

# English Language Teacher's Professional Attitude and Classroom Management Parameters

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## Abstract

English language learning in the context of secondary and higher secondary schools in Pakistan has always been challenging to students and parents alike. This study aimed to explore the classroom management skills and strategies of English language teachers in the capital city of Karachi. Teacher's motivation stimulates appropriate behavior that ensures teacher's performance of their duties. This study followed qualitative methods' parameters to explore the natural phenomena of the participant's perceptions and experiences. The study was conducted in 15 secondary schools located in Karachi, Pakistan. The findings has shown that further learning opportunities of ELT learning, interaction and exchange of ideas globally, students' participation in EL learning activities, professional education and in-service trainings are the most influenced motivational factors of secondary schools English Language teachers. Availability of ELT materials, respect from department officers, colleagues, society and parents and demand from students were found necessary skills to operate classrooms apart from professional content knowledge.

**Keywords:** Classroom management, Teaching English, professional attitude, teacher's motivation

**JEL Classification:** Z13

## INTRODUCTION

Attitude matters a lot in all professions, so, there is no exception to teaching in this respect. Classroom management is essential part of teaching activity and it is an inseparable component of teacher's professional activities. Learning is closely associated with discipline in classroom. There are different parameters that will be discussed in this research (Shaukat & Iqbal, H2012). Teachers use their professional attitude to get targets in acquiring classroom management parameters. This research will help teachers and academicians in promoting and implement classroom management parameters e.g. discipline, space, momentum, discipline, routine and attention on learner's part. Many debates regarding professionalism of teachers have so far been conducted to decide whether teaching can enjoy the status of 'a profession' (Aloe, Amo & Shanahan, 2014). Often the action agenda of such discourse is that of devising more effective means of improving the professional profile of teachers. There are some fundamental problems with such discussions of professionalism and the project of improving the work of teachers through a carrot and stick appeal to professional status will ultimately fail to bring about real changes in education. In many ways professionalism is a worn-out notion which could well be left behind. What is required is a bright way of looking at teachers' job and human action through which educators can progress beyond professionalism (Abd Hamid, Syed

Hassan & Ismail, 2012). This study contributes to this reconceptualization by proposing a form of educational practice rather than professionalism. The purpose of this study is to assess and evaluate English language teacher's professional attitude and classroom management parameters. Professional attitude as well as its componential features needs to be observed through research as it plays a vital role in educational set up. This study also explores parameters of classroom management from maintenance of discipline. This study intends to answer the following questions:

- What is the effect of teacher's skill in managing English language classrooms in professional context?
- What is the procedure to find out the level of discipline inside the classroom?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Matthews and Matthews, (2004) indicate that if a teacher is using classroom management methodologies and techniques that are triumphant for most children most of the time in most situations, then the majority of students is more often on task and, as such, needs less of teacher's time and concentration. Teachers can direct their efforts to either working with the exceptions or recognizing and procuring the support of others. The teacher requires recognizing what he can and cannot do for the learner. Be he must be aware of his network of fellow professionals and he should use them. A

teacher must do what he is able to do efficiently and then, if required, pass on those students he cannot help. This is not a sign of flaw on teacher's part; it is the professional matter to do. Effective classroom management is influenced just as much by things a teacher does not do as it is by things he does. Teacher behaviours do not transpire all by themselves (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). He can settle on to exclude certain behaviours that, more often than not, spoil or worsen discipline problems. The teacher also can choose to commend certain behaviours that, more often than not, direct to effective discipline. Sins of omission are just as unforgivable in a professional as sins of commission. They are also just as ineffective (Grube, Ryan, Lowell, & Stringer, 2018). None of the classroom management techniques will be effective for long if effective and engaging teaching is absent.

