

## **STUDENT TEACHERS' STRATEGIES TO OBTAIN STUDENTS' ATTENTION DURING TEACHING PRACTICE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

During the teaching and learning process, the teachers must bring students' attention to themselves. The purpose of this study is to investigate the methods that student teachers employ during their classroom teaching practicum to attract their pupils' attention. Researchers used the classroom observation method to investigate each strategy utilized by student teachers. During the observation, student teachers used a combination of verbal and nonverbal strategies to get the students' attention; however, there needs to be follow-up on all of these methods. The conditions, including the level of loudness in the classroom, are why the student teachers had to keep using the same tactics. Clapping and sussing are the most effective methods for obtaining students' attention because of the ease with which it may be transferred to students.

Keywords: Students' Attention, Teaching Practice, Student Teachers' Strategies

### **INTRODUCTION**

Teaching is directing and assisting learning, making it possible for the learner to learn, and creating the ideal learning environment (Brown, 2000). During the learning process, the teacher will direct the students to perform a certain activity and will need them to investigate various sources to expand their knowledge. On the other hand, learning may be defined as gaining new information or abilities via experience (Passarelli & Kolb, 2011). It is necessary for teachers to prepare their students to be able to concentrate and pay attention to the information being presented by the teacher to accomplish the goals of their teaching. Teachers need to have a variety of competencies and strategies, all of which they must continue to develop to enhance the learning outcomes for their students. Because the teacher is the most important person in the classroom, the teacher plays an essential and basic function in leading, directing, and teaching students throughout the learning process. Students are unable to maintain their attention throughout a full activity in the classroom. Nevertheless, if both teachers and students were to increase their attention awareness, it may help them better to achieve teaching and learning goals.

The ability to effectively manage a classroom is essential in all aspects of teaching and learning, including the English language; nonetheless, some teachers struggle with this aspect of their jobs. Effective classroom management is relevant to an effective teaching and learning process because it informs students about the required behaviors, the goals to be attained at the conclusion of the process, and the possible elements that limit any disruptive

activities (Cooper, 2013). On the other hand, successful classroom management is also connected to students' levels of achievement since it provides them with adequate time to comprehend the content and carry out the assignment (Korpershoek et al., 2016).

Students studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia are expected to be future teachers. Becoming an experienced teacher is a lifetime pursuit and a way of being, not a process that concludes with pre-service or in-service training. Therefore, teachers must prepare and practice to face class teaching (Penh, 2013). Teachers frequently exhibit a mechanical approach to their strategies, repeating the same activities and routines. Because of this, there is no genuine sense of teaching in these processes (Astika, 2014). As a result of these problems, teachers need to develop their capacity for self-reflection to increase their critical understanding of how their teaching practices affect student attention during the learning process to pursue learning outcomes.

Colombo and Cole have clearly explained the definition of a teacher's strategy, stated how to make decisions about courses, individual classes, or even the entire curriculum, and begin with analyzing the key variables in the teaching situation (Cole, 2008) (Colombo, 2011). So, a teacher's strategy can be identified as the way or method used by the teacher to convey the information needed by students as learning objectives. In the context of this study, the teacher's strategy uses specific patterns to attract and maintain students' attention in academic activities in class. All the strategies teachers use and students' attention are continuously shifting between what they are experiencing on the outside and what is happening inside them. Students can maintain concentration on their assignments and recall any information offered by the teacher that will be used if the classroom environment and activities are interesting to them. When the students' attention is drawn away from the setting and activities in the classroom, however, they will focus on other factors that have the potential to impede their educational progress.

Students' attention span is needed to implement the teaching and learning process. To obtain the student's attention, the teacher must also use various methods to handle the class well. Evidence collected by Jessica was later compiled to measure the strategy used by the teacher to obtain the attention of grade 1 students. Later, I discovered that giving instructions, doing repetition, setting up high-order thinking skills and varying the lesson will make the students give their attention during learning (Jessica & Santoso, 2022). It is the same line as Umar's result to cure boredom during learning. Teachers need to vary their strategies. The teacher needs to manage the classroom and avoid a disruptive classroom. So, the teacher had to perform several strategies such as interference, moving around class, and even punishment to give greater attention to the other students (Umar & Khair, 2022).

