughes puts it that:

Whatever subjects are taught, all teachers require this specialized classroom competence and should be trained in it. Foreign language teachers in particular require linguistic training aimed at the classroom situation, since, if they believe in the maximum use of L2, that is the language being taught, they are to use it both as the goal of their teaching and as the prime medium of instruction and classroom management.
How to equip English Training Graduates with Classroom English

Hughes (1991) suggests that classroom English should be included in the preparation of lesson plans, in micro teaching sessions and actual demonstration lessons.

Some ideas on how to equip students of English teacher trainings with classroom English

1. Including a specific subject in the curriculum is a good idea, for at least, students and staff members would be aware of its importance.
How to equip English Training Graduates with Classroom English (continued)

- 2. Since most of classroom activities in the training are also carried out in English, instructors should set examples of accurate classroom English.
- 3. In one or some of the speaking classes there should be an intensive training for this we can take Hughes’ A Handbook of Classroom English, which, according to the writer, has been a compromise between a textbook and a work of reference.
- 4. Intensive and extensive classroom English training through micro teaching classes
- 5. It is previously mentioned that classroom English is the language of classroom management and explanation. The language of classroom management seems to have already covered by Hughes in her book
The language of classroom management seems to have been already covered by Hughes in her book. The language of explanation, however, is not yet covered. The language of explanation can be presented as follows based on what is formulated by Lyz Hamp-Lyons and Ben Heasley in Study Writing (1987). The explanation can be roughly divided into several relationships, namely...
1. Spatial Relationship
2. Classification
3. Definition
4. General – Specific
5. Comparison – Contrast
6. Time
7. Linear Process
8. Cyclical Process
9. Cause – Effect

Such a division is to enable teachers to help students organize their thoughts through the supply of accurate and appropriate grammatical constructions as well as key vocabulary.
## The Teaching of language of explanation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Material</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exposure</td>
<td>Listening to models of language of explanation</td>
<td>Samples of oral explanation of Charts, graphs, diagrams showing classification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>Choosing their own texts containing explanation of classification</td>
<td>Some text, better the authentic materials they find related to their teaching</td>
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<td>Presenting it in front of the class</td>
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<td>Correcting errors through teacher’s feedback</td>
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**Examples of accurate language input**

Tables showing some of the most common language used in sentences which have classification.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong></td>
<td>There are <strong>Y</strong> kinds of X. There are A, B, and C.</td>
<td>A, B and C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The classes are A, B, and C.</td>
<td>are A, B, and C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **2.** | X consists of **Y** kinds of X. There are A, B, and C. | A, B, and C. |
|   | X can be divided into **Y** types | |
|   | Y kinds | |
|   | categories | |

| **3.** | A, B and C are **Y** kinds of X | |
|   | classes of X | |
|   | kinds of X | |
|   | types of X | |
Thank You