

Something that makes me feel uncomfortable in my school.

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Shouting. Not just shouting, but shouting with anger. I hate it. It is one of the only things that makes me feel uncomfortable in the classroom.

I am aware that our roles as NET is different to that of our Korean co-teachers. We are often the ‘fun ones’ that smile a lot and do the ‘fun’ lessons. The Korean teachers have to work hard to keep students in check, to ensure they get the work done, and above all, to learn. I am also aware that I can’t speak much Korean and my elementary school students can’t speak a great deal of English, so my shouts would be an ineffective way of dealing with bad behavior. However, sometimes I feel that my Korean co-teachers go too far.

I try to see the best in all students and all classes. Even if I dread a particular class, I try to walk in with a positive attitude, a friendly smile and a commitment to deliver a great lesson. I had a situation last week where my co-teacher entered the classroom with the exact opposite attitude. She hates this class, and she told me so before the class. Her attitude upon entering the class was negative, she start shouting at the students straight away and then any attempts I made to ‘rescue the mood’ of the class were destroyed by her continued and regular shouting. Yes, some students were a being a bit rude, and yes, they’d been rude last lesson too – but constantly yelling at them was dragging the whole class down into long sighs. It’s especially noticeable that when a ‘disliked student’ has been classified as such, they will receive the brunt of the shouting, whether they’ve been naughty in this class or not. Every lesson seems to end the same, with ‘disliked boy’ being yelled at for the class’s misdemeanors.

This makes me feel awkward. I don’t want my classes to be like this. So I talked with my co-teacher to try to improve the situation. She said she didn’t realize that it made me feel uncomfortable and justified her behavior by saying that she teaches this class three times per week (to my one) and she knows that an occasional shout tends to ‘sort them out’ for a few weeks after. She did agree to do less shouting in my classes, and deal with any major issues after the class or in her lessons alone with the children. I hope she sticks to this and our classes can return to the relaxed, smiling atmosphere that I try to foster.