

**Investigating the most effective teaching practices and  
strategies that enhance classroom management in cycle 2 in  
Abu Dhabi**

استقصاء الأساليب و الاستراتيجيات الدراسية الأكثر فاعلية في تعزيز الادارة  
الصفية في الحلقة الثانية في أبو ظبي

by

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## **Abstract**

The current study investigated the most effective teaching practices and strategies that enhance classroom management in cycle 2 in Abu Dhabi. The researcher implemented a mixed-method approach using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The quantitative method involved 50 students. The researcher administered a questionnaire to the students to find out the most effective teaching practices and strategies that enhance classroom management as well as the task-related factors that contributed to sustaining classroom management. Furthermore, the questionnaire investigated the factors that affect classroom management during task-based learning and cooperative learning. The qualitative method included classroom observations of three lessons and unstructured interviews with other five teachers. The classroom observations focused on collecting data in a natural classroom setting about the teaching practices, strategies and other factors that can contribute to classroom management. The unstructured interviews with five experienced teachers aimed at investigating the perceptions of teachers and their experiences about successful classroom management.

The study has revealed several findings regarding creating successful classroom management. The findings of classroom observations, student questionnaires and unstructured interviews showed that students are more engaged in learning when the lesson is task-based or cooperative learning based. The findings also showed that there are some factors that contribute positively to classroom management such as classroom seating, motivation, the curriculum and the relationship between the teacher and the students.

## ملخص البحث

قامت هذه الدراسة باستقصاء أكثر الاستراتيجيات والطرق التدريسية الفعالة في تعزيز الإدارة الصفية في مدارس الحلقة الثانية في أبو ظبي . استخدم الباحث الطريقة المختلطة التي شملت البحث الكمي والبحث الكيفي . شمل البحث الكمي خمسون طالبا حيث قام الباحث بإجراء استبانة لهم لإيجاد أكثر الاستراتيجيات والطرق التدريسية الفعالة في خلق ادارة صفية ناجحة . بالإضافة الى ذلك استقصى الاستبيان العوامل التي تؤثر على الإدارة الصفية أثناء المهام والعمل التعاوني. شمل البحث الكيفي مشاهدة ثلاث حصص و كذلك اجراء مقابلات شخصية غير رسمية . حيث ركزت المشاهدات الصفية على جمع بيانات في بيئة صفية طبيعية عن الأساليب والاستراتيجيات التدريسية والعوامل الأخرى التي تساهم في خلق بيئة صفية ناجحة . وهدفت المقابلات التي تم اجرائها مع المدرسين الى استقصاء خبرات المدرسين ومفهومهم عن البيئة الصفية الناجحة.

وقد أظهرت الدراسة عدة نتائج فيما يتعلق بالحفاظ على بيئة صفية ناجحة. حيث أظهرت نتائج المشاهدات الصفية واستبانة الطلاب والمقابلات الشخصية أن الطلاب يكونون أكثر انخراطا في التعلم عند استخدام اساليب المهام و العمل التعاوني في الحصة الدراسية. كما أظهرت النتائج أيضا أنه يوجد هناك بعض العوامل التي تساهم بايجابية في الحفاظ على بيئة صفية ناجحة مثل طريقة تنظيم المقاعد في الصف و التحفيز والمنهج الدراسي و العلاقة بين المدرس والطلاب.

## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents and my grandmother who have spent their lives and sacrificed a lot to make me successful all over my life. It is also dedicated to my wife and my four sons; Mohammed, Kareem, Omar and Ziad who have been my inspiration to achieve my dreams.

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# **Chapter one**

## **Introduction**

The researcher begins this chapter by providing the background to the current study. It shows the importance of classroom management for learning and teaching. The current study seeks to investigate the most effective teaching practices and strategies that can effectively contribute to a successfully managed classroom. The research questions that will guide the current inquiry are presented followed by an outline of the scope of the study and the organization of the dissertation.

### **1.1 Background of the study**

Classroom management is considered an issue of great importance in the field of teaching as it has been the primary concern for teachers ever since there have been teachers in the classrooms. It heads the list of concerns, not only for teachers but also for school administrators. The ability of teachers to manage the classroom effectively is considered one of the basic components of teaching and one of the most important skills that every teacher needs to possess (Evertson, Emmer, Sanford & Clements, 1983). In addition, since effective classroom management strategies have a great potential to influence the students' learning and achievement, they constitute a predominant concern for the majority of teachers, especially novice teachers and teachers who are considering the implementation of new instructional approaches (Delong & Winter, 1998). The majority of studies showed that classroom management is a very important factor that has a strong influence on learning and teaching. For example, Heartel, Walberg and Wang (1993) stated in their study that classroom management tops the list of the important factors that influence learning and teaching in all schools. In addition, Morzano (2003) concluded that classroom management is the most important factor that influences school learning. Ben (2006) reached the result that effective classroom management strategies are greatly significant to the teachers' successful delivery of instruction.

The traditional strategies of managing the classroom depended to a great extent on managing the behavior of the students. In the 1930s, behavior theorists described and stressed the frameworks

for maintaining and encouraging good behavior (Ivanok, 2013). Emmer and Sough ( 2001) indicated that some studies have already used the students' attitudes or achievement as outcomes , but today most classroom management research is more concerned with how teachers can bring about engaging students with each other and limit the misbehavior and disruptions in the classroom.

Teaching theories have witnessed remarkable change over the past few years. Brophy (1999) argues that instruction has been influenced by the principles of constructivist approach. The advent and development of constructivism has made for a student-centered learning environment (Elen, et al., 2007). The student-centered setting focuses more on the value of the student as an individual and seeks to provide help to the student in order to develop more positive emotional and social aspects of behavior. Classroom organization is effective in integrating the interests, experiences, personalization and needs of the students into learning activities that are engaging to the students. The importance of the classroom activities lies in the fact that they are designed to facilitate self-expression of the learners, to encourage their consideration of their own viewpoints, to develop purposeful listening and to encourage skills of critical thinking and creativity. Bereiter and Scardamalia (2007) mention that there are various forms of student-centered learning environments. For example , there should be distinction between “ messing around “ , guided discovery or hands-on learning “ , “ theory improvement inquiry” , “ curiosity-driven inquiry and “ learning through problem solving”. Although there is difference in the purpose and form of student-centered environments, there are some common features that they share. In the student-centered environments, students handle authentic tasks so that they can induce relevant learning experiences. For example, instead of lecturing students about the different means of social media and modern communication, they are asked to research the topic and write a report about it. The development in the teaching approaches makes it necessary for teachers to adapt their approaches to classroom management. This requires teachers to adopt a student-centered approach rather than a teacher-centered approach in order to manage the classroom successfully as this helps the teacher to build good relationship with the students (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). In the student-centered classroom, the role of the teacher changes from the only source of control and power who completely dominates the classroom into a guide and facilitator who encourages students' efforts and provides opportunities for open discussions. Martin and Baldwin (1992) state that the teachers who implement behavioral techniques are

more authoritative and interventionist, whereas teachers who implement constructivist techniques are interactionists. However, the transition from teacher-centered approach to student centered approach will only be successful when both teachers and students agree with the keystones of so-called “student centered learning environments (Elen et al., 2007). It is very important that the teacher’s role changes from an authoritarian figure to guide in order to achieve the objectives of the student-centered classrooms by enhancing the students’ sense of responsibility and empowering them. Brophy (1986) states that the teacher is not a prison warden, but he is a facilitator and the student is a reasonable human being not a wild animal. In addition, Evertson and Neal (2005) state that unless management and instructional strategies are integrated explicitly around a set of goals, they can easily work at cross-purposes. McCaslin and Good (1998) state that there can be a strong mismatch between management and instruction with a curriculum based on a student-centered approach whereas management is based on behavior control. The recent changes in curriculum make it necessary for teachers to adapt classroom management techniques and strategies that provide students with learner-centered environment. Despite the numerous studies that have been conducted to investigate the effectiveness of constructivist curriculum since 2005, the number of the studies conducted to investigate the changes in classroom management strategies is considered very limited (Kalender, 2006; Çelebi, 2006; Ekinci, 2007).

There has been significant change from classical to modern paradigm concerning the aim of classroom management .McCormack (2001) states that the focus of classroom management changed from focusing on discipline as a response to misbehavior to a holistic approach that implements classroom management and organization for providing students with effective learning.

Classroom management is a part of daily learning activities that is complex in nature. Brophy (1983) believes that a well-managed classroom is created through the classroom activities, the student teacher interaction and the physical structure of the learning environment. The main function of classroom management is to support the teacher to provide effective teaching and the students to gain new skills and knowledge in a supportive learning environment.

## **1.2 Significance of the study**

This study has been designed in order to find out the most effective teaching practices and strategies that result in the success of classroom management that can enhance the engagement of the students in learning. The study also investigates the relationship between the success of setting up tasks and managing the classroom in a way that helps the students learn better. The study aims at reaching recommendations that can support teachers in general and cycle 2 teachers in particular, and all teachers in general, in creating a manageable classroom that provides an adequate atmosphere for learning.

Additionally, there is a practical need that makes the current study important. The consensus view expressed at professional development meetings of teachers showed that in all schools of the UAE, including ADEC, the majority of teachers are concerned with the issue of classroom management. A lot of the students are not motivated to learn and they are not engaged in learning due to several factors. This makes the issue of classroom management a real challenge to many teachers. Some teachers leave schools and go back home because they fail to manage classrooms and feel failures as teachers. Although the majority of the schools provide physically good classrooms, the need for implementing effective behavioral and instructional strategies is essential for creating successful classroom management. The current study aims at investigating the effect of using instructional approaches, task-based learning and cooperative learning, alongside with supporting the instructional strategies with other essential factors such as motivation, classroom seating and good relationship with students in order to provide an engaging learning environment.

## **1.3 Research questions**

The current study investigates the impact of teaching practices and strategies on creating successful classroom management. Previous studies have investigated the issue, but the majority focused on establishing strict rules and procedures in order to manage the behavior of the students. Thus, in the context of cycle 2 EFL classrooms, the current study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- 1- How can task-based learning contribute to successful classroom management?
- 2- Can cooperative learning effectively enhance classroom management?
- 3- What are the teachers' perceptions about the most influential factors of creating a successfully managed classroom?
- 4- What are the students' opinions about the best practices for managing the classroom?
- 5- Is a well-managed class a good learning class?
- 6- What are the task-related factors that contribute to successful classroom management?

#### **1.4 Scope of the study**

The current study is confined to cycle 2 male students in Abu Dhabi schools. Cycle two students are selected in this study due to the recurrent classroom management issues that face teachers and constitute a challenge to them in this cycle in particular. In addition, the age of the student range from 12 to 16 years of age which is considered a critical age to manage. The study is investigating the impact of specific teaching approaches and classroom strategies that can enhance classroom management and provide a more adequate learning environment for the students. The study investigates the impact of Task-Based Language learning and cooperative learning on improving on-task behavior of the students and reducing the disruptive behavior that causes waste of time and inefficient instruction.

#### **1.5 Structure of the dissertation**

The current dissertation contains six chapters. Chapter one includes the background to the study, significance of the study, research questions and the scope of the study. Chapter two explores the conceptual framework as a background to the literature and surveys the pertinent literature on effect of the strategies and practices on classroom management. Chapter three provides a description of the adopted methodology, the sample and the instrumentation. It also shows the collection and the analysis of data. Chapter four reports the results of the current study. Chapter five discusses the findings and provides recommendations for teachers. It also compares the findings with other studies. In addition, it considers the implications and the limitations of the study on the researcher. Chapter 6 provides conclusion to the whole dissertation.



## **Chapter two**

### **Literature review**

#### **2.1 Theoretical framework**

To devise a theoretical framework for the current study and to explore the impact of effective strategies and teaching practices on creating successful classroom management, it seems necessary to have an overview of the different theoretical frameworks of classroom management. Brophy (1988) defined classroom management as the strategies and practices that teachers implement in order to maintain an environment conducive to successful learning. This can also include the physical arrangement of the classroom, the establishment of procedures and rules that maintain engagement and attention during the academic activities. Other researchers stressed that maintaining an environment conducive to successful learning relies on the ability of the teacher to combine the methods and strategies of classroom management with effective planned instruction (Brophy, 1983, 1988; Evertson, Emmer, Sanford, & Clements, 1983). Raya and Cooper (2004) also emphasized the importance of in-depth knowledge of management theories and the practical experience of these theories in order to maintain successful classroom management.

As has been noted, there are different theoretical frameworks of classroom management that have been devised in various contexts. However, the theoretical framework for the current study is mostly based on positive learning framework for classroom management. This framework aims at engaging students in learning and providing them with an attractive learning environment that motivates the learners to learn and disengages them from inappropriate behavior. It is based on the classroom management framework of Brophy, (1983, 1988), Evertson, Emmer, Sanford, and Clements, (1983). This framework involves using effective instructional strategies alongside with methods and strategies of classroom management that maintain an environment which is conducive to successful learning.

The next section will provide definition of task-based language teaching as a learner-centered approach, cooperative learning and task-related factors that influence classroom management.