Various learning strategies are developed each year to fulfill teaching and learning output. Suwarni implemented gamification in education, which was pretty impressive in students' performance and learning attention. With the result of 70.3%, gamification proved to bring students into a supportive learning environment, so students tend to spend their attention in class (Suwarni et al., 2023). A teacher must also apply a good relationship between teacher and student in the classroom to engage students in their response and collaboration. Hourigan introduces ARC, a simple and adaptable approach to engaging students in the class (application, response, collaboration). ARC encourages students to be

present and participate in class, creates an environment free from intimidation, encourages students to explore their perspectives and biases, and encourages them to think critically and creatively by integrating new information and ideas. Students' preparation and reading of class material might be acknowledged using ARC during formal assessments. In a large survey course, we examine ARC as a pedagogical strategy, including its foundations, implementation, benefits, and success indicators. (Hourigan, 2013).

## METHODS

Data for this study were gathered by observation in the classroom and personal notes, using a descriptive research design with a qualitative approach. The objective of the qualitative study was to accurately and thoroughly capture the factual reality of the phenomena (Sugiyono, 2014). The researchers collected and gathered the fundamental data for this investigation. Researchers have chosen the lecturer and sixth-semester students of the English Department study at Universitas Tidar as a sample based on these research approaches. The main data collection technique begins using classroom observation by observing teaching and learning activities in the Teaching English as Foreign Language (TEFL) course. In this course, five students were selected to become "student teachers" (ST) and demonstrate the teaching and learning process in English class, while other students became participants. Researchers observed the teaching process and analyzed the strategies of student teachers (ST) to gain students' attention. The observation's key points are the verbal and non-verbal strategies performed by ST to obtain the students' attention.

## RESULTS

The researchers obtained significant results to support the research after collecting data through interactive observation in the Teaching English Foreign Languages (TEFL) course. Researchers found data findings regarding patterns of capturing and maintaining students' attention in the classroom. The pattern formed in verbal speech and body language is dominantly used. Then, the patterns that emerge are grouped into three types of capturing and maintaining students' attention, such as:

### 1. Sussing

The first and most frequently used type of teacher is sussing. The use of this type can be said to be still in the stage of noise that is not yet severe, or it can be said that only a few students are still making noise. So, the class is still in a condition that the teacher can handle, even if only by hissing code for asking for silence. The interactive observation in class shows the teacher hissing students using a standing position in the middle so students can hear what they are saying. This method effectively diverts students' attention and views directly back to the sound source. This result is relevant to McIntosh's theory that performing sussing is effective during transition (McIntosh et al., 2004). Even though implementing this strategy, the teacher does not get much attention from all students.

### 2. Greetings ("Hello!", "Hi!")

In this category, to attract the attention of students in class is greeting. Greetings are greetings. When the teacher says the word, students need to answer to give attention back

to the teacher. According to the results of observations, teachers mostly say "Hello!" in a louder voice, and after that, the student replies "Hi!" In another greeting, the teacher says "Hi!" and then students respond in reverse. This technique is not only to attract students' attention but also to train students' focus. The same line also occurred with Hidayat's findings, where the greeting strategy increases the effectiveness of chemistry between teacher and student during their learning in the classroom (Hidayat et al., 2019). With the rules for answering 'hello' WITH 'HAI,' students must pay attention to the teacher saying Hello or Hai because the answer must be the opposite, predominantly using simple words like "Hello!" "Hi!" "Friends!" the sentences are still simple, and the noise level is usually still not severe, or the class conditions can still be handled with evidence that the students still hear and answer the teacher's voice.

### 3. Ask for attention directly.

In this category, the speech is classified as explicit because the teacher asks students to pay attention, so it can be ascertained that the class condition has started to be noisy. So, in asking for this attention, the teacher must be louder and able to break up the noise between students. The words that appear are

#### A. "Guys, please!"

In this sentence, the teacher instructs students to pay attention, even though they do not explicitly ask students to be silent. However, using this sentence is quite easy. Students accept the meaning that they must be calm.

#### B. "Okay, please pay attention!" "Attention, please!"

The teacher usually uses this sentence because it will explain something or other students are conveying something, so other students need to pay attention. In this case, there may be no noise, but students are busy with their affairs, making them not pay attention to the discussion at that time.

