

## 外国語言語教室成功方法

## Back To Basics: The Successful Foreign Language Class

Mark Offner †

マーク オフナー

*Abstract: It is sometimes assumed that because students are in the learning business they are naturally good learners and that by the time they reach university they have acquired good study skills. The reality is that students need to be guided and mentored in the methods of best practices to ensure that they get the most out of their classes. All students, including those who naturally excel, will get a great deal more out of their classes if they are given help in establishing good study habits. It is the teacher's responsibility to establish a good learning environment in the classroom and this should be the first priority starting with the first lesson.*

**1. Clearly Present Expectations**

Students are not always naturally motivated. Each student is taking the class for a variety of reasons, and some are attending only because it is a required course. Whatever the reason, the students will manage better if they know exactly what is expected of them and how to meet those expectations. Each teacher will place emphasis on different aspects of the course suited to his or her teaching style but the following things should be covered regardless of teaching methods. The teacher's system for grading and for allocating points for tests, quizzes, written assignments, and oral exercises should be made clear. It should also be made very clear to the students what the teacher's expectations are with regard to homework assignments, class attendance, and participation and what the penalties are if the minimum requirements are not met. This will help the students to direct their attention on the essentials and will enable them to better objectively assess how well they are doing on their own to better gauge their progress. It is easy to take too much for granted, and the teacher

should always take the opportunity to clearly explain assignments and remind students of the minimum requirements. The teacher should be ready to advise students and to suggest steps that can be taken to remedy deficiencies and to help students who are struggling with a specific aspect of the class in order to meet those minimum requirements and expectations.

**2. Accountability**

The most effective way to hold students accountable in the class is to memorize their names so they can be immediately singled out and addressed. However this is not always possible, especially in large classes. A convenient and unobtrusive alternative to hold students accountable for what they do is to assign seating. When seating is assigned the students are keenly aware that they are under the observation of the teacher and therefore need to take responsibility for their class performance, whether in listening to the teacher and other students, or conversing with other students in the target language. If a student is not performing as expected, this can be noted on the seating chart for future reference and the student can easily be singled

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† 愛知工業大学 基礎教育センター (豊田市)

out and given a warning. Although students will be required to be in their assigned seating at the start of each class to expedite attendance-taking, it is not necessary to have them remain there but instead have them rotate, using a system so the teacher can keep track of their movement, enabling the student to engage in new and interesting conversations by interacting with different partners and groups.

### **3. Classroom Dynamics**

In order to create a non-stressful environment in the classroom to enhance student learning, it is important to help the students feel that they belong in the class and that they can contribute and participate freely without the threat of embarrassment or of being unfairly criticized.

#### **3.1 Student-teacher Relations**

The first step in creating a relaxed class atmosphere conducive to learning is for the teacher to establish a good rapport with the students. In the first few lessons it is a good idea to try to incorporate exercises that allow the teacher to get to know a little about the students and provide opportunities for the students to get to know the teacher. Whenever possible the teacher should interject a little of his or her own experiences and make known personal preferences with respect to the various topics that arise. As a means toward this end it is also important to establish very early on what the students can and cannot do in the class. Once these parameters are set, the students will feel much more comfortable in the class as they are allowed the freedom to work within a framework that they understand without having to guess at or continually test the boundaries. There are any number of things teachers do to make students feel at home depending on the teacher's own personality and teaching style as well as the type of class he or she is dealing with, but easily one of the most important things a teacher can do is to accept all appropriate responses or communicative attempts by the students no matter how grammatically incorrect or seemingly off topic they may appear. It is important to deal with miscommunications and misunderstandings with

patience and humor and attempt to clear up any problems without embarrassment to the student. When a mutual trust and respect is established a student will be more confident and will be able to participate more fully in the class. Teachers should make an effort to always be open and accessible to allow students to come to them for help with any problems they might have.

#### **3.2 Student-student Relations**

Teacher-student interaction may be the most obvious facet of good classroom dynamics, but equally important is the rapport the students have with each other that will help determine the overall mood for the class. Students should know that they will be accepted without ridicule by their classmates and teachers must deal with any initial displays of it quickly and decisively. For obvious reasons it is critical that students are comfortable enough to express themselves freely in a conversation class. Students should be encouraged to speak loudly and clearly when sharing their views. It is also important to ensure that students are good listeners showing courtesy when others are speaking by listening quietly and attentively and showing respect for their classmates' opinions.

### **4. Maintain Interest**

Of course a crucial part of any successful class is to maintain interest. It is a simple fact that students learn better when they are engaged, interested and enjoy what they are doing. Teachers can facilitate this by employing a host of methods such as varying the types of exercises, having the students change partners regularly, providing anecdotal information about personal experiences, and relating the task at hand to current newsworthy events. It is also very effective to retain an element of the unknown or unexpected to keep students engaged. This spontaneous digression does not need to arise in every class, but the fact that there exists the possibility of something out of the ordinary happening will help heighten interest and keep the students involved and motivated.

## 5. Establish Good Habits

Good study habits are learned like anything else. The sooner students establish good study habits the better. Although the teacher cannot help the student much outside of class other than to require that homework be done with diligence, he or she can set an example in the class by consistently keeping the students on task in the target language and by reviewing often. The teacher should be punctual and require the students to be settled and ready to start at the designated time. It may seem that something as basic and obvious as being prepared could not get overlooked, but it is important to get students in the habit of consistently being prepared by bringing their textbooks, notebooks, workbooks, language dictionaries, and any other required materials to class each time. It also helps to keep a simple record of the lesson and the pages that have been covered on the board and to keep a record of what has been accomplished so students can make sense of and clearly see their progress. Students should be encouraged to do self-assessments so they can keep track of their own individual progress and identify areas that need more work.

## 6. The Successful Lesson

By taking the time to establish expectations, parameters for class conduct and a few simple rules, the student will be comfortable in their class and with more confidence will be able to more actively participate in and to learn more from their lessons. These things should be made clear in the first few lessons and reviewed and highlighted throughout the course to ensure a most successful educational experience.

## References

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