

The Impact of Classroom Management in Acquiring ESL Jordanian Schools

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This paper describes the role of learning English as a second language (ESL) in schools in Jordan. The Results Based Management (RBM) approach was selected to describe the input, management model, and the expected results in terms of output, outcome, and impact within predetermined strategic directions and educational policies. A survey of student records in the last year of high school graduates from a school was carried out to form the input for this model.

INTRODUCTION

English is recognized as the dominating language in the world. The dominance of English is clearly indicated in popular culture, and has become the main language of popular music, advertising, satellite broadcasting, home computers, and video games, it is the language of international airtraffic communication. It is used so extensively and deemed to be so important in the academic scientific and technological sectors that over 80 percent of all information is stored in electronic retrieval systems in English. More over internet offers over 90 percent of its information in English (Chang, 2006). In arenas devoted to multilingualism and to the preservation of the wealth and variety of language in the world, criticism is commonly made of the aggressive expansion of English at the cost of other languages, which has prompted some scholars to use the labels killer language and tyrannosaurus rex to refer to it (Ljurda, 2004).

English today has special status in at least 70 or so countries and is the most widely taught foreign language in over 100 other countries. In many of these countries, English also serves as the vehicular language in the general curriculum, and at times in the primary school (Ghosen, 2004).

Advances in language teaching stem from the independent efforts of teachers in their own classroom. This independence is not brought about by imposing fixed ideas or promoting fashionable formulas. It can occur where teachers, individually or collectively explore principles and experiment with techniques (Freman, 2007). Leeser (2004) pointed out that one of the challenges in content-based instruction in second language classrooms is how to focus on form in a way that is both effective and appropriate. Most researchers have tended to focus on methods and techniques to use in the classroom or on the analysis of the linguistic demands of the content areas. Much less attention has been paid to researching the process of co-planning and co-teaching and to supporting the evolution of the partnership between ESL and content teachers (Davison, 2006). Attempts to explore the attributions that learners make in relation to teachers' gestures, focusing thus on the non-verbal discourse of the language classroom have led to suggest that one of the crucial things that learners learn in a language classroom is how to interpret teachers' gestures in conjunction with their verbal input in order to learn successfully (Sime, 2006).

Current foreign and second language methodologies have shifted from traditional teacher – centered instruction, to learner- centered classroom, where learning, learner and purposes, and meaningful processes of communication are integrated (Lacorte, 2005). Teachers are primarily responsible for creating and maintaining classroom communication competence, which is based on an understanding that opportunities for learning are jointly constructed but primarily determined by the teacher (Walsh, 2003).

Research of the past 20 years strongly suggests that interaction is a key to successful second language learning, classroom interaction (Ghosen, 2004). It has been argued that knowledge is most effectively constructed through dialogue arising from jointly undertaken inquiry. The assumption is that active verbal engagement with a topic of interest will help students to transition from everyday's to scientific concepts and master the modes of language use associated with schooling (Haneda &Wells, 2008).

Therefore, this paper aims at discussing the effect of teacher's method in managing the English language (EL) class on students' acquisition at Jordanian schools where class management is considered one of the general fundamentals that a qualified teacher should possess and which in return desired educational goals can be achieved.

Consequently, class management concept is a mutual effort between teacher and students in order to achieve planned goals by focusing on:

-The role of student differences such as attitudes and motivation, aptitude, personality, gender, age, etc., and the characteristics of the environment in second language acquisition (English). There are two primary individual difference variables involved in learning language, ability and motivation, the student with higher levels of ability will tend to be more successful at learning the language than students less endowed. Similarly, students with higher levels of motivation will do better than students with lower levels (Gardner, 2006).

-The role of teacher in understanding, expectations, and feeling comfortable with the natural responses of students through interaction. And creating class a environment where students feel safe, secure, and sense of belonging which help in reduce fear and anxiety. In addition to structure classroom activities and use strategies to support language acquisition and comprehension of classroom activities (Curran, 2003), and use the multimedia application which provide teachers and learners with effective means of language acquisition in the classroom. (Tschirner, 2001).

