**Teacher Positioning in the Classroom**

Depending on the task they are involved in and the interaction required, we will adopt different positions.  
  
The theme of '***control v neglect***' also becomes important with our positioning, as a teacher can be too involved in activities that are more learner-centred, resulting in our inhibiting learning (too much teacher control), or not involved enough, and not providing sufficient guidance (neglect). The position we adopt is directly related to how we can provide learners with a balanced amount of attention and space.  
  
**Common problems with positioning**  
Here are some common problems I have encountered with positioning and how I have attempted to resolve them.  
 **Teacher to whole class**

* ***Problem***: Students not following the class, not paying attention, missing instructions, etc.  
  ***Cause:*** Teacher being seated, or standing to one side where not all students can see them.  
  ***Solution:*** Stand at the front of the class or where all students can see you and create eye contact with everyone before speaking.

**During pair or group work**

* ***Problem***: Impeding student-to-student communication due to too much teacher control. ***Cause***: Teacher sitting in with the group or pair, or remaining too long with one group or pair; teacher towering over students as they work. ***Solution***: Remain accessible but outside student-to-student interaction, seated in the middle of the class or at the front, or move around the class and crouch to attend to students.
* ***Problem***: Students over-reliant on teacher and not completing task  
  ***Cause***: Teacher being continually available ***Solution***: There are times when the aim of the activity is for students to be working together and yet one of the pair or group constantly asks for the teacher's help simply because they are there. In this case, it is wise to position yourself near another group or pair to encourage the "needy" student to work with their partner(s).

**During pair or group work or when students work alone**

* ***Problem***: Not providing students with enough support (student neglect) so students just stop working.  
  ***Cause***: Teacher remaining sitting or standing at a distance from the students ***Solution***: Circulate or get closer. Either move constantly around the class, attending to student questions and making sure they stay on task, or sit in a position that makes you accessible to all students (see following point).
* ***Problem***: One or several students dominate the teacher's attention (neglect of majority of students) ***Cause***: Teacher sits next to one or two students and stays there ***Solution***: Remain mobile. Being seated is fine, but either leave your chair in the middle of the room and go and crouch by the student(s) to answer questions, or take your chair with you and draw it back to the middle of the room when you've answered the question.

**Conclusion**  
Remember that where and how we choose to position ourselves sends a message to our students about what they should be doing and about our availability. Although it is tempting to always be available for students, and certainly preferable to neglecting them, there is a need for a balance in terms of the attention they receive, and this can be achieved by positioning ourselves according to the requirements of the activity.

**Reference**

Griffiths, B. (2024, March 3). Teacher Positioning in the Classroom. TeachingEnglish. <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/teachers/managing-lesson/articles/teacher-positioning-classroom>