## **2.2. Definition of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT):**

Task-based language teaching (TBLT) has been one of the most widely teaching approaches in teaching. TBLT is an approach to teaching a foreign language in a way that engages learners and improves their interaction through performing a series of authentic tasks. Task-based learning is known as “learning by doing “and it is seen as an unpredictable process. TBLT aims at enabling the learners to acquire new linguistic knowledge and systemize their existing knowledge (Ellis, 2003). It also helps students to acquire language fluency and self-confidence. In addition, students are motivated as they feel that they are going through an adventure .During a task-based lesson, students are required to complete of a task and the language studied is determined by what takes place as students complete this task, the teacher does not determine what language will be studied during the lesson (Frost, 2004).

Task –based language teaching is effective in making language learning in the classroom much closer to the natural way. Wang (2006) states that it is more effective in making language acquisition reach a higher level with a clear communicative goal that also enhances interaction and supports the comprehensive input to facilitate language acquisition. TBLT was developed by Prabhu (1987) and he is considered the originator of TBLT. Prabhu (1987) assured that students learn more effectively when they focus more on the task they are using, rather than on language. Prabhu (1987) stated that a task is “an activity that requires learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which makes learners able to control and regulate that process”. This definition implies that reading a food menu, deciding on the food and making an order can be an effective and appropriate classroom task that engages students in leaning and helps them to acquire the language (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). In addition, Nunan (1989) defined a task as “a classroom activity that involves learners in comprehending, producing, manipulating or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on exploiting their grammatical knowledge to express meaning, and in which the main intention is to convey meaning rather than to manipulate form ". Lee (2000) also defined task as ;(1) a language learning method that requires students to understand, carry out and produce the target language as they planning work; (2) a classroom exercise or an activity that involves an obtainable objective that can be achieved through the interaction of the

participants, a mechanism for creating and improving interaction (Van den Branden and others, 2006).

### **2.3 Task-Based Language Teaching and classroom management**

Learners are considered to be on-task when they are engaged actively in some classroom exercises and activities that facilitate the process of their learning, and not engaged in behaviors that distract their attention from learning (Lee, Kelly, & Nyre, 1999). In addition, Richmond, McCroskey, Kearney, & Plax (1987) state that a learner can successfully complete an academic task without attending to what he or she is doing as on-task behavior is a necessary prerequisite for both effective performance and academic achievement. In an investigation of learners' academic behavior in high school classrooms, Frederick (1977) concluded that low-achieving students were completely engaged 51 % of the time in the academic activities compared to high-achieving students who were engaged 75 % of the time. Thus, the more time students remain engaged in classroom tasks and activities, the more likely their academic achievement will be better.

During a task, students may be engaged in problem behavior actions when the academic task is often focused on specific outcome in order to escape from the difficulty of the task (Lalli, Kates & Casy, 1999). This implies that students are less likely to demonstrate problem responses when they are able to effectively complete a task. In addition, students tend to spend less time in disruptive behavior when they are working actively on a task or participating effectively in an activity because disruptive behavior and on-task behavior are incompatible with each other. For this reason, on-task behavior is considered an effective treatment in reducing disruptive behavior in the classroom.

Some studies have been conducted to demonstrate collateral reductions in disruptive and off-task behavior after an intervention with on-task behavior (e.g., Ducharme & Harris, 2005; Ducharme, Lucas, & Pontes, 1994). The researchers investigated the impact of errorless embedding, a graduated, success-focused and non-punitive treatment for improving on-task responding.

Martens, Witt and Hannifin (1993) examined the relationship between problem behavior and on-task by conducting a home-based academic reinforcement program. The program included three students who are in grade 4 and who engaged in high rates of challenging and disruptive

behavior. Academic performance was defined as the amount of time students were engaged in during their interaction with the teacher and their peers listening and discussing. The investigation showed that there was a significant decrease in percentage of disruptive behavior and a significant increase in percentage of academic responses from baseline to treatment.

## **2.4 Co-operative learning and classroom management**

Co-operative learning is one of the teaching approaches that teachers use in their classrooms. Co-operative learning, like collaborative learning, entails that learners work in groups to carry out specific tasks. It aims at overcoming the weaknesses of traditional small group approaches by more careful structures of the activities. Cooper (1990) states that structure is considered the key to successful cooperative learning. Macaulay and Gonzalez (1996) characterize cooperative learning as the instrumental use of small groups so that learners become able to work together co-operatively in a way that effectively enhances both individual and group learning. Careful structure of learning groups is considered the key to co-operative learning. Tang (1998) believes that cooperative learning provides a non-threatening learning context that enables students to interact effectively as they share and exchange ideas and provide feedback. Cooperative learning also provides great opportunities for collaboration between students as it provides “ scaffolding “ for mutual support and makes students able to learn from each other.

Previous research has proved that cooperative learning is more effective than individual learning in improving the academic results of the students. Likewise, when cooperative learning is compared to lecture directed learning, it is obvious that students who work cooperatively achieve better academic results (Johnson & Johnson, 2002). Furthermore, cooperative learning enhances interpersonal skills, communication skills, self-motivation, higher self-esteem, greater respect for others, acquisition of information and critical thinking skills (Slavin, 1995).

Many studies have investigated the influence of cooperative learning on reducing the off-task behavior. Research has revealed that co-operative learning has significant reduction in off-task behavior (Cartney & Rouse, 2006). Cooperative learning is mainly concerned with creating cooperation and involving all students to increase their actions and promote their collaboration in order to solve an assigned task (Miglietti, 2002). According to Veebman and kenter (2000), co-operative learning is very effective in promoting the social skills, self-esteem and on-task

behavior. In addition, it fosters interpersonal skills and critical thinking skills, enhances students' achievement and increases active participation in learning (Miglietti, 2002).

## **2.5 Task-related factors influencing classroom management**

### **2.5.1 Seating arrangement**

Research shows that the students' behavior is affected by classroom seating arrangement (Anderson, 2009; Kaya & Burgess, 2007; Lei, 2010; Wannarka & Ruhl, 2008). In addition, research shows that when students have enough space to work on their activities, their on-task behavior and social interaction get improved (Kaya & Burgess, 2007). Baron (1992) also recommended that seating arrangement should be treated as a priority because it affects the on-task behavior of the students. Downer, Rimm-Kaufman, & Pianta (2007) state that effective learning takes place when the classroom is designed in a way that "fosters student engagement." Rosnefield et al. (1985) concluded in their study of three different seating arrangements that sitting in circles encourages more student on-task behavior and increases their oral response than did the rows and columns.

The effectiveness of any seating arrangement in the classroom depends on the activity that students are doing (Bonus & Riordan, 1998). According to Rosenfield et al. (1985) and Wannarka and Ruhl (2008), on-task behavior includes actions done in order to carry out an activity at hand. The student who withdrew and showed off-task behavior was much greater in columns and rows setting than the circle setting resulted in. Wengel (1992) examined the U-shape setting arrangement and how it affected the students' reaction. He concluded that u-shape arrangement enabled students to be more active and work collaboratively as the students could interact with the teacher as well as with each other. Furthermore, Wengel (1992) stated that this could be evidence that U-shape setting arrangement was effective in enhancing students' on-task behavior. In U-shape setting arrangement, students get the opportunity to exchange idea and share information that maximizes their learning space and enhances their learning.

### **2.5.2 Curriculum**

Curriculum is very important in engaging the students and helping them to get disengaged from inappropriate behavior. When a teacher is considering whether a “type A” or a “type B” is most appropriate for the classroom environment .Type “A” is concerned with the content of the lessons and the process of learning itself is not given enough attention (Willis, 1990). In addition, type “A” syllabus requires the teachers to design and itemize the course even before the beginning of the first lesson. Teachers have the full authority of tailoring the knowledge that students are going to receive and this does not allow the teacher-student roles to flourish (White, 1988). There is criticism of type “A” syllabus. Type "A" syllabus has no procedures designed for the selection of tasks based on the needs of the learners (Nunan, 2001).

Syllabus “B” is mainly concerned with the process of learning. It is internal to the learner and self-fulfilling. There is also negotiation between the learners and the teachers to make a joint decision about what and how is going to be learned. There is more emphasis on the process and the assessment of the students is carried out based on the students’ criteria. Candin and Breen’s procedural syllabus is a task-based learning approach because it focuses on the learning process and the teacher has no authoritarian power as he shares power with the learners. The learner is considered a researcher while the teacher as a coordinator of the classroom processes (Carter, 2002).

### **2.5.3 Motivation**

Motivation is a very essential factor in making the students engaged in their learning. Metcalf (1999) states that students who are poorly motivated are considered a basic problem to off-task behavior. In addition, Kilmer (1998) claims that low rate of academic productivity, not participating in class and disenchanting students are the result of the lack of motivation. There is no magical formula that can achieve motivation. The existence of a strong and positive relationship between the teacher and the students is considered an influential factor in raising the students’ motivation and providing them with more learning opportunities. Roberts (1996) recommends providing students with good teaching practices that can play an effective role to counter the student’s apathy through providing them with some measure of academic success instead of additional efforts to directly attack motivation. Likewise, Pianta (2000) believes that

most of the students positively respond to a well-organized classroom that is led by an enthusiastic teacher who is genuinely interested in his students and what they learn.

#### **2.5.4 Class size**

One of the most important factors that determine the teaching methods that teachers use in the classrooms is the number of students. The related literature shows that educators should take class size and the effects associated with it into consideration. Podmore (1998) stated that research on class size investigated the relationship between the class size and the achievements of the students, their motivation, teachers' stress and satisfaction and the educational organization. This means that the class size has an inevitable influence on teaching styles (Capel, Leask, & Turner, 1995). In his study, Bosker (1998) stated that teachers who teach small size classes have well and more opportunities to monitor the individual students closely and consequently provide more opportunities for individualized help and instruction during practice. In addition, Croll and Hastings (1996) pointed out that small class sizes can be effective in changing teaching methods and students' experiences. For lecture style learning, class size may have no significance, but with small class size it is more suitable to tailor courses that develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. On the other hand, Blatchford, Goldstein, and Mortimore (1998) suggested that the size of the class could make the teachers alter their teaching styles in order to suit the larger classes. Literature also indicates that there is a considerable variation in relationship between the size of the class and the motivation strategies that teachers can utilize. Capel et al. (1995) indicate there is a difference between teaching a large group of motivated and unmotivated students. Motivating students is considered an uneasy task and it poses a problem for the new teachers. Assessment is also another factor that is closely related to the class size. A study conducted by Shapson, Wright, Eason, and Fitzgerald (1980) concluded that teachers believe that the process of assessment is different in small and large classes. In Shapson et al. study, teachers who worked in small size classes with number of students ranging from 16 to 26, showed more satisfaction because correcting the students' errors were immediate and took little time. In contrast, classes of 30 students and more were more tiring, time consuming and assessment became more formal and was sometimes delayed. Korostoff (1998) carried out a study that also supported this view as teachers indicated that small classes enabled them to easily evaluate students by keeping track of students' achievement.

Salvin (1989) indicated that there is no correlation between students' academic achievement and class size and that differences are relatively subtle.

## **2.6 Student-centered and teacher-centered classroom management**

Dupin-Bryant (2004) states that learner-centered teaching style is defined as “a style of instruction that is responsive, collaborative, problem-centered, and democratic in which both students and the instructor decide how, what, and when learning occurs” (p.42). In addition, McCombs & Whisler (1997) define student-centered learning as “the perspective which focuses on the learners' experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, talents, interests, capacities, and needs. It creates a learning environment conducive to learning and promotes the highest levels of motivation, learning, and achievement for all learners”. In contrast, Dupin defines teacher-centered teaching style as “a style of instruction that is formal, controlled, and autocratic in which the instructor directs how, what, and when students learn” (p.42). In addition, Elliott (1996) states that teacher-centered teaching style is regarded a teaching style including a range of behaviors that a teacher uses consistently and comfortably over situation, time and content.

In student-centered learning, instruction is more suitable for learners who are more autonomous, more self-directed and ready to effectively participate in what, how and when to learn. Learners construct their own learning experiences as they learn by doing (Brown, 2008; McCombs & Whistler, 1997; Weimer, 2002, and Schuh, 2003). Weimer (2002) proposed that achieving student-centered teaching needs five areas that are: the role of the instructor, the selection of the content, the process of assessment, responsibility for learning and the nature of relationship between the learners and the teacher. The role of the learners must be more effective; learners need to take more responsibility of their own learning, contribute to the design of curriculum and have ownership of their own learning.

The role and the traits of the instructor in learner-centered learning are of great importance. The instructors who employ learner-centered instruction have to touch the lives of their students and use varied forms of assessment to place a strong emphasis on student learning outcomes (Bain, 2004).

For decades, people's perceptions of classroom management were mainly rooted in behavioral theories of learning and teaching. The behavioral model focused on implementing techniques



that could bring students' behavior under stimulus control (Brophy, 1999). However, these behavioral approaches to classroom management shifted over the last decade. Educators have become more concerned with implementing an instructional approach that depends on principles of constructive learning (Brophy, 1999; Dollard and Christensen, 1996). Educators have started implementing teaching styles and educational approaches that can successfully enhance classroom management.