Classroom management models, and their complementary strategies, are not replacements for good teaching. Valuable teaching, perhaps the "most difficult job of all in our society (Lekli, 2020), is in reality an anticipatory discipline measure that keeps students so mixed up and interested that they are not tending to cause issues. For example, the often-propagated teacher's statement, "When you are able to act in an acceptable manner, you will no longer have to stand outside in the hallway," assumes that what is going on in your class is more appealing and thrilling than remaining in the hallway. If unsuccessful teaching is taking place in the classroom, then the student will not realize that he or she is missing anything by staying in the classroom. Hence, teacher's discipline attempts have no effect. Liu (2020) studied teachers' discernments of their own classroom management behaviour. His research shows that teacher's trait that behaviour's growth to real experiences on the job, successive years on the job, and student teaching—in that order of importance. Coursework while in college is considered to be less of a feature in the development of classroom management proficiency. English teacher professional competence is generally viewed as an integrated set of knowledge, skills and sub-competences acquired by the teacher trainee and used efficiently in his / her classroom teaching (Sarwar & Bhamani, 2018).

### **Impact of Professional Development Structures**

Bronfman, Ginsburg and Jablonka, (2016) explored teachers' understanding and implementation of active-learning pedagogy after having participated in numerous mandated workshops and school-based professional development activities geared at changing

teachers' instructional practices from the traditional teacher-centered to student-centered approaches. In their study, which is based on data from teacher self-reports, classroom observations, project documents and statistical databases, they found that teachers who participated in training workshops were able, with varying degrees of depth, to articulate the rationale and strategies of active-learning while exhibiting modest movement over time towards implementing student-centered practices in their classrooms (Sarwar, Bhamani & Ahmad, 2017). However, in both studies they contend that the outcomes of the training programs were limited and teachers' ability to implement the desired change was constrained by challenges such as having to work in a high-stakes test environment, poor teaching conditions (large class size and lack of relevant instructional materials) and the absence of incentives.

### **Professional Development in a Shifting Field**

In the past, in-service teacher education focused more on the 'education' rather than the 'teacher', emphasized the scientific 'method' or 'scientific certainties' as opposed to 'situated certainties', valued the outsider-expert knowledge at the expense of teachers' beliefs and practical knowledge and offered one-size-fits-all knowledge about teaching rather than context-specific knowledge of teaching (Hargreaves, Elhawary, & Mahgoub, 2018). The traditional transmission models have long marginalized the teacher's role in the development process and offered teachers sets of disconnected and de-contextualized experiences that do little to help teachers improve their practices or generate new knowledge. As reported in the literature, those models of professional development have proved ineffective in addressing the learning requirements of today's world of higher educational expectations and ambitious reforms. According to El-Henawy, (2020), conventional professional development initiatives had often failed to achieve improvement and change due to a mismatch or a lack of connective tissue between the teacher on the one hand and the content and goals of professional development efforts on the other.

### **Individually Guided Model**

According to Soebari and Aldridge, (2016), the key characteristic here is that activities are chosen, designed and carried out by teachers on their own without a formal organizing body. However, external professional development programs may actively support such teacher initiatives. Ideally, as teachers

employ activities of this model, they go through gradual phases of identifying a need/issue or setting a goal for themselves, followed by finding a plan to address the issue(s), undertaking a particular activity or implementing the plan, then finally assessing their achievement and learning so as to act upon it. Activities within this model can be undertaken either informally or almost unconsciously, or formally as when teachers participate in action research. This model accounts for the centrality of the teacher to his/her development process, principles of adult learning as well as the stage-related needs of teachers across their career time. It fosters reflectivity and collaboration among teachers as mechanisms for development and change (Shin, Tang, & Jadhav, 2019). Thus it is widely supported in the literature on TE, particularly by proponents of inquiry-based approaches to professional development.

