

A simple approach towards improving teaching learning skills of teachers and would be teachers

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Abstract

This article highlights a simple approach towards improving the effectiveness of teachers and helps in improving their teaching learning aspects. Further suggests other useful teaching methods that can be attempted in imparting knowledge to the students. Ultimately a teacher tries his best to impart the knowledge as the way he understands. The use of innovative methods in educational institutions has the potential not only to improve education, but also to empower people, strengthen governance and galvanize the effort to achieve the human goal for the country.

Introduction

“Teachers are amazing people. They inspire us, motivate us, and help us to dream, encourage us to soar. On any given day, a teacher influences the lives of a 30 to 150 students. Over the span of a career, a teacher will have touched thousands of lives. As educators they are given a precious responsibility but along with the rich rewards of teaching come difficult pressures and challenges “ NTC

Education is a light that shows the mankind the right direction to surge. The purpose of education is not just making a student literate but adds rationale thinking, knowledge-ability and self-sufficiency. When there is a willingness to change, there is hope for progress in any field. Creativity can be developed and innovations benefits both students and teachers.

The interest in improved teaching has mushroomed rapidly in recent years ago. Its emphasis was to improve competence in subject matter. Practically no intention was paid to the ways of imparting the contents of a discipline to the students. Now the scenario has changed. Today the concept is based on a learned web of skills, attitudes and goals.

According to Batten, Marland & Khamis (1993); students in Australian schools describe good teacher in the following terms:

A good teacher

- Helps you with your work
- Explains well so you can understand
- Is friendly & easy to get on with
- Is fair & student oriented
- Makes lessons enjoyable
- Cares about student's well being, is always ready to listen and understands them
- Controls the class well
- Knows his content well
- Has a sense of humour and creates interest of his students by giving live examples and sharing his own experiences.

Qualities of a good teacher

- Acquires knowledge of every student and demonstrates knowledge of student development and learning to promote achievement for all students.
- Knows the content they are responsible for teaching & plan instruction that ensures growth and achievement for all students
- Implements instruction that engages and challenges all students to meet or exceed the learning standards
- Work with all students to create a dynamic learning that supports achievement and growth
- Use multiple measures to assess and documents growth of the students, evaluate instructional effectiveness and modify instructions accordingly
- Demonstrates professional responsibility and engage relevant stakeholders and maximize student's growth and development and their learning process.
- Get informed goals and strive for continuous professional growth.

An effective teacher has

- Well managed classrooms where students have the maximum opportunity to learn
- Maintain an academic focus
- Have higher rather than low expectations of what students can be helped to achieve
- Shows enthusiasm
- Use strategies to keep students on task and make them productive
- Impose structure on the content to be covered
- Present new material in a step by step manner
- Employ direct explicit teaching procedure
- Use clear instructions and explanations
- Use a variety of teaching styles and resources
- Frequently demonstrate appropriate task-approach strategies
- Monitor closely what students are doing
- Adjust instructions to individual needs and re-teach wherever the need arises
- Provide frequent feedback to the students
- Use high rates of questioning to motivate students and to check their understanding Poor explanations usually get learners confused and therefore create learning problems. This occurs due to lack of clarity, use of complex terminology, failure to draw analogies or give examples to which the learner can relate and present too much material at one time. Teacher's presentations and explanations can be analyzed to reveal important dimensions of clarity and accuracy, organization, language level, richness of examples or analogies relevant to the listener, use of pictures, diagrams or other support material and sensitivity to the learner's reactions. Many of these elements appear in the class room observation schedules such as the recent Internal Class room Observation System (ICOS) for rating teacher's effectiveness (Schaffer, Nesselrodt and Stringfield : 1994)

According to Wragg and Brown (1993) Explaining should not be one-way process. A good explanation also embodies questions to the

listener to ensure that what is being said is making sense and students should be encouraged to ask the teacher questions during an explanation. Perhaps the least helpful question for a teacher to ask, but one that is frequently heard is "Do you all understand that"; Johnson (1982) says of this particular question, a few students especially those not doing well, are going to confess in front of the entire class that they don't understand. Students who need extra help most of them are least likely to seek assistance, especially, once they have been in school long enough to learn that asking question, sometimes yields teacher criticism for not having listened. Good and Brophy: 1994: Of course high quality explanations are not restricted to the teacher's domain. Children can and do explain things to one another in class. Sometimes they do this very effectively indeed because they are able to empathize with a fellow learner at a similar stage of development and use just the rich language or examples to make a point clear.

Wragg and Brown: 1993 "I still remember being taught how to carry out the long division algorithm by the boy. I was sitting next to in primary math's class. He was for me a much more effective communicator and much less threatening, than the class teacher. The fact that can still remember this incident 50 years later must say something about the impact and quality of peer tutoring. Explaining a concept to another child serves two important functions. The first is that the child practices clear communication and thinks about the audience, even if this is only one person. The second is that explaining to someone else can often clarify your own ideas or reveal what you yourself don't fully understand."

According to the mathematician and educator Richard Skemp 1989, from the student's perspective there is no better way of improving one's own understanding of curriculum content than by having to explain it to someone else. The value of student to student explanation is strongly essential part of effective teaching and learning. Group work certainly increases the opportunity for productive discussion among students, which is something known to facilitate learning. It also supports the value of peer and cross age tutoring as a class-room organizational strategy. These

less formal practices are often thought not to be compatible with the effective teaching model. This is quite untrue.

Important aspects

Two components are critically important in teacher preparation: Teacher Knowledge of the subject to be taught and knowledge and skill in how to teach that subject. Research and common sense tells us that subject matter knowledge is necessary for effective teaching. But there is a second part of the equation: knowledge and skill in how to teach is also must. Effective teacher's understand and are able to apply strategies to help students increase achievement. They understand and apply knowledge of child and adolescent development to motivate and engage students. They are able to diagnose individual learning needs. They know how to develop a positive climate in the classroom in order to make it a stimulating learning environment. While content knowledge is important and necessary, it alone can't determine whether the teacher is able to teach so that student learns.

Effective learning is variable. Effective teachers use a variety of strategies and a range of methods and they change and refine these over time. They don't teach the same way and use the same instructional repertoire year after year. Effective teachers also differ from one another. Both teachers's who use traditional methods and those who employ the most up to date pedagogy can be successful.

Effective teaching is contextual. It responds to individual student's school and classroom communities and societal needs. Effective teacher's alter, adjust and change their instructions depending on who is in the classroom and the extent to which those student's are achieving. Effective teachers are not so devoted to their practice that they ignore the student's in front of them. Effective teaching is premised on student's intellectual curiosity. Effective teacher's begin with the belief that students are smart and can be enticed to learn. Despite their own skill, knowledge and experience, effective teacher's neither patronize nor condescend to students of any age.

Effective teaching must be somewhat autonomous: Reflective and accomplished. Teachers do not need to be controlled, managed or

strictly monitored. Such teachers are close to their students in intellectual as well as psychological ways and they must be empowered to use their judgement to make classroom decision.

Ultimately Effective teaching is fearless: Because the goal is learning, effective teachers must adjust curriculum, methods and pairing to meet the needs of the students. Effective teachers put a priority on student's needs rather than on the strictly interpreted demands of the school district curriculum guide or the year end test. Again, to do so this, teachers must have a great deal of independence.

Student growth artifacts, evidence, student voice-surveys, peer observations, self-reflection and classroom observations to evaluate an individual teacher's effectiveness, all these serve as a roadmap for the teacher's professional growth

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