Grasha (1996) defines teaching style as the personal qualities and behaviors that educators implement in managing their own classes. Conti(1979, 1983, 1985, 1989, and 2004) states that teaching style includes the distinct qualities that a teacher exhibits and which are consistent from one situation to another regardless of the content that is being delivered. The traditional learning style that centered on the teacher as the primary source of instruction and knowledge transmission has been dominant for decades. In the traditional classrooms, students used to be passive recipients of teachers' knowledge and they played no role in their own learning. Teachers took complete responsibility of making all the decisions concerning the teaching methods, the curriculum and the different methods of assessing the students. Duckworth (2009) affirms that the students' educational growth has been slowed down by the teacher-centered teaching style. On contrary, in student-centered classroom students take more responsibility of their own learning because they are actively involved and they share some decisions with their teachers. Students participate actively in their own learning as they have a greater input into what they learn; they construct their own learning by how and when they learn things. Weimer (2002) and Wohlfarth et.al (2008) state that learner-centered teaching style does not focus on how teacher teach, but it emphasizes on how students learn.

Teacher-centeredness is criticized because compliance is valued over initiative and passive learners over active learners (Freiberg, 1999). Students have little or no authority as teachers exert their control through a system of clearly defined routines, rules and procedures and punishments that the teacher mandates rather than developing them with the students (Freiberg, 1999).

In addition, motivation in the teacher-centered classrooms is extrinsic as teachers use it to influence students' behavior. In this case, the completion of a task is considered a prerequisite for obtaining something desirable (Chaoe, 1993) that can be praise or activity rewards (such as

computer time or free time) and also tangible rewards (e.g. candy and gifts). In contrast, a constructivist teacher is mainly interested in supporting the students to get engaged in problems and issues, think critically, try out various possible solutions or explanations and search below the surface to construct their own learning instead of being passive recipients (Ryan & cooper, 2001). In the student-centered classrooms, teaching strategies include role-playing, inquiry, exploratory discussions, reflective thinking, simulations games, projects and demonstrations (Edwards, 2004). One of the primary goals is to give students the power and strengthen their responsibility. Proponents of student-centered classroom management state that teachers will be able to make the classroom more manageable by relinquishing hierarchical power structures and sharing control with the students (Nichols, 1992).

## **2.7 The importance of teacher-student relationship and its influence on managing the classroom**

Educators and researchers agree that there is no magical formula form managing the students' behavior. However, the strong and positive relationship between the teacher and the student is central in establishing a good safe classroom environment (Weinstein, 2002). Good consistent teaching practices are also very effective in managing the behavior of the students as most students positively respond and interact in a well-organized classroom that is led by a teacher who demonstrates a genuine interest in what students teach (Erickson, 1978). Successful teachers value the mutual trusting, positive and respectful relationships with their students as this allows for a stronger focus on encouraging students' learning and effectively manage their behavior (McNaughton, 2002). A study carried out by Hawk et al., (2002) revealed that placing a high value on the right kind of relationship between teachers and students encourages learning and improves classroom management. Hawk et al, (2002) mentioned some of the main attributes that a successful teacher should attain so as to have strong positive relationship with the students. These attributes include attitude , values , skills , behaviors and efforts that are helpful in developing good positive relationship that makes students engaged in learning and well managed (MacFarlane, 2007). Teachers should also have empathy towards the students' culture as the students really appreciate this and feel happy.

Respect between the teacher and the learner is also one of the main factors that helps in keeping the classroom well managed as students abstain from demonstrating bad behaviors in front of the

teachers who respect them ( Wilson-Hill , 2006). Robertson ( 1996) provides a conclusion by Tattum ( 1982) from a study of disruptive students that the behavior of the students was not determined by what consequences could their actions bring but by whether they liked and respected the teacher or not. Serious confrontations are extremely impossible to take place between students and teachers who have healthy friendly relationship and who share respect for each other (Alton-Lee, 2003; Boyes, 2002; Rogers, 2000).

Communication is also a very important and essential factor that fosters a good classroom environment for learning. Communication between the teacher and the students is a two-way process that enhances learning and reduces behavioral disruptions. Hawk et al., (2002) state that respectful communication between the teacher and the students provides strong opportunities for reciprocal dialogue that positively enhances learning and reinforces classroom management.

## **2.8 Students' role in classroom management**

Pajak, Cramer, and Konke (1986) claimed that the perceptions and the expectations of the students of their teachers have a significant impact on student behavior than anything else. Student should be involved in the design of classroom procedures and rules instead of imposing these rules on them. When student feel responsible for their behavior , teachers rarely need to intervene to correct behavior ( Kyle& Rogien, 2004).The students also learn responsible behavior and avoid disruption when teachers share with them the discipline strategies and their rationale and purpose. Establishing classroom harmony is also very effective for improving classroom management. Students feel that they are part of the class when the classroom environment is warm and supportive.

## **2.9 Observation studies of classroom management**

Many research studies on classroom management began with classroom observation in order to highlight the highly effective behaviors that teachers implemented in order to successfully manage the classroom. These studies defined effective teachers as the teachers who could produce greater learning opportunities for their students or those who had lower incidents of behavioral disruptions and more on-task behavior (Anderson et al., 1979). Some researchers collected narrative descriptions of effective teacher behavior in order to identify the behaviors and practices across teachers that enabled them to make recommendations for effective

classroom management. For example, Kounin, (1970) attempted to identify these practices through comparing teachers' managerial behaviors in smoothly functioning classrooms with teachers in classrooms that are dominated by high rates of frequent disruption and inattention. Kounin (1970) identified a set of teacher behaviors that could be effective in creating a successfully managed classroom based on the observations of videotaped lessons of teachers in both types of classrooms. He concluded in his study that "successful teachers in managing the classroom have a "withitness "trait. Withitness means that teachers are aware of the student behaviors and activities all the time and can prevent small issues from escalating. They make students feel that they are everywhere in the classroom and observe what they are doing.

Another long study that was carried out by Anderson , Everson and Emmer (1970s) to find out the most effective trends in classroom management. They collected extensive narrative recordings of teacher behavior in 28 third grade classrooms over one academic year (Anderson et al., 1979). Based on the gains at the end of the school year, researchers identified one ineffective and one effective teacher. They concluded that there was a large difference in teacher behaviors between the ineffective and effective teachers. The effective teachers had better classroom management as they had clear expectations about behavior and successfully communicated them to their students at the beginning of the year. In addition, the effective teachers taught the students the classroom rules and routines explicitly. They also provided response to the inappropriate behavior promptly before they escalate. The researchers compared the seven effective teachers with the seven ineffective teachers. Teachers were considered effective based on the academic progress of their students. Studies found out that the effective managers successfully applied preventing procedures that included re-teaching the classroom rules and routines. During the classroom of the effective teachers, the transition between the activities was done smoothly and disruptive student behavior was rare. Finally, the observation studies concluded that effective teachers provided appropriate learning environment through monitoring the student behavior, behavior specific praise and consistent consequences.

## **Chapter3**

### **Methodology of the study**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The main purpose of the study was to find out the impact of tasked based learning and cooperative learning on improving classroom management. Chapter three details the procedures followed in collecting the data.

As mentioned in chapter one, the fieldwork undertaken assumed a mixed approach. The researcher observed different EFL classes during different learning styles. He used a checklist in order to find out how the teachers employed certain strategies and some task related factors. Observational research is effective because it is characterized by nonparticipant naturalistic observation (Gay, 1987: 206). The researcher also interviewed five ESL teachers in order to investigate their perceptions about the most effective teaching practices and strategies and the task-related factors that can sustain successful classroom management. Moreover, the researcher administered a questionnaire to 50 students to support the qualitative data with quantitative data in order to make the results of the research more valid.

#### **3.2 Research design**

##### **Rationale for choosing mixed-method approach**

The current study implemented a mixed-method approach in order to investigate the impact of task-based learning and cooperative learning on creating successful classroom management. The method involved the collection of extensive descriptive data (qualitative) in order to get insight into the phenomenon of interests; data analysis included the coding of the data and production of verbal synthesis (Gay, 1996). The qualitative data was collected through using the observation checklist during classroom observation and the unstructured interviews with the teachers.

The study used the qualitative method , alongside with the quantitative method , as Creswell (1994) states that qualitative research is reliable because it is built on the idea that documents, informants or visual materials are selected purposefully based on the fact that they can provide the best and the most reliable answer to the research questions. Therefore, in order to observe the

classroom management techniques implemented through task-based learning and co-operative learning, the researcher observed some ESL teachers. In addition, qualitative research depends on personal interactions and the unstructured manner in which the participants provide the data to the researcher (Vakalis, 1997). The qualitative research creates a picture that facilitates understanding through in-depth description of the events (Bryman, 2004b; Cohen, Manion & Marrison, 2007). This approach helps the participants to provide their detailed points of views and answer the research questions more deeply (Bouma, 1998, P.169).

At the same time, the researcher also collected quantitative data through students' questionnaires. Collecting the "numerical data was mainly statistical "in order to explain, predict, and control phenomenon of interest (Gay, 1996). The researcher used the mixed approach as he sought corroboration, convergence and correspondence of the results from various methods (Denscombe, 1998). The mixed-method approach used in the current study was valuable because it developed the instruments of research as well as checking for bias in research methods. The classroom observation and the teachers' interviews (qualitative method ) enabled the researcher to verify the findings of the students' questionnaires ( quantitative method).The comparison of both quantitative and qualitative findings made it possible for the researcher to give some recommendations that can be effective in sustaining successful classroom management. Although the mixed method can be criticized in terms of time and cost compared to the single method of research project, it strengthened confidence in the results and their validity along with their reliability (Denscombe, 1998). The researcher chose the classroom observation checklist and the students' questionnaires very carefully in order to make sure that the results from both methods corroborate one another.

### **3.3 Study Population**

The current study is a small scale study as it involves eight teachers (3 for observation and 5 for the unstructured interviews) and 50 students. The study also involved participants who have different perspectives as the five teachers are different from one another in terms of their teaching experiences and the number of years they have taught. The study researched both teachers and students in order to find out the role that they played in creating successful classroom management as well as their perceptions about classroom management. Researching both the teachers and the students has triangulated the results. Three teachers were observed in

different classroom contexts. The observations conducted were in line with the purpose of the study. The teachers selected were experienced teachers. Sherman and Webb (1996) believe that the researchers should employ strategies and methods that are in line with the aim of the study. In addition, Gay (1987) and Borg and Gall (1983) state that it is impossible that the observer and the participants record everything that takes place in the classroom as it naturally happens as the lesson can include different kinds of activities. Hence, the observer determined what to observe based on the research questions and the researcher's focus. The researcher was mostly interested in the activities and occurrences that required implementing classroom management techniques as well as the activities that made the students more engaged in their learning.

The researcher also carried out unstructured interview with other five teachers in order to collect as much data as possible about the most effective teaching approaches and strategies of classroom management. The teacher implemented unstructured interviews as they give in-depth answers and are informal in structure. The teachers selected for the unstructured interviews were experienced who had been working in the field of teaching for more than 7 years. Experienced teachers can provide the best insight and they can represent the full range of experiences and opinions that other teachers can utilize in their teaching (McKenzie, 2007).

The researcher chose the students randomly as he wanted to find out the opinions of different students about the most effective teaching approaches and classroom strategies that are effective in disengaging them from inappropriate behavior. The students aged from 12 (grade 6) to 15 (grade 9) as the researcher carried out the study in a cycle 2 school. Arabic is the mother tongue of the students and they learn English as a second language. In addition, more than 98 % of the students are Emiratis which means that they share the same cultural background.

### **3.4 Sampling**

It is very important to select the details of sampling techniques before the process of data gathering. This is very effective in enhancing the validity and therefore makes the data sound and reliable. Sampling means that a sample represents the whole or a group of people, but the results can never be completely certain unless everyone is a part of the sample. In the current study, the researcher used a small sample of teachers and 50 students. It is a considerably small sample, but the researcher aims at establishing the findings so that they may be applicable to larger groups of

students and teachers (Cohen et al., 2007; Davidson & Tolich, 2003). Nevertheless, Wellington (2000) points out that the small sample can never be the whole population.

The researcher chose a representative sample from students and teachers. A representative sample provides results that can be generalized to the whole study population or the other students and teachers (Amin, 2005).

### **3.5 Instrumentation**

The researcher manipulated three instruments for collecting data about how a successful classroom management can be achieved. The first tool was the classroom observation checklist (Appendix B). The researcher used in observing three ESL classes. He also used unstructured interviews with 5 teachers (Appendix D). In addition, he used questionnaires for students (Appendix C) in order to find out their perceptions about successful classroom management techniques and teaching approaches. The following section provides a detailed description of the research instruments used.