### **Observation / Assessment**

Practices of this model often take the form of peer observation, self-observation, peer coaching and clinical supervision as well teacher evaluation procedures. Although in the minds of many, this model is associated with evaluation and judgment, it is a powerful development approach (Randall & Thornton, 2005) as it provokes thought and reflection on action. Nagro, Fraser, and Hooks, (2019) suggest that this model is better seen as 'observation/feedback' or 'input/feedback' procedures, which are processes that form the basis for learning. They contend that activities within this model are known to nurture the teacher learning process as they tend to provide teachers with opportunities or 'meditational space' for engaging in in-depth systematic reflections, examinations and reconstruction of their teaching practices and their students' learning. From another perspective, Johnson adds that participating in observation/assessment practices supports teachers in creating/expanding their social professional networks and perceiving their own classrooms as powerful sites for professional learning.

### **Principles of Effective Professional Development**

Particular forms and structures of professional development do not guarantee consequential teacher learning and change. However, there is a consensus among researchers that successful professional development programs can be characterized as teacher-centered, goal-oriented, context-appropriate, inquiry-focused, collaborative, and sustained over time and linked to everyday school work. Also the field of teacher education has come to incorporate these

elements through pedagogical approaches that place the teacher at the centre, promote reflection, collegiality and meaningful collaboration by creating conditions that support the generation of knowledge and continuity of learning and improvement. Structuring professional development while taking into account these issues is seen to create a link between the various the entities involved in the professional development process and thus narrows the gap between teachers and their work realities on the one hand and the content and goals of professional development effort on the other (Abu-Tineh & Sadiq, 2018).

### **Teacher Readiness and Choice**

Another lesson from the research on professional development is that development and change cannot be forced on teachers. In order to develop and improve, teachers must have a sense of responsibility and control of their own learning/improvement process. When teachers feel in control of the change process, they are likely to realize the full value of it as opposed to situations where they have no say about the form, content and goals of the change process. Focusing on 'The Self as a Source for Professional Development,' Utami and Prestridge, (2018) draw attention to the important issue of accounting for 'teacher choice' in pursuing professional development. This tends to be overlooked, particularly in large scale development/reform efforts, despite of its direct impact on the processes and outcomes of professional development initiatives. Pointing to those situations in which teachers are obligated to compile a portfolio, attend courses or participate in what seems to be professional development activities (Kalinowski, Gronostaj, & Vock, 2019). Development can easily be faked by teachers and displayed at a surface level. No matter how advantageous/useful professional development programs may seem to be, the issue of whether or not teachers benefit and actually develop or change is dependent upon the teacher's willingness and choice to do so.

### **Teachers' Goals and Needs**

The nature of the teaching profession is cognitively, emotionally and physically demanding (Korthagen & Evelein, 2016). Despite both a full work day and after-hours work, it is a job that is never really done. Teachers are often in a race with time to fulfil their daily teaching responsibilities. Therefore they may not be receptive to adding another dimension to their already full agenda unless they perceive a need for such an endeavour. Despite the numerous benefits

that teachers may gain by participating in professional learning opportunities, teachers will display readiness and actively engage in professional development opportunities only if the substance and process of the given activity are relevant to them and directed to their perceived goals and needs. Teachers' professional needs vary according to their identity, career stages, professional background, dispositions, and context conditions. For example, the needs of language teachers working in ESL and EFL settings are different from those teaching in monolingual English contexts. Likewise native and non-native English speaking teachers have different needs pertaining to their linguistic proficiency and professional preparation (Pasternak & Bailey, 2004).

### **Teachers' Voices and Visions on Change and Development**

Since teachers' input on the relevance and practicality of particular practices and proposed changes in their fields is valuable, their voices and visions on the content of professional development and desired changes should be built into all development efforts. After the 1970s and 1980s and the questioning of the applicability of scientific educational research, the field moved towards empowering teachers by helping to establish the legitimacy of their local knowledge and encouraging professional development and educational change through approaches based on teachers' local understandings of persistent and relevant problems. According to Kumaravadivelu (2006) and most of the studies reviewed here, there is a consensus among researchers in the field of teacher education that over time, teachers develop an awareness of what does and does not work in their contexts. They become more sensitive to and knowledgeable of the particularities of their work contexts than outside experts. This awareness is acknowledged in the literature and referred to as the 'teacher's conception of practice, sense of plausibility and beliefs and assumptions.

