



To Smile or Not to Smile!

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Abstract:

First day of a new academic year! Students were either nervous or excited and their teachers are also not exceptions. Many teachers are found uncomfortable under their skin while they are entering in the classroom. Mr. Chauhan entered the class of First Year of B.A. (English). Students observed the teacher from top to toe. Mr. Chauhan briskly walk to the centre of class and greeted the students with pleasing smile. And the half battle was won. Such is a power of smile in the classroom, but teachers have often misunderstood the power of smile in classroom dynamics. The present article focuses on the power of smile for teachers to deliver effective teaching and joyful learning.

Keywords: *Smile, Classroom Teaching, Classroom Management, Cheerfulness*

Whether teacher smiles or not, the teaching happens. With the least smile, many teachers have completed their entire syllabus. The popular belief is that if the teacher smiles in the classroom, students takes him/her for granted and may not approve his/her teaching. This is nothing but myth which must be demystified.

The eternal truth about life is that whatever we do has two purposes: 1] peace and 2] happiness. Happiness is seen with smile. Cheerful teachers wear their ornamental smile with style and creates joyful climate for effective teaching and pleasant learning.

The time has changed. The textbook content has started losing its importance because abundance of resources available free or paid on the internet. With few clicks, there are possibilities to find the better presentation of the same material which is taught by the classroom teacher. So now content is not king. Experience is in reign. In this new era of experience, those who are about to create better learning experience for their students will be survived or considered as better students. With this explanation, the questions that arise are: how to give a good effective experience of the students? What can be done create consistent experiences in the classrooms? The answers are simple and easy to be ignored as what is obvious is easily ignorable. The focus should not how and why, rather what. More than content, the presentation of that content matters and here, smiles pay pivotal roles in it (Redman, 2005).

Despite widespread ignorance and misunderstanding about smile in teaching fraternity, there are reasons we cannot ignore in using smile as an effective gesture in effective teaching learning processes:

1. Sense of Security

Students of any age feel secure when his/her teacher flashes teeth through smile. Many students are extremely stressed out on their first day of college. Now it is up to teacher to make the students comfortable or break his expectations by the inviting gesture of smile.

2.Booster of Well-being

Smile is important for teachers and students as it contributes to their wellbeing. If the class time is spent in frowning, grumbling and snarling, the result will be student's nervousness and disliking for the teacher. Smile is the most contagious element as smile triggers smile. It delivers feel-good factor and contributes to have endorphin- Nature's happiness drug. It is also good for heart and relieves a lot of tension and stress.

3.Mood-maker

A smile can relax students to learn effectively and behave better. Students equate smiling with kindness, humour and positivity. Therefore, lots of smile is inevitable in the class as it alters mindset, outlook and approach of students quite drastically. Every student likes smile as it lift the bad moods with very little efforts (Ghiora, 2010).

4.Bonding

Angry outlook and serious gestures may damage the relationship with the students, but smile is a boon to create rapport with the students. Most people feel warmth through smile and ready to share more with smiling people. As we all know, there is no teaching without reaching, smile is superb tool for learning (Terada, 2018).

5.Impress

Smile impresses and creates positive impressions. Every teacher wants to have great impression in first class so that students would like to come again to his/her class; here smile contributes to this cause. Smile creates long lasting impression and is also memorable so when the students went home, they would remember their 'smiley' teachers more than 'scary' teachers.

6.Friendliness

It is an obvious fact that smiling teachers are perceived by teachers as friendly who can support them. Showing the pearly white teeth is important make teacher liked by the students as smile builds trust, respect and motivation (Smith, 2016).

7.Parents

When teachers spread smiles and create conducive climate in the classroom, students will speak positively about their teachers which ultimately develops the good faith in parents for teachers. If they have any misconception about their children's learning and safety, they can be easily clarified.

8.Defuse

Smiles are just like a bomb disposal squad; in an instant they defuse the tense situation and disarm the angry opponent. With smile, the explosive situations can be avoided. Teacher must understand that students come to campus for learning, having fun, belonging and feeling wanted. It is the place where they smile a lot so in reciprocation they also expect lots of smile throughout the day in the campus.

9.Community

Smiling is good for the whole campus as a community. Smile is a professional gesture which can be used as a professional response. When teachers handle stressful situations with smile, it makes a positive campus community.

10. Advantage

As the prime goal of life is to have happiness and peace, smile is advantageous as it benefits all. Smile creates happiness loops that promotes positive thinking.

11.Productivity

It is the proven fact that happy workforce is more productive workforce. Smiles produce positive emotions and can feed motivation whereas negative emotions can drain effort and engagement. Smile helps teachers to increase skills, enhance professional development and maximize classroom learning time (Fay & Fay, 2016).

12.Creativity

Smiles inspire the positive atmosphere which boosts creativity. Smiling helps to be more creative in solving problems, thinking freely and make better choices.

Thus, smile is something that should not be avoided in the classroom at any cost. But as everything, if we over smile or exaggerate, the result can be adverse. Teacher is teacher, not a friend. He may be

friendly but not a friend. Teacher is not there to seek students' approval for classroom procedure. Therefore, teacher should explain, enforce and then reinforce his/her expectations and standards firmly with smile. The balance of firmness and cheerfulness is the crux of joyful teaching. With it, teacher can reinforce the habits he/she desires and also flourish the relationships with students (Roberts, n.d.). In short, smile is inevitable for cheerful environment in classrooms and joyful experiences for learning. If the goal of teaching is to touch the heart of learners forever, smile plays a pivotal role. Smile or not to smile? This paper favours the smile as affective and inviting gesture for learning.

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