#### **3.5.1 A checklist for classroom Observation**

The researcher collected data through using a classroom observation checklist (Appendix B) to observe the teachers in their classrooms. As the researcher did not have the intention to interfere with or influence the teacher's daily classroom procedures, he followed a nonparticipant naturalistic approach. Behaviors are best observed as they occur naturally and the observer does not manipulate them on purpose (Gay, 1987). The intention of the researcher was to study the classroom behaviors and the teacher's response as they normally occur through naturalistic observation. The researcher did not interfere, but he just recorded facts (Bless & Higson-Smith). The researcher also focused on the behaviors that caused classroom management problems to emerge as they interfered with classroom procedures and activities. The researcher sat at the back of the classroom and observed the classroom proceedings and activities. According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995), non-participant nature "involves unobtrusive and systematic observation of the phenomenon of interest".

The observation checklist consisted of five sections that are crucial for sustaining successful classroom management. The five sections included were organization of the lesson, physical



arrangement, behavioral considerations, instructional strategies and social climate. The checklist is fully detailed in order to collect related data about the other strategies and factors that can influence the classroom management alongside with the instructional strategies.

### **3.5.2 Questionnaire**

The students filled in a questionnaire (Appendix C) that is related to their behavior in the classroom during the instructional process; especially task-based learning and cooperative learning. The researcher designed the questionnaire for the students in order to be able to collect more in-depth data about the perceptions of students regarding the teaching styles and the behavior strategies that can be effective in maintaining successful classroom management. The researcher divided the students' questionnaire into three sections: section one is about teaching approaches, section two focuses on the relationship between the students and the teacher and section three is about classroom seating and environment. The sections of the questionnaire are related to the research questions of the study.

Questionnaires are very effective in collecting data for research purposes. Questionnaires are practical tools and they provide huge amounts of information that can be utilized for the purpose of the study. Ackroyd and Hughes (1981) state that questionnaires can be administered by the researcher or by other people with limited affect to the validity and the reliability of the research. The results of the questionnaires can be easily quantified by a software program or by the researcher. Moreover, the results of the questionnaires can be scientifically and objectively analyzed in a more accurate way than other tools (Popper, 2004). Questionnaires can also be an effective method of measuring the attitudes, preferences, behaviors, opinions and intentions of relatively large numbers of subjects more cheaply and quickly than other methods.

According to McLeod (2014), questionnaires are considered a relatively cheap and efficient way of collecting large amounts of information from a large number of people. He also states that the data can be collected relatively quickly as other people can distribute and collect the questionnaires without the researcher being necessarily present. However, the main problem with the questionnaires is that the participants tend to provide a positive image of them or bend the truth to look good (McLeod, 2014). The questions included in the questionnaires should be

appropriate to the participants in the study in terms of their age, level of education, social background, ethnicity, etc.

### **3.5.3 Interviews**

Interviews are research tools that are widely used to gather data about people's inner perceptions, attitudes, feelings of reality and their experiences. According to Fontana and Frey (2005) interviews are divided into three types: structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and unstructured. Structured interviews contain predefined set of questions that are asked in the same order to all the respondents. Semi structured interviews are characterized with their flexibility as the interview usually includes both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The researcher used the unstructured interview with the teachers (Appendix D) as a qualitative method of collecting data. The unstructured interview is used interchangeably with the informal conversational interview, the non-standardized interview, ethnographic interview and in-depth interview. According to Minicheiello et al. (1990), unstructured interviews are defined as interviews in which neither the questions nor the answers are predetermined. This type of interview depends on the social interaction between the researcher and the participants in the study. In addition, Punch (1998) defined unstructured interviews as a means of understanding people's behavior without imposing any a priori categorization that can put a limit on the field of inquiry. Patton (2002) also defined unstructured interviews as a method of extending the observation of the participants naturally as the questions are generated spontaneously throughout the natural flow of the interaction between the researcher and the participants. The researcher used the unstructured interview in order to give the participating teachers to provide their own opinions in-depth and without imposing any restrictions on them as they interviewer generates questions based on the narration of the participants.

### **3.6 Quality control: Reliability and validity of the study**

Reliability means to be consistent over time with methods and treating all groups the same during the process of data gathering. Validity means that the data that is gathered by the researcher is relevant to the concept studied so that it goes closely in line with the actual research aim (Bryman, 2004b; Cohen et al., 2007; Davidson & Tolich, 2003). As reliability and validity support the authenticity of the findings, it is very important to discuss these two issues especially

with qualitative research. However, they are challenging with qualitative research because there are no direct answers to the questions involved in the research tools.

The researcher established the validity and reliability of the instruments in order to collect reliable data. He assured the validity of the research instruments by assessing the questionnaire items. Validity is when the tools that the researcher uses are correspondent with the variables in the study, so that they can produce accurate results (Amin, 2005). The researcher discussed the questions with the supervisor who provided useful technical input before administering them to the respondents. This helped the researcher to make the questions clear and void of any ambiguity or lack of clarity. In addition, the relevance of the questions was also measured with the objectives of the study. One more challenge with the qualitative research is that the researcher, the respondents or the questions can be biased and influence the findings of the study. Both Seidman (1998) and Wellington (2000) expressed further concerns in their writings concerning their validity and reliability.

However, there has been debate regarding the issue of reliability and validity. According to Wellington (2000), total reliability is a debatable issue as far as the replication of the research results is concerned. Seidman (1998) also questions the concept of validity as he believes that both external and internal validity are only perceptions, so they can never be claimed as a certainty. He also states that the word validity should be replaced by other words such as trustworthiness and transferability.

In order to establish reliability and validity within the current research, the researcher followed the following steps. First of all, the content of the observation checklist and the questionnaires was checked against the research questions and the purpose of the study. Second, the questionnaires were carried out on some students prior to the study and some modification was made. To support the reliability of the study, the researcher implemented carefully planned and systematic sampling, he designed the research was thoroughly and compared the collected data with previous research within the literature.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

It is extremely essential in any educational research to follow the ethical considerations as people are involved in the process. According to Wellington (2000), ethical research might be unethical in its methods, its presentation, its tools, and its design and even in its conclusions. Informed consent is important for classroom observations as the teachers had to agree to be observed for research purposes before they were observed in the classrooms. In addition, the issue of privacy and confidentiality is so important to the participants, so the researcher assured them that all the information would be confidential and that it would be used for educational research. Wellington (2000) states that, "the main criterion for educational research is that it should be ethical.....Ethical considerations override all others".

The researcher informed the participating teachers (Appendix A) that their participation is voluntary as some teachers feel uncomfortable of being observed; there could have been some situations that might have caused an embarrassment to the teachers. According to Bless and Higson-Smith (1995), "Participation in research must be voluntary.....and the consent must be informed, in the sense that the participant must be aware of both the negative and the positive consequences of participation". In support, Vakalisa (1997) states more that in order to win the trust of the respondents, the researcher has to make the respondents informed of the benefit of their participation, their rights as well as the negative consequences that they may expect. After the discussion between the researcher and the teachers, the teachers duly allowed the researcher to observe the classes. The researcher selected three teachers only to be observed as classroom observations are time consuming and they also significantly involve small samples (Gay, 1987; and Vakalisa, 1997). The sampling that the researcher used was purposeful as it enabled the researcher to choose deliberately the kind of subjects that he wanted to include or have interview with in order to get the best answers to the research questions that are stated in the study (Nkossa, 1994; & Cresswell, 1994).

Prior to the beginning of the current research, an approval was obtained from the principal of the school. After the researcher got the approval, he began observing the sample teachers and distributing the questionnaires on both teachers and students. He also emailed every teacher a consent letter to read and sign (Appendix A).

### 3.8 Chronological stages of the research

Table 3.8 shows the list of activities used in the current research. It is adopted from Gantt Chart Model (Carlisle 1979, cited in Gay 1996, p. 97).

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES FOR CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT							
	DATES							
	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan	Feb.	Mar.	
1	Proposal and ethical approval							
2	Defining the framework and the main points of the research							
3	Preparing the methodology of the research							
4	Implementing the methods of the research							
5	Data collection							
	Data analysis							
7	Preparation of the dissertation							

**Table 1: chronological stages of the research**

### 3.9 Data Analysis

The process of analysis is used to turn the information collected into useful data (Coleman & Briggs, 2002). However, there is no definite way that can be used to analyze and represent qualitative data. Ary et al., (2002) suggest that there are three steps that should be used in analyzing and representing qualitative data. These three steps include organizing, summarizing and interpreting.

#### 3.9.1 Organizing

The researcher organized the data according to the response of the participants. He organized the similar response of the students' questionnaires and analyzed the percentage of each level of agreement regarding each statement. In order to provide a visual representation of the questionnaire findings, the researcher used the excel program. He inserted graphs about the different results of the questionnaire.

### **3.9.2 Summarizing**

Summarizing is a very important step in analyzing data. Regarding the interviews, the researcher wrote down a lot of notes, classified the similar themes together and looked for the repeated phrases and words. Three themes were main focus of the unstructured interviews; the teachers' perceptions, the instructional strategies and the task-related factors that create successful classroom management. The researcher summarized the data that focused on these three themes. He also summarized the themes of the observation checklists.

### **3.9.3 Interpreting**

The third step implemented in analyzing the data was the interpretation of the data. Interpretation of the data included analyzing, contrasting and comparing the data collected through the research instruments. The researcher provided figures to interpret the results of students' questionnaires.

Using the process of organizing, summarizing and interpreting data was used by the researcher in order to increase validity as it can be understood easily by the reader.

## **3.10 Challenges faced during the Study**

The researcher faced a few challenges during this study. One of the challenges was that he had classes during the classes of the participating teachers who were going to be observed. This challenge was overcome with the support of the administration staff that co-operatively made some changes in the school timetable to allow the researcher to observe the participating teachers. Another challenge was that one of the participating teachers decided that he did not feel comfortable to be observed regarding the classroom management and students' behavior. This made the researcher look for another teacher who agreed to participate. All the participants were assured that all the data would be confidential and would only be used for research purposes.

## **Summary**

The best way to understand the factors that can contribute to successful classroom management is to observe the teachers' interaction with the students in the actual classroom. In addition, the perceptions of teachers and students about classroom management are essential because they

enabled the researcher to hear their experiences as they are the main pillars of the educational process. The interviews with the teachers provided a large amount of data that was analyzed and categorized in order to get the main features of successful classroom management. The student questionnaire also provided a lot of data the students' opinions and perceptions for maintaining a successfully managed classroom. In addition, the observation checklist was also a useful tool that enabled the researcher to gather natural data within the classroom context without interfering with the instructional or behavioral process at all.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Results**

The current study aimed at investigating the effect of task-based learning and cooperative learning on classroom management. It also investigated other task-related factors that could enhance successful classroom management. The results of the study are presented based on the classroom observations, student questionnaire and the unstructured interviews with the teachers.

#### **4.1 Classroom observations**

The researcher used a checklist in order to observe three teachers (Appendix B). The focus of the observation was the classroom management strategies. In addition, the checklist used focused on other factors that enhanced classroom management during task-based learning and co-operative learning. Following are the observation of the three teachers.

Teacher A: The teacher teaches grade 6 and the school follows theme-based curriculum according to the New School Model that is implemented by Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC). Teachers select the materials and tailor them based on the level of the students and in line with the learning outcomes and the school improvement plan. The theme of the first lesson was "imaginary world". Students had to work in groups in order to talk about the place they would like to live in or a house they dream of living in. The class was already divided in groups of mixed ability students and each student entered the class knowing where to sit. Each group was provided with some materials on the tables such as crayons, pencils, a sharpener, glue and erasers. The teacher distributed a 3D worksheet that has a big bubble inside it. Then, he explained the lesson objectives and the success criteria to the students. He also showed the students an example of the task they were going to do. Students had to draw their dream house and write some sentences to describe it. The teacher made sure that the students understood clearly what they were going to do. He asked them to work in groups and he allocated 30 minutes for that activity. While the students worked on their task, the teacher kept going around the class facilitating any difficulty to the students and intervened when there was any disruption in any group. It seemed that there was a mutual relationship of respect between the teacher and the students as he used some nonverbal gestures to make some students work cooperatively with their colleagues in the same group. The teacher also motivated the students to keep on their tasks



by providing encouraging comments to the groups who were doing significantly well. After the 30 minutes finished (time counter), the teacher began to let every group present what they did. Then, he asked the groups to exchange their tasks so that they can provide each other with feedback. The teacher also showed some samples to the whole class and provided his feedback. Finally, the teacher assigned homework to the students that were related to the task.

The lesson was task-based learning that gave the students the opportunity to work together cooperatively. Overall, the class was well managed and there was little misbehavior that did not cause any disruptions of the lesson. The teacher could successfully intervene and he was everywhere in the class while the students were working on their task. The students were engaged in the task as they found it interesting.

Teacher B: The second lesson that the researcher attended was in grade 7. The curriculum is also theme based and the teacher explained a lesson about looking back. It was also a task-based lesson where students had to compare between the past and the present. The teacher clearly explained the learning outcomes of the lesson and the success criteria.