The importance of this paper stems from the importance of class management in general regardless of the subject being taught, as teaching and learning process is of an interaction peculiarity which supposed to be positive in order to achieve goals. This process requires suitable conditions that class management has to offer. The importance stems also from that English language is taught all over Jordanian schools; public and private from grade 1 to grade 12 as a second language, and it is significant in the Jordanian society as well regarding job requirements which English language has become one of its basics. So, it is essential to study factors that affect EL acquisition such as classroom management.

RESULTS BASED MANAGEMENT (RBM)

It is said that if you do not know where you are going, any road will take you there. This lack of direction is what results-based management (RBM) is supposed to avoid. It is about choosing a direction and destination first, deciding on the route and intermediary stops required to get there, checking progress against a map and making course adjustments as required in order to realize the desired objectives.

Results-based management (RBM) is an approach that seeks to focus efforts and resources on the expected results of a project, program or organization. RBM builds on traditional management approaches such as management by objectives or activities, but shifts the emphasis from inputs and activities to results. Definition of the terms used in RBM approach is given in Table 1. This approach can be applied to almost any project (CIDA, 1999 ; Resheidat, 1997).

RBM can mean different things to different people. A simple explanation is that RBM is the way an organization [or sector institutions] is motivated and applies processes and resources to achieve targeted results. Results refer to outcomes and intermediate outcomes that convey benefits to the community. Results also encompass the service outputs that make those outcomes possible [such as trained students

and trained teachers]. The term 'results' can also refer to internal outputs such as services provided by one part of the organization for use by another. The key issue is that results differ from 'activities' or 'functions'. Many people when asked what they produce [services] describe what they do [activities]. RBM became a central aspect within the UN system and a global trend among international organizations such as the World Bank, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

RBM has been on UNESCO's agenda for several years and has been one of the main items of the organization's reform process. This process is not a mere technical one as it involves a radical shift in the way we conceive interventions and in our approach to our work, with an increased emphasis on partnership, accountability and transparency for the achievement of well-identified expected results, implying changes in the very working culture of the organization. While from an institutional point of view, the basic purposes of RBM systems are to generate and use performance information for accountability reporting to external stakeholders and for decision-making, actually the first benefiting from the implementation of the RBM approach are the managers themselves. They will have much more control on the activities they are responsible for, be in a better position to take well-informed decisions, be able to learn from their successes or failures and to share this experience with their colleagues and stakeholders. The RBM approach is to be applied to all organizational units and programs, including extra budgetary projects. Each of them is expected to define anticipated results for their own work, contributing to achieving the overall expected result(s) defined for the organization. The integration of RBM in the implementation of large-scale organizational reforms can be seen as important as the application of RBM in small and definitive projects.

Considering classroom management as a target program or an educational project where the stakeholders of this project exchange the know-how, services, sustainability and maintaining the on-going momentum, requires the implementation of results-based management approach.

TABLE 1
SUMMARY OF RBM TERMINOLOGY

Input	The human, organizational and physical resources
Activity	Action to be undertaken
Output	A short-term developmental results
Outcome	A medium-term developmental results
Impact	A long-term developmental results
Goal	Aim to be reached.
Purpose	The project objective to be achieved with the life of the project and which can be attributed to activities, outputs and outcomes.
Assumptions	Conditions that influence the achievement of or lack thereof result. Assumptions are issues over which the project planners and managers have generally little control. Yet, assumptions are necessary conditions for the project to perform. They represent the major risks and uncertainties.
Indicators	An indicator is "a pointer, measurement, a number, a fact, and opinion, or a perception that points at a specific condition or situation and measures changes in that condition or situation over time .Indicators may be either quantitative or qualitative in nature and seek to measure progress towards achieving results.
Risks	Risks indicate the probability that the assumptions will not hold true.