#### C. "Silent, please!"

In this sentence, the teacher clearly or explicitly states that the teacher needs students' calm. The condition that occurs when this sentence is said is usually noise that almost causes an uproar in the class. It can even be said that the class is almost chaos. When conveying this sentence, the teacher must be loud and clear because the voice will no longer be heard if the teacher does not deliver it aloud.

### 4. Body movement (symbol)

Based on observations made by researchers, other strategies are most dominantly used by teachers. Physical movement patterns or body language are used to restore the students' attention in the class. Body language refers to the physical activity shown by the body and forms certain symbols to produce meanings that can be translated orally or in writing by the recipient. This skill can be performed by a single limb or a combination of movements from several body parts. The finding data shows that body language such as

"applause" effectively refocus students. The teacher stands in the middle of the class and claps her hands with two loud claps.

In addition to "clapping," the teacher can place the index finger in front of the mouth to ask students to calm down. This symbol is usually accompanied by a hiss "shhh" from the teacher. The teacher asks students to refocus on the explained material as an affirmation. The method of capturing and maintaining students' attention is ultimately the teacher's way of refocusing and ensuring students understand the material being taught.

## DISCUSSION

From the observations, students agree that all teachers are encouraged to use attention-grabbing strategies in the learning process in class because it is important. Teachers must understand that the duration of learning in class is very time-consuming and energy-consuming, especially in English subjects where students study foreign languages and materials for cognitive understanding. Therefore, the teacher uses the strategy of attracting attention periodically within a certain time. Besides that, when children scream or make loud noises, other students will feel disturbed, which becomes a problem that will continue if not resolved. So, the teacher's strategy for capturing and retaining students' attention to solve problems is refocusing on one class object.

The research results stated that the most prominent strategy to attract students' attention was "applause." This data was concluded after many students said paying attention to direct body language was more effective. Students like it when the teacher claps and varies it with verbal greetings such as "class." or "attention please" because it makes students more aware of their focus. In addition, with this strategy, students do not feel afraid or intimidated by the teacher's attitude compared to when the teacher screams or curses loudly. Students are more comfortable and feel safe responding to the teacher in a light voice. However, based on the findings data obtained after this study directly observed learning activities in class, there were different results. The strategy of attracting and retaining students' attention is more dominant in using verbal utterances, especially hissing. The teacher is more dominant, using utterances such as "Silent, please!" "Attention, please!" "Guys, please!" "Okay, please pay attention!" to return students' focus instead of clapping. This result controverts the research result by Geng, who argued that non-verbal strategies such as clapping and pointing out were effective (Geng, 2011). This difference is because students pay more attention and are sensitive when they receive direct verbal stimulation. The voice needed by the teacher can be adjusted to the conditions of the class and the students themselves. In addition, adding the affix "please" is considered more subtle and humane than the teacher directly mentioning the student's name.

## CONCLUSION

In the results of direct-action observations, the researcher found several patterns used by the teacher in attracting students' attention back in the class. These patterns are identified as hissing, chanting, and clapping hands. The greatest frequency of existing patterns is hissing, which is dominantly applied as a verbal utterance such as "Silent, please!" "Attention, please!" "Guys, please!" "Okay, pay attention, please!" which differs from previous studies

results. This difference is due to the variable factors that underlie the dominance of different strategies. The differentiating factors include differences in the conditions of the place, the level of sensitivity to student stimuli, the ability to control the teacher's class, and the psychological conditions of students and teachers.

The teacher's use of sentences or body movements to attract attention must still pay attention to the noise level and class conditions. Not all uses of these sentences and movements are always relevant in all conditions and situations, so the teacher needs to consider them properly. In addition to looking at the conditions and noise levels, the teacher also needs to pay attention to the ejected sound level and the movements that are given. Excessive movements that seem to give emotion make students uncomfortable, and using a voice that is too loud will make students feel that the class is uncomfortable and stressed. If the class is still under good control and there is no chaos, the teacher can use small movements or simple sentences first.

The most significant obstacle in this study lies in the sample data collection instrument, which carries only the observation method. Researchers also experienced problems with the inadequate quantity of data findings. During the collection of data findings, the researcher hoped that the teacher would use attention-getting strategies such as sounding, for example, tapping on the table with a pen or marker. Besides that, there is a strategy of shouting "Silent!" which also does not appear in learning activities. Even so, the researcher hopes this will serve as a bridge for future research to better prepare the other factors that might affect student attention in the classroom.

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