The class consisted of 33 students and seats were arranged into groups of fives. Thirty students were present and three students were absent. Each student knew exactly where to sit as the name of each student was written on a label that was stuck on the desk. This saved a lot of time as no time was wasted on arranging the seating of the students.

The teacher asked the students to compare the UAE in the past with the UAE nowadays in terms of buildings, transport, education, health care and jobs. Each group worked on one item. For example, group one was assigned transport, group 2 buildings, group three educations, group four health care and group five jobs. Each group had to draw a picture and write a paragraph about it. The teacher ensured that all the groups understood what they were going to do. The teacher told the students that they would spend 30 minutes on the exercise.

The students worked in groups and the teacher monitored the groups. He provided each group with immediate feedback. He also maintained control of the whole class, but there was some disruption because the number of the students in the class was 30. The students took about 35 minutes in the activity (5 minutes more what was allocated) because the teacher took more time with the students as the size of the class was big.

Although the teacher reinforced the classroom rules and procedures and used nonverbal gestures to manage the misbehaviors of some students during the task, there were some disruptions. The main cause was the large number of the students in the classroom that seemed congested for the students. He could not provide feedback to all the students because the number of the students was large, so he collected some of the students' work in order to provide his feedback during his free time.

Teacher C: the third lesson that the researcher observed was in grade 9. The theme of the lesson was “adventure”. The classroom was arranged in rows and the number of the students was 25 students. As for the organization of the lesson, the teacher gave clear directions for all the activities, all the materials were well planned ahead of time and the time of the lesson was well planned. The physical arrangement of the classroom environment was well managed. The students were physically comfortable, the classroom was attractive to the students, all the students could see presentation of instruction, the desks and furniture were arranged to maximize space and distraction was minimal. Overall, the classroom environment was completely suitable for learning.

Regarding the behavioral considerations, the expectations and the classroom rules were clearly posted in the classroom. He also used positive reinforcement frequently and transitions between activities were smooth and without confusion. Students took responsibility of their actions. The teacher made the students work independently to write about “a risky trip they once made”. He gave clear instructions that matched the need and the skill of the students and the purpose of the lesson was clearly stated. The teacher gave the students worksheets that contained pictures in order to stimulate the students to write and they were of interest to the students as the pictures included cars, the desert, falcons and a lion. The teacher asked the students some questions in order to elicit from them some ideas and he varied his questions.

The students began writing and the teacher walked around the class monitoring them. He answered all the inquiries from the students. However, the teacher was so strict with the students and the social climate in the class was not positive. Although the students had the opportunity to interact, they were very reserved and afraid to break the classroom behavior rules. There was a mutual respect between the teacher and the students, but the teacher never used humor during the

lesson. After the students finished writing their narrative individually, the teacher let them check in pairs and finally he gave them his feedback.

Overall, the teacher could manage the behaviors of the students successfully in terms of following the classroom procedures and rules. However, learning was taking place but not so successfully as some students remained unable to write; they did not ask the teacher many times because the teacher was so strict.

## **4.2 Answer to the study research questions**

The current study aimed at answering the following research questions:

### ***4.2.1 Q.1: How can task-based learning contribute to successful classroom management?***

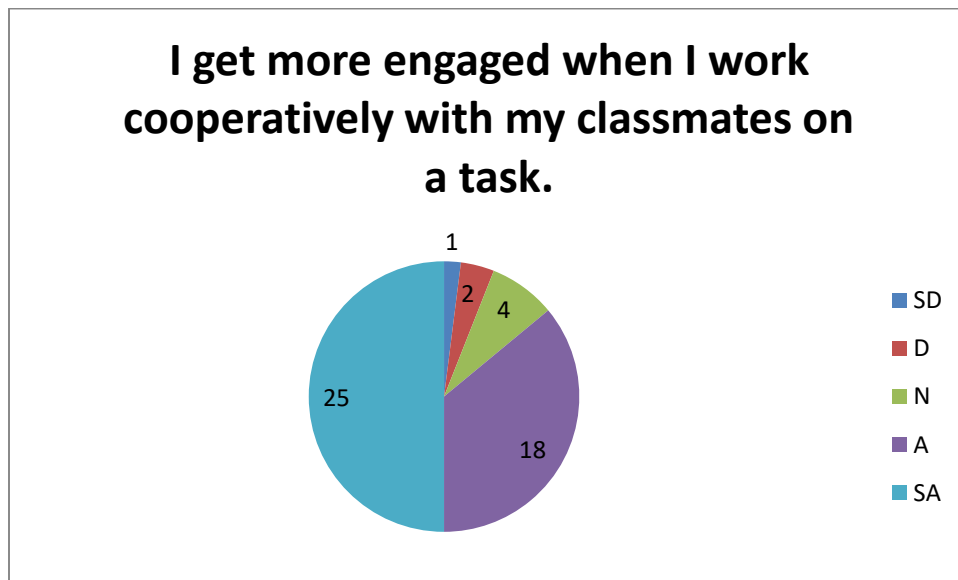
The findings of the study showed that task-based learning has positive effect on the success of classroom management. Students were more engaged in their learning in task-based learning and the majority of the students participated effectively. The classroom observations showed that the lessons where teachers used task-based learning were successful as the students disengaged from any disruptions or misbehaviors (Teacher A and teacher B). They made students work on tasks (imaginary world and looking back). Students worked on the tasks that they found interesting, so they did not engage in any misbehavior. Their engagement kept them working on the task and few students demonstrated just little disruption that was stopped effectively by the immediate intervention of the teachers.

However, teacher C lesson was successful in terms of behavior management because the teacher was so strict. He made the students work individually, but learning was not taking place successfully as with teacher A and teacher B. Students were seated individually and they wrote a narrative about “ a risky trip “, but they did not work cooperatively. Although there was also little disruptions, but learning did not take place successfully. Students did not collaborate together to do a task.

The interviews with the five participating teachers also supported the findings of the student questionnaire and the classroom observations. Four of the five interviews teachers (80 %)

mentioned that students rarely get engaged in misbehaviors when they work cooperatively with their classmates to do a task, especially if they found it interesting. One teacher only stated that it is difficult to manage students while they work on task because some students can get into off-task behavior, talk together or make disruption, especially if they find the task challenging or boring. He added that it was better to impose rules and procedures that students follow strictly.

The students' questionnaire also showed that task-based learning can effectively contribute to successful classroom management. Figure1 shows that half of the students (50 %) strongly agreed that they got more engaged when they worked cooperatively on a task. Only one student (5 %) strongly disagreed, four students neither agreed nor disagreed and only two students disagreed with the same statement. This shows that when students are engaged in task-based learning and, they tend to be more focused and engaged. The figure shows that students are more engaged when they work on a task, especially if it is not too challenging.

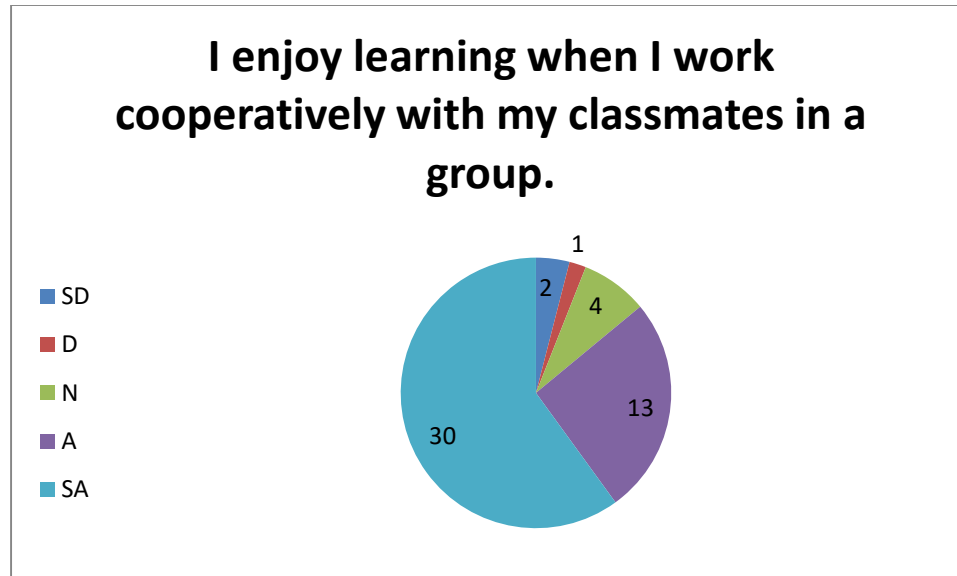


**Figure 1: the engagement of students during task-based learning**

#### **4.2.2 Q.2: Can cooperative learning effectively enhance classroom management?**

The findings of the current study revealed that cooperative learning can effectively enhance classroom management, especially when the teacher supports it with some other factors that include attractive learning environment, motivation and friendly relationship with the students. The classroom observations showed that students worked effectively and harmonically when they had a purpose to fulfill. Students also interacted with each other positively and they showed a high degree of mutual understanding. The unstructured interviews with the teachers showed that four of the five teachers indicated that students use their interpersonal skills and communication skills so effectively during cooperative learning and they rarely demonstrate inappropriate behavior. Three teachers also stated that cooperative learning is successful and enhances classroom management when the teacher intervenes at the suitable time to provide feedback to the students or to stop any disruptions caused by any member in the group. Two teachers also stressed the importance of setting a goal for the students during the cooperative learning in order to make them feel that they are going somewhere.

The student questionnaire also showed that most of the students enjoy cooperative learning with their classmates in groups. 30 out of the 40 participating students (60 %) strongly agreed that they enjoyed learning when they work cooperatively with their classmates in a group (Figure 2). Only one student disagreed and 4 students were neutral with the statement. Some student commented at the bottom of the questionnaire that they feel more comfortable when they work cooperatively with their classmates because their communication and interaction makes learning more interesting and beneficial.



**Figure 2: cooperative learning and classroom engagement**

**4.2.3 Q.3: *What are the teachers’ perceptions about the most influential factors of creating a successfully managed classroom?***

The unstructured interviews with the teachers revealed their perceptions about the most influential factors that can create a successfully managed classroom. The majority of the teachers stressed the importance of good planning and preparing the materials in advance. All the five teachers stated that when the teacher has a clear plan for the lesson and communicates it effectively to the students, the students are engaged in what they are going to learn and disengaged from any inappropriate behavior. In addition, they emphasized the importance of making the learning materials interesting to the students because when students get bored they talk with their friends or get engaged in inappropriate behavior.

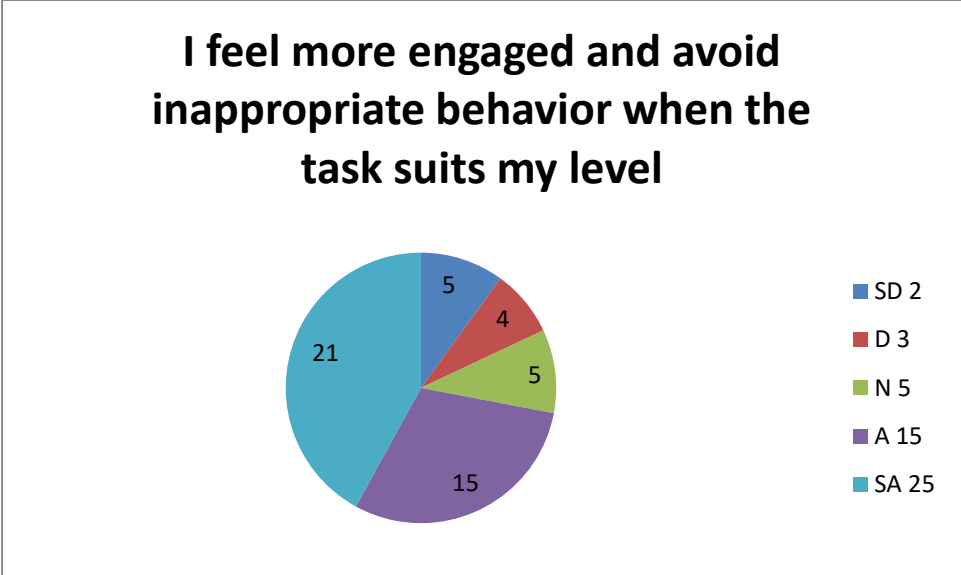
Another effective factor that the majority of teachers stressed on its importance was the physical environment of the classroom. Four of the five teachers (80 %) emphasized the importance of seating arrangement. They revealed that when the students are seated in groups of mixed abilities, they tend to work cooperatively with each other to finish the assigned task. However, only one teacher stated that this can make some students depend on the other and get engaged in some disruptions. In addition, all the teachers stressed the importance of an attractive environment that makes the students feel comfortable and which has no distractions.

One more factor that all the teachers agreed on its vital influence on sustaining a successfully managed classroom was the class size. All the five teachers said that a classroom of 20 students can be perfectly managed because the teacher will have enough time to support each student and the classroom will not be congested. They admitted that it is too challenging and exhausting to manage a classroom of more than thirty students (as the case is in their schools). Three teachers stated that a lot of time is wasted in order to solve the problems between the students and this sometimes prevents the teacher from completing the lesson successfully. Moreover, two teachers added that when the number of the students in the classroom exceeds 25 students, a lot of time is wasted on providing students with feedback and this makes the teacher more stressed which can be reflected in his relationship and reaction with the students.