The following modules (Prince George's County Public Schools) may assist teachers in becoming proficient in the area of classroom management:

1. Establishing a Positive Climate

"When students feel safe, secure, and are engaged, learning increases. Learning decreases when students feel threatened or unchallenged ":

- Promote and Maintain High Expectations.
- Know Your Students.
- Engage All Students in the Learning Process.

2. Organizing Your Classroom

"In organizing your classroom, consider ways in which you can make students feel welcome, encourage involvement, and allows for learning experiences in a multitude of arrangements":

- Ensure Furniture Arrangement Promotes Learning Opportunities.
- Have a Seating Chart.
- Maintain Plans for Materials and Assignment Management.
- Create Bulletin Boards that Foster Learning.

3. Developing Rules, Routines, and Procedures

"It is critical for an effective teacher to have rules and procedures in place for students and who fully understand the working expectations. Class rules should be aligned with both the school's plan and the code of student conduct":

- Create and Communicate (Verbally and in Writing) Fair Expectations.
- Develop Routines and Procedures for Tasks that Occur Regularly.
- Set Up a System of Specific Consequences and Rewards.

4. Assigning and Managing Work

"Assignments should be based on instructional objectives and provide opportunities for students to extend, refine, or rehearse the skills or content of the lesson. The teacher must have a system for providing meaningful and relevant assignments and managing their work":

- Promote Student Responsibility and Accountability to Learning.
- Develop and Implement a Fair and Consistent Grading Process.

5. Preparing for Instruction

"When students are actively engaged in learning, they are focused on the task and are involved with the material, so fewer behavior problems exist. Therefore, an effective teacher has prepared meaningful lessons that involve students for every minute of class time":

- Plan for Long-range Units and Daily Instruction.
- Develop Plans that Include Best Practices for Instructional Delivery.

6. Managing Behavior

"To manage behavior in the classroom, effective teachers use anticipatory responses to reduce misbehaviors and are consistent in their delivery of consequences":

- Be Proactive.
- Be Consistent.

7. Maintaining Momentum

"As the year progresses, stay focused on successes and maintain the momentum of continuous improvement ":

- Build a Culture of Excellence.
- Reflect and Seek Out Support.
- Take Care of Yourself.

Further e-learning can be found in the web site <http://www.pgcps.org/~elc/momentum.htm>

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: CASE STUDY

I have selected one school for this study: Yarmouk Model School. This school is housed and run by Yarmouk University in Irbid, Jordan. I anticipated that this school is unintentionally applying classroom management and always hiring qualified and well trained teachers. Students enroll in the school from the first grade till grade 12. It is a mixed school for boys and girls. The student population is about 2100 students. Every year 120 -130 students graduate from the 12th grade and sit for the general examination that is the gate for being admitted to the university or college education.

About The School

No. of highly qualified teachers = 134, Supporting staff = 21

Facilities: Modern Library, Modern Chemistry, Physics and Biology laboratories, Educational studio, modern video and lecture hall, indoor and outdoor gymnasiums, workshops, health clinic, etc.

Incentives: Annual Best student award, Student Conferences, Talent Competitions

Further information could be found in the web site at:

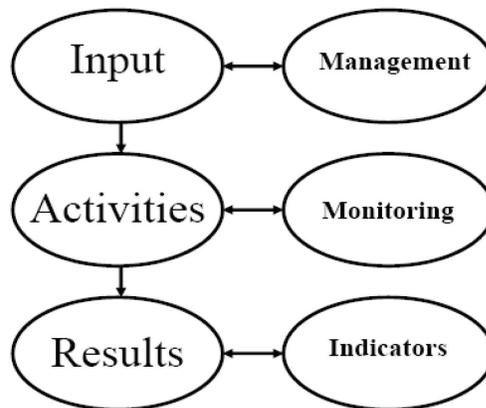
http://portal.yu.edu.jo/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=134&Itemid=292.