### **Reflectivity and Collaboration**

According to sociocultural views on teacher learning, professional development emerges through reflective activities, in collaboration with colleagues and others within teachers' communities of practice. It occurs through engaging teachers in professional discourse, about tasks related to teaching and learning and using authentic resources and artefacts from teachers' work contexts as learning tools. When the substance and tools of the improvement efforts are real teacher issues of every day practice rather than

imported topics and methods, potential gaps between teachers' needs and goals and those of professional development providers are likely to be narrowed. The general teacher education literature promotes professional development designs and activities that evoke reflection on practice and foster collaboration. Johnson and Johnson (2009) explain that when teachers engage in reflective activities such as journal writing and sharing or study groups where they reflect on their ideas, thoughts, beliefs and teaching practices, they externalize their current knowledge and internalized concepts about teaching. As such thought takes shape through the activity of reflection (verbal or written), it becomes an object that can be examined, altered, confirmed, or changed.

### **Teaching Scenario in English**

English language teachers do not develop their knowledge and skills exclusively on their own. They learn from the interaction and contact with others who are knowledgeable in the field, from 'experts' by participating in courses or in staff development programs, from their supervisors, mentors, and peers through the feedback and review of their practice and from their students through getting feedback on their own teaching. Among the many groups and sources in and out of school, teachers learn most from their colleagues -- the other teachers working at their same school. Hayat, Ahmad and Sarwar, (2020) established that teacher collaboration has potentials as a vehicle for professional growth, benefits teachers personally and professionally and is key component in teacher growth. Sarwar, Idris, and Ali (2018) contend that collaboration facilitates teacher reflection on practice, promotes collegial interaction and involves teachers in school change.

### **Perspectives in Language Teaching**

(McCarthy and Carter, 2014) looked into the impact of different types of teacher relationships on teachers' professional learning and identified four types of collegial relations among teachers ranging from complete independence to deep interdependence. Another type is "aid and assistance", and it is characterized by the mutual help and advice readily available among teachers only upon request. It treats the matters of teaching in a piecemeal fashion while resting on implied asymmetries in teachers' status and therefore the degree to which collective expertise can be developed is limited. The third type of collegiality is developed through a routine of sharing and exchanging materials, methods and ideas relating to teachers' work.

Although this can lead to productive discussion and desired results, it could pose problems in contexts where collaborative school culture does not exist.

### Professional Development in Language Teaching

Therefore, professional development efforts should be built on the intersection of the perspectives of all of those directly or indirectly involved in the process, such as students, parents, teachers, school administrators and policy makers. It should be fairly applicable in terms of goals and content to the context in which it is carried. At the school level, in order to invite teachers' active engagement in development/improvement activities, schools should create a context in which teachers are enabled to develop while fulfilling their potential and satisfying their needs. In practice, this may be done through delegating significant responsibilities to teachers, engaging teachers in identifying their needs and the needs of the school as a whole and involving all staff in professional development activities. This would encourage staff ownership of professional development policies, goals and programs. From another perspective, school systems and educational policies should give due value to professional development efforts that teachers undertake, by motivating them and linking professional development work to appraisals, promotions and other forms of reward. Working towards mutual goals invites various types of organizational support such as providing sufficient time and resources, encouraging productive collegial relationships among teachers and between teachers and staff.

### METHODOLOGY

Qualitative approach in research deals with narrative format while statistical data is gathered and its analysis makes the research quantitative one. In this study, both approaches are being used. Mixed method or, so to say, eclectic approach method is being used to conduct this study. English teachers of private schools in Karachi are the participants of this research. Total number of participant teachers is 50. They are given a questionnaire composed on Likert scale with 5 options starting from 1 to 5. Fifty English teachers are selected through stratified random sampling technique from Karachi. Each questionnaire has 15 items to be responded by the respondents. These items are then analysed in the light of literature review and their data is presented in pie chart form for statistical analysis. In order to get the deeper insight into the process of professional attitude and its link with classroom

discipline parameters, its construct and various other factors associated with it, different approach of study is required from that of quantitative study. So, the present research used qualitative method of research, as this approach of research allows researcher to collect descriptive information on various variables, not assessed easily through empirical research and also lends to view the phenomenon from perspective of the subjects.