Furthermore, three teachers stated that the classroom atmosphere should be friendly and there should be a mutual relationship of respect between the teachers and the students. However, the other two teachers declared that classroom management is more successful when the teacher is strict and forces the students to follow the classroom rules and the procedures of the classroom. Four of the five teachers also stressed the importance of varying the instructional strategies and differentiation of learning in order to keep all the students engaged in learning and disengaged from any inappropriate behavior. All the participating teachers also stated when the learning materials are accessible to the students a lot of time is saved and students do not have to move a lot during the lesson and cause disruption in the classroom.

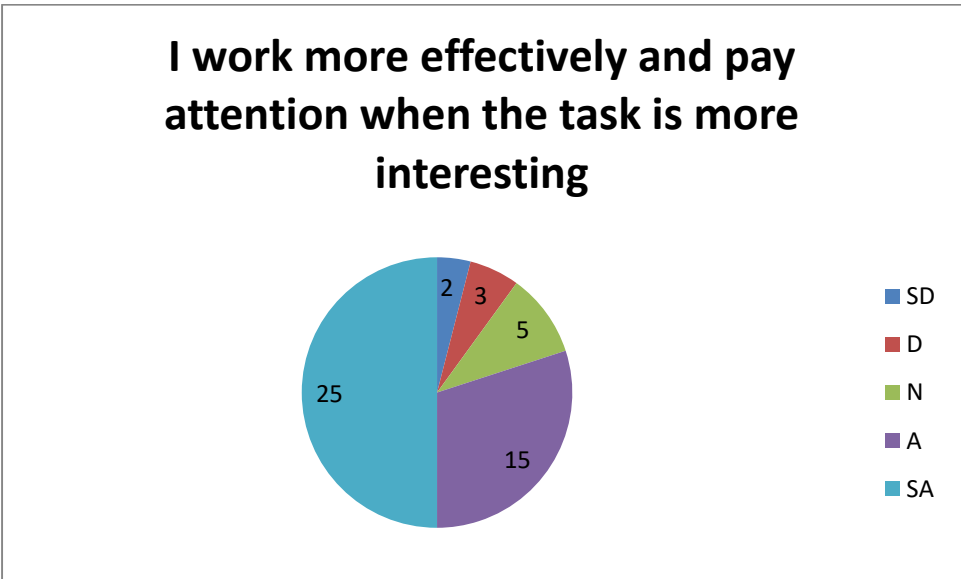
#### ***4.2.4 Q.4: What are the students' opinions about the best practices for managing the classroom?***

The researcher administered a questionnaire to the students in order to find out students' perceptions about the best practices that teachers can implement in order to create a successful classroom management. The following pie charts (figures 3 & 4) show the students' perceptions about the best practices that can create a successful classroom management. The first section of the questionnaire is related to task-based learning and cooperative learning and their effect on improving the classroom management.



**Figure 3: engagement in tasks helps students avoid inappropriate behavior**

Regarding the level of the task, 42 % strongly agreed and 30 % also agreed that they feel more engaged and avoid inappropriate behavior when the task suits their level. Only five students (10 %) strongly disagreed and four disagreed with the same statement. This shows that the majority of students do not engage in inappropriate behavior when the task suits the level of students.



**Figure 4: nature of the task and students' engagement**



Similarly, the majority of students stated that the nature of the task is effective in engaged them during the lesson. Twenty-five students ( 50 %) strongly agreed and fifteen students agreed ( 30 % ) that they work more effectively and pay attention when the task is interesting , while only two students ( 4 % ) strongly disagreed and three students ( 6 % ) disagreed with the same statement. Five students (10 %) remained neutral and did not state their explicit opinions.

The classroom observations also showed that students were more engaged and avoided inappropriate behavior when the task suited their level and was interesting to them. In classes A and B, the students were engaged in the task because it was interesting to them.

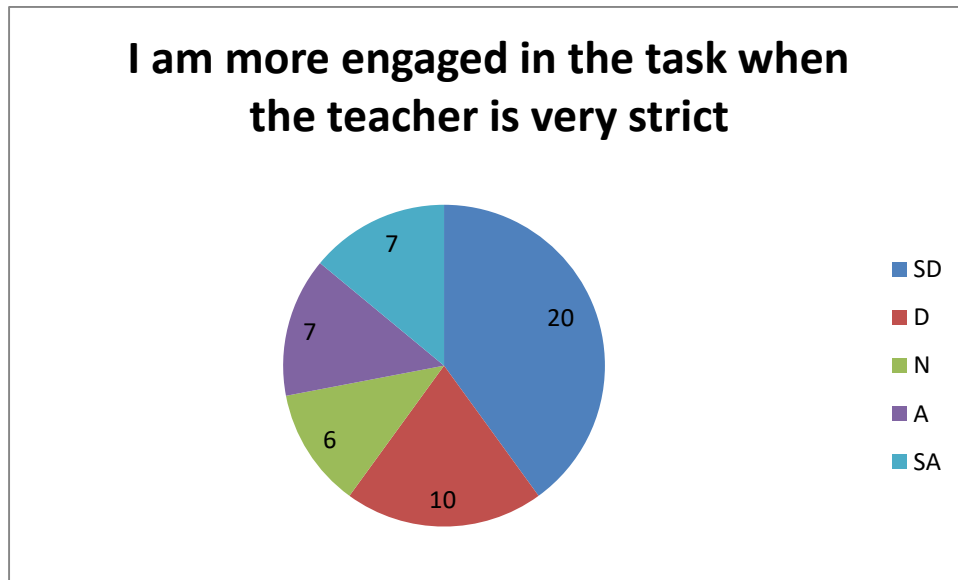
The unstructured interviews with the teachers also revealed that the nature of the task is of great importance in creating successful classroom management. All the five teachers stated that students are more engaged and work very effectively with the other group members when they find the task interesting and does not constitute much challenge to their skills. Three teachers stated that the students tend to be noisier and can chat together when the task is boring or much above their level. They stated that the task can be challenging and interesting, but it should be interesting and must not hinder the students from using their skills and knowledge.

Teachers also stated that when the students are motivated they demonstrate good behavior and are keen on making their teachers have good ideas about them. They also keep working on their tasks and cooperate with their classmates in order to finish the task. Most of the students (60 %) revealed that they behave well in the classroom when the teachers have good attitudes towards them and treats them with respect.

#### **4.2.5 Q 5: *Is a well-managed class a good learning class?***

A well-managed class is not always a good learning class. The current study supports this finding. The questionnaire that was administered to 50 of the students in the school also supported this finding that a well-managed class is not always a good learning class. Most of the students stated that they are not engaged in the task when the teacher is very strict. Twenty students (40 %) strongly disagreed and ten students (20 %) disagreed that they are more engaged in the task when the teacher is very strict. In contrast, seven students (14 %) agreed and other seven students strongly agreed with the same statement. This concludes that the majority of the

students are not engaged in the task when the teacher is strict and being strict does not mean that learning is effectively taking place in the classroom even if it is well managed.



**Figure 5: teacher's personality and the engagement of the students**

The classroom observations also supported this finding. During the observation, one of the lessons observed was well managed as the teacher was very strict and did not allow the students to move or break the procedures. The students behaved very well, but a lot of the students did not participate with their colleagues in the class. They felt afraid of the teacher and did not violate the classroom rules, but they were not engaged in the task. The results of the classroom observations showed that teacher C could manage the behavior of the students very successfully. However, when the teacher gave the students a writing activity some of them struggled and could not write well. The lesson ended with some students unable to write some complete and meaningful sentences. When the teacher assessed the students' learning at the end of the lesson, he found some students unable to mention anything that was useful to them in the lesson. In contrast, the other two teachers gave the students some freedom to move freely in the classroom but without making noise or causing disruption. Students shared their work and provided each other with feedback. The teachers were facilitators who guided the students during their work. The classrooms were well managed and the students worked effectively and cooperatively.

The interviews with the teachers also proved that not all well-managed classes are not necessarily good learning classes. Four out of the five teachers stated that the teacher should give

the students some freedom in order to make them interact effectively. According to them, students are not engaged in their work when the teacher is so strict. They get afraid to make any mistake even if it is slight mistake. Four teachers mentioned that it is so important to provide the students with a friendly classroom atmosphere that supports the students to interact with the students and with the teachers freely without fear. They also stated that some students might know the answer, but they do not answer because the teacher is strict and they get afraid of making a mistake.

#### ***4.2.6 Q.6: What are the task-related factors that contribute to successful classroom management?***

Teaching methods cannot maintain a successfully managed classroom without supporting it with some other related factors. Teachers emphasized the importance of seating arrangement in the classrooms. 4 out of the 5 teachers interviewed stated that seating arrangement is very effective in resulting in a successfully managed classroom. They stated that seating students in rows makes it easy for them to prevent any disruptions and control the misbehavior of any student as the teacher faces the students and can use verbal or nonverbal instructions to stop any disruption. However, they also stated that students work better when they are seated in groups because they interact more and share knowledge. Only one teacher mentioned that the seating arrangement does not matter, but the classroom must accommodate all learning styles and provide space for teachers to access all the students and provide them with support. All the teachers interviewed also stated that task-based learning and cooperative learning styles are better when students are seated in groups because they could support each other and share ideas (Chang, 2007). In addition, most of the teacher participants indicated that creating an environment that enables students to get access to their preferred ways of learning is very effective in preventing the disruptive or challenging behaviors (Edwards, 2000 & Naughton, 2002).

Another important factor that participating teachers highlighted as important in creating a successfully managed classroom is motivation. Being organized allows a framework for “classroom ecology “and suggests that appropriate activities and organized seating motivates students to learn (Glynn, 2005). Most of the teacher participants stated that when students get engaged and motivated, they do not indulge in disruptive behavior. Motivating students

minimize the chances of the challenging behavior from occurring (Erickson, 1978). The participating teachers pointed out that making student's feel good about their learning encourages them to learn as it is considered a source of motivation. Eventually, participating teachers believed that students could be motivated to learn if they worked within boundaries and conformed to classroom expectations and rules. Three teachers expressed their opinion stating that allowing students work without rules can cause a disaster as students do not know how to behave if there are no rules to follow. Rules and expectations help govern the behaviors of the students as they work within the boundaries of teachers' expectations (Kroegeer & Bauer, 2004). These findings are consistent with the findings of previous studies ((Balson, 1992; Kauffman et al., 2002; Rogers, 2006; Watkins & Wagner, 2000) that students need to be clear about the acceptable behaviors in the classroom in different contexts.

One more important factor that participating teachers consider vital for successful classroom management is the relationship between the teacher and the students. Four of the five participating teachers ensured that good relationship that is supportive and positive between the teacher and the students is considered very important in ensuring that effective learning takes place and challenging behaviors are successfully managed. Two teachers only of the participating teachers stated that having a good relationship with the students does not make a difference regarding classroom management. According to Macfarlane and Russek (2004), students show enthusiasm towards learning and are more likely to conform to classroom expectations when they find that their teachers care for them. Hence, teachers can easily manage the classroom successfully when they build a relationship of mutual respect with their students. All the participating teachers stated that respect can be gained by being fair, kind and firm as well as creating a safe environment with boundaries and rules for the students. Teachers can successfully develop an effective relationship with the students when respect is mutual (Alton-Lee, 2003 & Hawk et al., 2002). In addition, the behavior of the students is influenced more positively when they like the teacher rather than by the consequences that are imposed on them if they violated the boundaries of classroom rules (Robertson, 1996). In conclusion, the findings of the current study show that it is crucial for successful classroom management that teachers and students have a positive relationship of mutual respect.

Motivation also proved to be a very effective factor in enhancing successful classroom management. During the classroom observations, teacher A and teacher B motivated the students by writing encouraging comments on their work and by praising their performance. It was evident that this type of intrinsic motivation encouraged the students to keep engaged in their tasks and they did not engage in any misbehavior. The interview with the teachers also consolidated this finding. All the five teachers affirmed that students behave well and are engaged in their work when they are motivated whether intrinsically or extrinsically. One of the teachers mentioned that he used to motivate grade 6 students by giving them candy when they give a correct answer. Another teacher said that he also used to motivate students who perform well in their task and behave well by giving them extra marks.

### **4.3 Summary of the results**

The current study revealed a number of findings. According to the results of the questionnaire, students preferred student-centered classroom where they got engaged on a task. In addition, they felt more comfortable when the teacher was not strict and they tend to participate more and disengaged from inappropriate behavior when the teacher provided a positive social atmosphere.