Because of the private act, I am not able to get the records of students from the school or from the Directorate of Education in Irbid. Accordingly, I have contacted the parents of the students who were enrolled in the school and completed their secondary education and enrolled in universities. A trace study for those graduates has been extended even beyond that to working careers or higher education in different fields.

Figure 1 shows the components of RBM approach and will be described as follows:

Input	Classrooms, Teaching aids, Teachers and Students.
Activities	Teaching, self learning, motivation by teachers, competitive awards, etc.
Results	Output as shown in Table 2. Outcome will be shown later after the results. Impact will be shown later after the results.
Management	School management, Classroom management.
Monitoring	The progress of students is monitored by teachers, principals and parents.
Indicators	Smart Indicators: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Track-able.

FIGURE 1
RBM COMPONENTS



Statistics For the School Year 2007/2008

Total number of students = 2129 and distributed as follows:

Kindergarten	520
Primary	524
Secondary	959
12 th Grade	126

**TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION OF GRADES IN THE GENERAL EXAMINATION
RUN BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

Range of grades	90.0 – 99.9	80.0 – 89.0	70.0 – 79.9	60.0 – 69.9	50.0 – 59.9	< 50.0
Grading	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Pass	Fail
Number of students	33	54	18	11	1	9
%	26.19	42.85	14.28	8.73	0.79	7.14
*English grade %	97	91	86	73	68	-
* Records are based on the average of the group						

TRACE STUDY

The author has carried out a trace study for the graduates of the Model School by direct personal contacts with the graduates and/or with their parents. This limited study dealt with 45 students whom have graduated from Yarmouk Modern School since 15 years until now and acquired 85 and above in English language at the general exam.

The students were enrolled in the university education as shown in Table 3. Because the majority of this sample pursued higher studies beyond the Bachelor's Degree, they sat for the test of English as a foreign language TOEFL. They have gained excellent records.

**TABLE 3
DISTRIBUTION OF COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND TOEFL SCORES**

College	Medicine	Engineering	Pharmacy	Sciences	Economy	Other
Number	12	8	7	10	1	7
TOEFL	80-99 out of 120					NA

Another indicator about the proficiency of students in English, they sat for English examination run by the university. Those who pass the examination are exempted from the first course in English language. This study showed that all students in the sample had passed this Examination.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

I will start discussing the results considering the inputs, monitoring, how to measure the results, the level of risk. We have to focus on two objectives:

- School Management
- Classroom Management

Classroom management stems from the overall school management. These two objectives are interrelated. In other words, they are like twins. Good school management at the planning level highly influences the performance of the classroom management. However, the risk level may be considered as a medium one for the school management is of a low level.

For the short term results is measured by the performance of students who sat for the general examination run by the ministry of education. The achievement of students as shown for example in Table 1 indicates the high level of both school and classroom management. The passing average is about 93 % as compared to about 65 % for all students in Jordan. For English performance is also reached an excellent level.

Similar results were also reached for the cohorts of students in previous school academic years. These results were not included in this paper because of space limitations. On the other hand, as far the trace study is concerned, the English proficiency was also reached an excellent level whether at the high school or at the university levels. The outcomes of the trace study on the medium term are very obvious.

For this school, the set of outcomes accumulated over the years lead to the "Impact" on the students, their career, and their families and in turn on the country. It is no wonder that this school was rated as number one in the whole country.

In order to maintain this highly recognized performance of the Model School, incentives for school administration and teachers must be considered. The school environment has always stimulated parents to encourage students to enroll in it.

The school non curricula activities such as annual conferences and students awards may be considered as significant milestones for all stakeholders; namely, the university, the school, parents and students.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions may be drawn from this study:

1. Classroom management plays a major role in the high school education.
2. School management must be the umbrella of classroom management.
3. Student's participation and self learning is vital for motivating students towards learning.
4. English language as a second language at the school level and as a language of instructions at the university level was an important indicator for the high scores achieved by students.

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NOTE

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