The data collected by qualitative method is detailed, provides thick description and in-depth inquiry. It also provides direct quotations capturing individual's personal experiences and perspectives. Moreover, in qualitative approach the researcher has direct contact and has the opportunity to get closer to the subjects, situations, and phenomenon under study. Qualitative research is open to change throughout the inquiry of the process and data collection. This allows the researcher of the study to adjust the direction of the research and pursues new paths of discovery as they emerge. In addition to that, the very nature of the qualitative research i.e. the thorough and detailed description of events, experiences, attitudes, opinions, feelings and knowledge provide researchers with the understanding of 'the complex nature of many aspects of human and organizational behaviour.' While survey questionnaire reflects quantitative approach in this study which has its broader validity and objectivity in its results and conclusion.

### RESULTS & FINDINGS

In this part of the study, it evaluates the results of collected data. The total number of questions asked from the selected English teachers was fifteen and the received responses are presented in the following table:

No.	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
1	Teacher's professional attitude counts a lot as a component of classroom discipline	0	10	5	30	5
2	Professional attitude distinguishes English language teachers from other professionals	5	5	10	25	5
3	English language teachers demonstrate their professional attitude through their class control	5	0	10	25	10
4	Professional attitude of English teachers has identifiable impression on learners' performance	10	5	0	25	10
5	English language teacher's professional attitude has direct link with classroom management parameters	5	5	10	25	5
6	Classroom Management Parameters transpire English language teachers competence	5	5	15	5	20
7	English language teachers can improve classroom discipline through strategies learnt by them as a result of observing professional attitude inside classroom	5	0	10	15	20
8	Professional development of English language teachers can enhance the teaching proficiency and acumen	0	5	10	30	5
9	Maintaining discipline is edged by professional development of English teachers	5	5	15	20	5
10	Qualities and standards set by English language teachers reflect the level of professional approach and attitude of the teacher	10	5	0	35	0

11	Students adhere to their English language teacher's professional attitude inside the classroom and get inspiration from him	0	10	10	30	0
12	A well behaving English language teacher is always considered a successful professional	0	0	0	25	25
13	English language teacher can impress his/her students through his/her punctuality and regularity	5	10	5	10	20
14	Time management is part and parcel of professional attitude of an English language teacher	0	0	5	35	10
15	A good discipline keeper must be first a good discipline observer	0	15	5	5	25
Note: 1 is being the least level of agreement while 5 is being the highest level of agreement						

The first statement asked was about professional attitude of English teacher and majority of respondents agree to the item that it matters a lot in maintaining discipline within the classroom. The second was about distinction and distinguishing factor of English language teacher from other professionals and mostly respondents seem to agree to it as 50% chose the option 'Agree'. The third item reflects the demonstration by English language teachers as regards to class control and discipline to which 70% of the respondents either chose agree or strongly agree. This next item is related to learner's performance and the impact of English language teacher's professional attitude whether does this attitude have some kind of impression or impact on a learner's performance and worthy teachers give their opinion in its favour. 70% respondents in case of this item selected agree or disagree. The afterward item creates a linkage between English language teacher's professional attitude and classroom management parameters whether or not these two have some common link or affective factor between them. Here also 60% respondents select agree and disagree. The item number 6 is put forth concerning classroom management parameters and competence of English language teachers. The response received is bit split type. 30% respondents remain silent and choose neutral option while, 50% choose agree and strongly agree. Item 7 is about Teachers' career grooming that plays a vital role in forming their professional attitude and this item shows if there is some contribution of strategies in maintaining classroom discipline and managing it through their professional attitude demonstration. 70% of respondents say they agree and strongly agree to this statement. The next item is about teaching skill and techniques that count a lot in imparting instructions to learner besides classroom management issue. It is only through professional management boost up that English teachers can improve their teaching proficiency. The item is all about this. Results show that 70% of the respondents agree/strongly agree to this item.