Regarding the results of the classroom observations, the three teachers could manage their classroom successfully with little disruptions that can be stopped. Teachers could effectively manage the students as they provided an engaging environment that made students feel comfortable and focused. The strict teacher (c) could manage the behavior of the students successfully, but learning did not take effectively in the same way it occurred in task-based learning and cooperative learning classes. There were other factors that enabled the teachers to manage their classrooms successfully such as seating arrangement, motivation, rules and procedures, planning and keeping a mutual relationship of respect with the students.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion**

This chapter discusses the findings of the current study and links these findings to the previous studies. It also provides recommendations to the teachers to support them in maintaining a well-managed classroom. The current chapter also presents implications for maintaining successful EFL classroom management and some limitations to the research and concludes by providing directions for future research.

#### **5.1 Relationship between teaching practices and classroom management.**

The current study findings indicate that task-based learning and co-operative learning are very effective in creating successful classroom management. This finding bears a lot of similarities to other previous studies ( Prabhu , 1987 ; Nunan , 1989 ; Lee , 2000 ; Richards and Rodgers, 2001 ; Wang , 2006 ). Based on this, the instructional strategies are very effective in keeping students disengaged from inappropriate behavior and more focused when they work cooperatively on a task. The current study indicated that tailoring tasks that suit the level of the students and which are interesting to them are very effective in maintaining successful classroom management.

Similar to Kounin's findings, the effective classroom manager could overlap more than one classroom task and structure different activities at a time in order to maintain high rates of student attention as well as monitoring student behavior. The activities that teachers choose have a profound influence on the behavior of the students. LePage et al. (2005) indicate that students must be interested and engaged in the learning activities presented in the classroom in order to maintain an effective learning environment and sustain successful classroom management.

#### **5.2 The influence of motivation on classroom management**

The results of the current study showed that motivation is essential in sustaining successful classroom management. According to Dornyei and Czizer (1998), motivated students can manage themselves. The students in this study are adolescents who are characterized by their curiosity. They can be motivated in different ways based on Dornyei (2001). The first way of

motivating the young learners is to enhance their language-related values and attitudes. In the current study, the interview with teachers indicated that students are more engaged when they have a positive attitude towards learning the language and some students are not engaged in learning and get engaged in inappropriate behavior when they have a negative attitude towards language. The second way of motivating students is through increasing their expectancy of success. Students do tasks and become more focused on their tasks when they expect that they will succeed in the task. The student questionnaire and the classroom observation showed that most of the students were more engaged in their learning and well-managed when they found that they would complete the task successfully. The third way of motivating the students is through making the teaching materials relevant to the students (McCombs & Whisler, 1997). The students preferred the activities that were relevant to them and that also suited their level. Teachers also indicated that students were motivated when the materials are relevant and not very challenging. In addition, protecting and maintaining motivation is also very peculiar to sustain successful classroom management. Motivation can be successfully maintained through making learning more enjoyable and stimulating, presenting tasks in a motivating way, creating learner autonomy and increasing the students' self-confidence.

### **5.3 The influence of student-teacher relationship on classroom management**

The relationship between the teacher and the students is of pivotal importance to classroom management. Ashworth (1990) states that human beings are social creatures who biologically intend to work, play and live together. They are deeply influenced by others. Perry (2001) adds that the most important trait of humankind is to form and maintain relationships. Moos (1979) and Goodenow (1993) suggest that students are more involved in learning when teachers respect them. The current study revealed that students are more engaged in their learning and do not engaged in inappropriate behavior when teachers have positive relationship of mutual respect with them. The teachers also assured that holding high expectations for students also motivates them to get engaged in working with their classmates and interact more effectively with the teacher. Kohl (2006) suggests that most of the students who fail feel detached, unwelcome or alienated from the educational environment. The relationship between the student and the teacher is the foundation on which learning is based. Effective teachers care for the emotional needs of their students.

## **5.4 seating arrangement and classroom management**

The physical layout of the classroom is very effective since it may help students to work cooperatively, reduce the stress within the classroom, facilitate learning and revitalize the fatigued students. Teachers and students stated that the arrangement of the classroom seating has an influence in increasing the interaction of the students during the tasks. Teachers mentioned that they always consider what seating and grouping arrangements are most suitable for each activity undertaken in the class. The interviews with teachers and the class observations revealed that it was difficult for cycle two students to sit still for a long time. Teacher stressed the importance of including some activities that involve kinetic activities and this can be done when the teachers design the tasks. However, Scrivener (2005) indicates that teachers have to be aware that a constant movement every five minutes might be uncomfortable for some students and can create noise in the class.

Scrivener (2005) states that the arrangement of students in the classroom has many advantages and helps the students work more cooperatively. He also states that seating students in a horseshoe or a circle improves the student interaction, increases on-task behavior and disengages students from inappropriate behavior. In addition, seating weaker students with stronger students help them to interact more effectively together. The five interviewed teachers indicated that they can change the seating arrangement of the classroom based on the type of the task and mix students of different abilities together so that the stronger students can dominate less.

Despite the several advantages of arranging classroom seating, many teachers indicated that there is no universal correct classroom seating. However, teachers also added that the best arrangement is the one that fits the style of the teacher and which makes students feel comfortable.

## **5.5 Recommendations**

The current study concludes that there are some recommendations which teachers can try in their classrooms in order to help them better manage their students and provide more efficient instruction. “Classroom management is mainly concerned with behavior, but it can also be defined more broadly as involving the planning, organization and control of learners, the



learning process and the classroom environment to create and maintain an effective learning experience.” (Krause, Bouchner & Duchesne, 2003).

### **5.5.1 Recommendation one: teachers should follow teaching strategies and approaches that increase the on-task engagement of the students and improve their behavior.**

Teachers have to focus more on effective instructional styles in order to prevent behavioral and academic difficulties and help in increasing the students’ achievement, especially among low achievers and students who tend to make problems in the classroom. Espin and Yell (1994) state that effective teachers have higher rates of positive student responses to their instruction. Students who are engaged in academic achievement rarely tend to be engaged in disruptive or off-task behavior at the same time (Carnine 1976; Sutherland, Alder, & Gunter, 2033). However, there are several features of effective instruction that encourage higher rates of academic engagement and on-task behavior (Carnine, 1976):

- Using teaching materials that are educationally relevant to the students.
- Implementing sequential order that suit the students’ instructional level and are logically related to the skill development of the students.
- Increasing the frequent response opportunities of the students to the academic tasks ( Christle & Schuster , 2033; Greenwood , Delquadri , & Hall , 1989 ; Lambert , Cartledge , Heward , & Lo , 2006).
- Using error correction and immediate feedback.
- Implementing guided practice to make students more engaged.

It is important that teachers provide instruction at the appropriate level of the students. Students may get engaged in misbehavior and become frustrated when they are presented with information and materials that are beyond their current skill and academic level (Wehby, Symon, Canale, & Go, 1995). Likewise, if the instruction level and the teachings materials are too easy for the students, they can get involved in inappropriate behavior as a result of boredom or lack of challenge. Providing students with materials that are at appropriate level of instructional difficulty increases the students’ on-task behavior, task completion and comprehension (Gickling

& Armstrong, 1978). Students tend to be less disruptive and demonstrate improved academic skills when they are actively engaged and provided with frequent opportunities to respond to academic tasks (Sutherland & Wehby, 2001).

It is also recommended that teachers should consider the poor academic and social outcomes for students who are at risk as they are in more need of effective instruction. At-risk students have low academic skills and are in more need of increased instruction in order to improve their learning (Donovan & Cross, 2002). Some students are in need of more practice and review, lower level-reading texts and small group instruction. Emmer and Stough (2001) believe that effective instruction does not fully eliminate behavior problems, but at least it reduces it remarkably. Effective instruction can never take place without some important requirements that include:

- Active supervision and monitoring of student engagement
- Implementing classroom rules and routines
- Implementing strategies that reduce misbehavior
- Modifying classroom procedures as needed
- Encouraging appropriate behavior
- Structuring an engaging classroom environment

Students should also be involved in choosing what to learn. Scrivener (2005) asserts the importance of giving students power to choose the topics of the lesson that they study. He states that “ the more the learners feel that they have chosen what to do and how to do it and feel in control while working , the more they will be likely to get engaged and get something worthwhile”. Charles (2005) also recommends a simple solution to the issue of classroom management. He emphasizes the importance for developing teaching approaches that meet the students’ needs and interests, while keeping consistency with their personality and social realities of the community. He also ensures the importance of an enjoyable and positive classroom where students enjoy their learning and feel that their educational experiences are satisfied. Moreover, he also recommends organizing a personal system of discipline that can increase the students’ sense of purpose and improve positive personal relations, responsibility and self-control.

Kounin (1970) and Jones (1979) advocate the instructional approach to classroom management. This means that implementing the instructional approach to classroom management can effectively prevent most management problems through the active engagement of students in lessons that meet their needs, interests and abilities.

### **5.5.2 Recommendation two: teachers should ensure that the classroom environment is engaging and the seating arrangement suit the learning activities**

A lot of experienced teachers recommend assigned seating for students in order to facilitate instruction and discipline (Jones,). Accordingly, students should not be left to themselves as they will choose a seat that places the teacher at the greatest disadvantage. There are three types of seating arrangements that teachers can implement in the classroom; rows, U-shaped and groups / clusters. Each seating arrangement has some advantages and some disadvantages. Row seating is more appropriate for classes with large number of students. It also reduces disruption problems in the classrooms. However, this type of seating does not provide more opportunities for interaction between the students as it is more teacher-centered. U-shaped seating is effective in providing more interaction between students and enables the teacher to observe the performance of the students. In addition, it is very effective in preventing any off-task behavior as the teacher can get access to any student in the classroom. Nevertheless, this type of seating is inappropriate for classes with large numbers and does not encourage shy students to participate in the classroom activities. The third type is group/cluster seating where students of mixed abilities of similar abilities are seated in groups. This type of seating is more students centered because it provides them with a safe area and more opportunities of interaction and sharing knowledge. However, low achieving students can copy the high achieving students' work. The teacher should implement the type of seating that is appropriate to the age and the level of the students and the nature of the content being taught.

A lot of studies state that student seating location is connected to teacher interaction with students (Good & Brophy, 2000; Evertson, Emmer, & Worsham, 2003; Lambert, 1995; Shores, Gunter, & Jack, 1993). Students who are seated at the action zone (usually at the front of the

class) receive more attention from the teacher as they face the instructional area. In contrast, students at the back receive the least instruction and they avoid participation (Wong & Wong, 1998). Teachers are also recommended to move frequently throughout the classroom and have clear sight of each student in the classroom (Evertson, Emmer, & Worsham, 2003). The seating arrangement of the classroom should give the teacher the opportunity to interact with each student in the classroom and provide them with effective instruction and feedback (Shores, Gunter, & Jack, 1993). Worsham (2003) also recommends that frequently used materials and equipment should be stored in locations that can be easily accessed by the students.

### **5.5.3 Recommendation three: teachers should keep students motivated and improve the social climate of the classroom**

Motivation is very effective in keeping students engaged in what they are learning. Motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic, but intrinsic motivation is more effective and long lasting. Arthur et al., (1993) state that planning, keeping the classroom well organized and having the right equipment is very effective in creating “classroom ecology “that enhances classroom management. Eriksen (1978) states that the majority of the students respond positively to a well-organized classroom that is led by an enthusiastic teacher who shows consistency in dealing with students. All the teacher participants expressed that students were more engaged in the task when they are motivated and that they would not indulge in inappropriate behavior. In addition, adolescents are self-centered as they try to figure out who they are and how they fit in the world. promoting this tendency of adolescents by motivating them and making them feel they are responsible of what they are doing will be very effective in keeping them engaged in their work and disengaged from any inappropriate behavior.

Most of the students ( 40 out of 50 ) who participated in the study stated that they are more engaged in tasks and less engaged in appropriate behavior when they are motivated by the teacher. The students stated that they are more motivated when the topics they are studying are relevant to them and meet their needs and interests. It is recommended that teachers should look for ways that bring the curriculum into students’ real life. Students also revealed that they are more encouraged to keep working on their tasks when the teachers motivate them.

## **5.6 Pedagogical implications**

Classroom management is essential for effective learning to take place and the way teachers manage their classroom has an influence on their own teaching of the students, as classroom is the environment where interaction takes place between the teachers and their students (Muhammad and Ismail, 2001). Effective classroom management indicates the effectiveness of students learning and teachers teaching quality. The teachers should create a supportive and friendly classroom environment that makes students feel secured, cared, safe and respected. This makes it necessary that teachers should create conditions of responsibility, cooperation and discipline (Riaz, 2009). Furthermore, teachers who are well planned are more able to overcome disruptions and misbehaviors of the students. Aly (2007) also affirms that nature of the teacher has a pivotal role as different teachers have different ways of managing the classroom and setting an environment that best fits the needs of the students. The way that the teacher uses to manage the classroom influences the way students think towards their own learning.

The current study has also some implications regarding the teaching approaches. Teachers should use task-based language learning and cooperative learning approaches in order to make them more engaged in their learning. This should also be supported with the appropriate seating arrangement, motivation and the positive relationship between the teachers and the students.

