

Rationale for the “Rules”

1. LISTEN with the intent to UNDERSTAND: This is your job. We ALL acquire language in one way ... when we receive input that we can understand. If you aren't listening, then how can you receive the input? You don't have to worry about repeating things after me ... all you have to do is LISTEN and UNDERSTAND what is being said ...

2. STOP if it doesn't MAKE SENSE: If you don't understand the message, or what is being said, you have to stop me. You won't acquire the language if you can't understand me, so please, if something doesn't make sense, please stop me. (Then, establish gesture for stopping as a class)

3. ANSWER as a GROUP: We are a community, and we are going to build these stories together. So, when I ask you a question that you already know the answer to (it could be a yes/no for example), I want everyone to answer together. If I don't see your lips moving, then you might get some extra special attention to answer some more questions. (Thanks Terry for that bit :D) The only different part is, if I put my hand up when I am asking a question, then I want you to put your hand up to answer.

4. TWO WORDS or English ... MAXIMUM: If I ask you a question that you don't already know the answer to, and we are finding out something that will help us to build our story, then you can answer in English if you don't know the Indonesian (or whatever language you teach) ... And you can only use TWO WORDS of English to do so. So, 'McDonald's Coffee' is OK, but 'A mocha from the McDonalds Cafe' isn't.

5. That is MIND-BLOWING! Like, seriously, whoa!: (I love, love, LOVE the idea that came out of the workshop to have TL signs made up for different responses to keep kids engaged in this one). What I say: "You are now in Indonesian, and are in the presence of the most fascinating, amazing, funny, interesting teacher at the school. Everything that I say as a truth is the most amazing thing ever. You will have your mind blown by the amazing things that come out of my mouth. And when you are, we're going to react in Indonesian!"

There are two other rules that didn't make it on the poster: Naked Desks and G-Rated for Grandma ... I just explain these to my students. They don't usually need to be reminded of these ones in my experience.