The teacher who acquire and excel in professional development, inspire learners the most. This is the core of this item and the response is split as 30% think they

cannot give any opinion being neutral and 50% stay agree/strongly agree. This item is related to qualities and standards set by English language teachers. Results show that 20% strongly disagree to this statement and 70% agree to it while there is none chooses neutral or strongly agree. This shows their opinion is not vague about this statement. The outcome of showing good professional attitude inside the classroom by English language teacher is mentioned in this item with reference to adherence and inspiration by learners. 60% of respondents say they agree while 20% remain neutral and 20% disagree to the statement. This is a clear cut item and the response is even clearer. The item is about personal attitude and behaviour of an English teacher guarantees his/her success. Surprisingly, all respondents agree to this. 50% agree and 50% strongly agree to this item. This item was linked with English language teacher's observing rules and habit of punctuality and regularity. 60% opt for agree and strongly agree. Students follow the character of their English language teacher and consider him a role model. This item is about time management of the teacher himself/herself. The respondents' response is quite clear here. 90% say agree/strongly agree and only 10% say neutral. There is none to disagree/strongly disagree to this statement. This is also a straight forward item regarding practicing by self before expecting from others. The item says classroom management parameters demand that a good discipline keeper must be first of all a good discipline observer. The opinion is clear by the respondents. 60% opt for agree/strongly agree and 30% disagree while 10% remain neutral.

## Discussion

Data analysis, result and discussion transpire that professional attitude of English language teachers play a vital role in classroom management. Literature review conforms to the data collected through questionnaire by 50 English language teachers. First and foremost, teaching is a dynamic activity and it demands progressive evaluation as well as evolution. Teachers generally and English teachers specifically, must look towards enhancement of their professional competence to impress students inside the classroom. When their professional attitude is enhanced, with the same frequency, their classroom management will be improved automatically with the passage of time. Discipline is main feature inside classroom. Class controls sometime excels teaching techniques, methods and strategies. Some very competent and proficient teachers cannot achieve those results which

ordinary teacher can gain only through proper classroom management parameters. Additionally, English language teachers in both the public and private sectors may benefit from resorting to various forms of self-selected professional development activities. This allows teachers to expand their knowledge and refine their skills through (individually or collectively) reading professional writings, enrolling in language or subject area courses and/or experimenting with new ideas and reflecting on their learning. Considering the self as a source of professional development, English language teachers can develop their knowledge, pursue their interests and become aware of and attend to their needs. Importantly, their knowledge will vary, and so when collaborating together, they become a community with variety of referents.

## CONCLUSION

This study responds to English language teaching from the prism of professional attitude and classroom management parameters. It contributes to the understanding of the complexities involved in assisting teachers in their professional development so that they can successfully meet the ever changing educational demands and societal expectations. Extending the research work that focuses on English language teacher education, the bulk of which is conducted in English speaking countries, the findings of present study can be useful in other contexts. Moreover, tapping into teacher voices from various educational settings contributes to the understanding of context-specific issues as regards to classroom management parameters. It opens doors for ideas for correlating professional attitude in order to support teachers becoming 'adaptive experts' in their context as regards to classroom management parameters.

## Recommendation

Such self-directed professional learning activities enhance English language teachers' knowledge, skills, morale and satisfaction. They provide a medium for support, reflection and mentoring of practice that impact on teaching methods and practices while encouraging teachers to be committed to continuous growth and improve thus, classroom management techniques. In the private sector, establishing a collaborative culture is a powerful way through which school principals can nurture stability, professional working conditions, as well a sense of belonging and permanence. Through involvement in collaborative efforts and professionally constructive, reciprocal relationships, English language teachers become empowered active members of the

school community and thus are likely to develop loyalty and be more committed to their work and set right classroom management parameters.

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