## **5.7 Limitations**

The current study has some limitations. First, it was implemented in a male school and female classrooms were not included in the study. Due to some cultural issues, it is difficult to access female classroom to observe classroom management practices and strategies. Second, the number of the teachers included in the study is limited which cannot generalize the findings on all the schools. Thirdly, more schools from the northern Emirates should be involved in the study in order to investigate various contexts of classroom management.

## **5.8 Directions for future research**

Future research can make use of the current study in many ways. The research studies that investigate the influence of task-based language learning and cooperative learning can compare their findings with the findings of the current study. Other research studies can also find

investigate the impact of additional factors that can enhance classroom management. The current study revealed that motivation, seating arrangement, student-teacher relationship and the size of the class are effective factors in sustaining effective classroom management.

Additionally, future research can research the perceptions of more teachers and students regarding the most effective strategies of classroom management. The teachers and the students are the most important contributors to successful classroom management. Teachers should have a positive attitude towards their students and consequently students should take some responsibility in classroom management.

The next chapter will focus on the core points of the research. It will give an outline of the purpose, the adopted methodology and the major findings of the current study.

## Chapter 6

### CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter is to summarize the research. First, it outlines the purpose of the study, the methodology that the researcher implemented, the results of the current study and the impact of this study on classroom management.

The current study investigated the effectiveness of teaching practices and strategies on sustaining successful classroom management. It investigated the influence of task-based learning and cooperative learning alongside with some task-related factors that can effectively contribute to the success of classroom management. It also investigated the other factors that teachers can use in order to support classroom management during task-based learning and cooperative learning.

The study implemented a mixed method approach that included both quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to validate the results. The interviews and classroom observations were implemented in order to collect in-depth descriptive data and natural data in real contexts. In addition, the data collected from the student questionnaire provided quantitative data from the students in order to support the qualitative data. The data of both quantitative and qualitative methods were analyzed in the light of the research questions.

The qualitative data results revealed that task-based learning and cooperative learning are very effective in engaging the students and keeping them more focused in their learning. The data also revealed that there are some factors that increase the opportunity of engaging students in the task. These factors involve classroom seating, relationship between the students and the teacher, rules and procedures and motivation. The results of the questionnaires showed that students tend to be more engaged when the tasks are interesting, the learning environment is attractive and the social atmosphere in the classroom is encouraging and engaging.

Despite the fact that the results of the current study cannot be generalized to other contexts, the study has some pedagogical implications that other teachers can apply for successful classroom management. The study does not only stress the importance of tailoring tasks and cooperative learning contexts to engage students in learning , but it also emphasizes the fact that other task-

related factors are very influential in disengaging students from inappropriate behavior and keeping them on task.

To conclude, the current study has indicated that students are more involved in learning and disengaged from inappropriate behavior when students are engaged in task-based learning and cooperative learning. The current study also indicated the importance of some task-related factors such as motivation, classroom seating, social atmosphere, rules and procedures and curriculum. Hopefully, the educators, teachers and curriculum designers tailor lessons that are task-based and which make students more engaged in their learning and disengaged from inappropriate behavior.



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## Appendices

### Appendix A: informed consent form

**Research project title:** Investigating the most effective teaching strategies and approaches that enhance classroom management in a cycle 2 school in Abu Dhabi

**Researcher: Alaa Fathi El Moursi El Mittwalli    Mobile No. : 0503719759**

I am asking you for your voluntary participation in the research which I am carrying out in order to investigate the teaching practices and strategies that contribute to classroom management. If you would like to like to participate in my study, please sign in the appropriate space below. The interviews will be unstructured; in the form of informal conversations and all the data collected will be used for research purposes. Confidentiality is guaranteed as no personal information will be mentioned at all.

Check ( ) in the appropriate box:

- I agree to participate in the study
- I do not agree to participate in the study

Name: .....    Signature: .....

Date: /...../.....



## Appendix B

### Classroom Management Checklist

Classroom management refers to procedures, actions, and strategies teachers use to

Establish and maintain order in the classroom (Burden, 1995)

<b>Section one : Organization</b>	
Directions for activities are clear	
Directions for assignments are clear	
Assignments are posted clearly	
Homework assignments are written on board	
Materials are prepared ahead of time	
Materials are distributed efficiently	
There is a plan in place for interruptions and unexpected events	
Time is well planned, leaving little down time	
<b>Section two: Physical Arrangement</b>	
Temperature and lighting are comfortable	
Students are physically comfortable	
Classroom is attractive to students	
All students can see presentation of instruction	
Desks and furniture are arranged to maximize space	
Distractions are minimal	
Students are not seated in high traffic or congested areas	
Frequently used materials are easily accessible	
Students know where materials/books/assignments belong	
<b>Section three : Behavioral Considerations</b>	
Teacher is visible at all times	
Clear expectations are communicated regarding acceptable behavior	
Expectations regarding behavior are posted clearly	
Rules are realistic and reasonably attainable	
Positive reinforcement is used	
A variety of reinforcements used	
High ratio of positive to negative statements	
Desired behavior is reinforced appropriately	
Students take responsibility for their behavior	
Transitions between activities are smooth and	

without confusion	
Transitions in and out of the classroom are clearly defined and practiced	
Students can see teacher and teacher can see students-at all times	
<b>Section four :Instructional Strategies</b>	
Uses whole group, small group, independent work effectively	
Pace and tempo are appropriate for learners	
Attention to lesson is monitored continually	
Instruction is matched to skill level and need	
Instruction is adapted based on student differences	
Purpose of lesson is clearly stated	
Relevance of lesson is clear	
Materials and examples are up to date and of interest to students	
Strategies are used that capture and maintain student interest	
Instructional tools and methods are varied	
Questioning is used	
Feedback is given in a timely manner	
Feedback is appropriate	
<b>Section five : Social Climate</b>	
Teacher portrays a friendly, positive attitude	
Teacher listens to what students have and need to say	
Students are invited to be risk-takers without fear of ridicule	
Students are provided with opportunities for success	
Students are provided with opportunities to interact	
Students interact in a positive manner	
Effective communication skills are present	
Overall a safe, non-threatening environment is provided	
Respect is shown at all times	
Humor used appropriately; sarcasm avoided	

**This observation classroom management checklist is adopted from Burden (1995); Teaff (2007)**

## Appendix C: a model of students' questionnaire

Research title: Investigating the most effective teaching practices and strategies that enhance classroom management in cycle 2 in Abu Dhabi.

Dear students, the aim of this questionnaire is to investigate the role of task-based language learning and co-operative learning on creating a successful classroom management. Please, be informed that all the data is confidential and will only be used for research purposes. So, I will be grateful if you respond to these sentences honestly as your answers will be very useful to me to collect reliable data about successful classroom management.

Thank you

Instruction: Please, rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statement by placing a check mark in the appropriate box:

Strong disagree SD	Disagree D	Neutral N	Strongly A	Strongly Agree SA
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#	Statement	Level of agreement				
		SD	D	N	A	SA
<b>Section one : teaching approaches ; task-based learning and cooperative learning</b>						
1-	I feel more engaged and avoid inappropriate behavior when the task suits my level					
2-	I work more effectively and pay attention when the task is more interesting					
3-	I get bored and may be involved in misbehavior when the task is too challenging.					
4-	I enjoy learning when I work cooperatively with my classmates in a group.					
5-	I feel more comfortable when the teacher explains and we listen					
6-	I get more engaged when I work cooperatively with my classmates on a task.					
<b>Section two : the relationship between the students and the teacher</b>						

1-	The class is well managed when the teacher respects students					
2-	Students are more engaged when the teacher communicates effectively with the students					
3-	I behave well when the teacher has a good attitude towards me.					
4-	I behave well when the teacher has great expectations of me.					
5-	I am more engaged in the task when the teacher is very strict					
6-	I disengage from misbehavior and become more engaged when I am motivated.					
Section three : seating arrangement and classroom environment						
1-	I am more engaged and disengaged from inappropriate behavior when I work with my classmates, not individually.					
2-	The classroom environment is effective in engaging me in the lesson.					
3-	I am more engaged when I have easy access to all the learning materials.					
4-	Classroom is well managed when the size of the class is small					

**Comments:**

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## **Appendix D: Excerpts from the unstructured interviews with the teachers**

### **The first teacher**

The researcher: How can task-based learning and cooperative learning help in sustaining classroom management.

T: In both task-based learning and cooperative learning, the student is more engaged in what they are doing and they are more interactive.

R: Are there other factors that can help in sustaining successful classroom management?

T: I think that one of the most important factors is that the tasks should be interesting in order to help students carry out the task. In addition, it must not be too much above their level because in that case, students will feel bored.

R: Are there any other factors?

T: Yes, motivation is considered one of the most important factors because it makes students feel that they are doing something for a purpose. In addition, the seating arrangement is effective in sustaining successful classroom management. When students are seated in groups of mixed abilities and they know where they sit exactly, the teacher does not have to waste a lot of time in order to solve problem between students about where to sit.

R: Does class size affects classroom management positively?

T: Yes, it has a great influence on classroom management. When the number of the students is small, the teacher can better manage the class because he can support every student and provide them with immediate feedback.

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**The second teacher**: Providing students with the necessary materials during task-based learning and cooperative learning is very effective in preventing much disruption during the lesson.

R: What else can help the students to keep on task?

T: The students should feel that the teacher is everywhere and that he sees and access every student in the class.

R: How is task-based language teaching effective in managing the classroom?

T: When students work on a task, they interact together effectively. They also get more engaged when the task is interesting and is not too much challenging. I mean that the teachers should be selective with the materials that they use the in the classroom.

R: How can cooperative learning keep students disengaged from inappropriate behavior?

T: students feel that they have a goal and they enthusiastically work in order to achieve it.

R: Do you believe that class size affects classroom management?

T: It is sure that the number of the students in the class is very important. When the number of the students in the class is 25 or less, it is easier to manage the class. The teacher has the opportunity to access every student and provide support. Having a class of 30 students and more is very challenging.

R: why is it challenging?

T: The teacher cannot provide feedback to all the students and the class environment becomes congested.

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**The third teacher**: The teacher has been working as a teacher for ten years.

R: How do you perceive successful classroom management is?

T: It means providing an engaging environment to the students where they can learn and interact successfully.

R: How can you provide an engaging environment to the students?

T: It can be through providing students with activities that make them feel engaged. The activities must be interesting and suitable to their level.

R: Which is more effective in sustaining successful classroom management, task-based learning or individual learning?

T: Task-based learning is more effective in keeping students engaged and prevents disruptions. Students work cooperatively as long as they have a goal.

R: What other factors can also affect the classroom management?

T: I believe that the most important factor is the relationship between the teacher and the students. When the relationship depends on mutual respect and effective communication, students feel that they have responsibility with the teacher to make the classroom successful.

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**The fourth teacher:** He has been working in cycle two for 5 years and worked for 7 years before in cycle 3

This is an excerpt from the interview with the teacher:

R: How can you define successful classroom management?

T: classroom management is creating a successful environment that encourages students to learn and interact with each other and with the teacher. It also means that students are disengaged from any inappropriate behavior because they enjoy their learning.

R: How can cooperative learning and task-based learning be effective in sustaining successful classroom management?

T: When students work on a task, they feel that there is a goal to reach. However, the task must not be so challenging or the student will feel bored and may behave inappropriately. In addition, during cooperative learning, students interact together so effectively, so they do not get engaged in inappropriate behavior.

R: Are there any other factors that support successful classroom management?

T: I think that the most important factors are motivation, teacher-student relationship and the classroom environment?

R: What about class size? Does it affect classroom management?

T: I do not think that class size is so effective. When students are engaged and follow the classroom rules and procedures, classroom management is successful.

R: How can a teacher prevent any disruption immediately?

T: The teacher has to make the students feel that he sees everyone in the class and that he is everywhere. He should intervene with any inappropriate behavior and prevent it at once.



R: What else do you recommend as strategies to sustain classroom management?

T: It is very effective to differentiate instructional strategies to suit the levels of the students.

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**The fifth teacher :**

R: I am really grateful to you for accepting to participate in this study about classroom management.

T: It is my pleasure.

R: Let's begin by giving a definition of successful classroom management.

T: A classroom management is not only a means of organizing a classroom. It is the successful structure to everything that goes on in the classroom—from the seating arrangement to the lessons to the grading of homework assignments to the relationships among classmates.

R: Do you think that task-based learning can sustain successful classroom management?

T: Of course. Task-based learning makes students more engaged in their learning and more enthusiastic to work. They feel that they are working on something meaningful and interesting to them. However, there are some other factors that should be taken into consideration.

R: What are these factors?

T: Motivation is one of the most important factors during the classroom activities. Motivation encourages the students and feels that they are rewarded for their work, so they try to be successful.

R: What else can maintain successful classroom management?

T: the relationship between the teacher and the students is of great importance. Students work harder and feel more responsible when they feel that they are respected and appreciated by their teachers.

R: What about class size? Does it make a difference in classroom management?

T: Yes, it is very effective. When the number of the students in the class is small, the teacher can successfully manage the students, giving them immediate feedback and intervene immediately when any disruption takes place.

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***These are excerpts from the unstructured interviews with the teachers, not the complete interviews.***