

Chapter Two: Teachers and Teaching Introduction Any study of the teacher starts with raising questions like: Who are teachers? Very often teachers need to make decisions with minimal knowledge ("will my students integrate ideas better if I require them to prepare for a formal exam or if I assign a take-home exam on this new topic that I am teaching for the first time,"). However, teachers do not always make decisions independently. Many decisions are influenced by the behaviour of previous teachers or parents, learners' peers, and school policies. Some instructional decisions are not made in a conscious, deliberate way, often because teachers simply do not see a problem. One teacher may see a learner as a pleasant, capable, hard working whereas another teacher may realise that this learner is anxious and excessively dependent on teachers, performing capably because he or she is a compulsive worker and socially withdrawn, seldom engaging with peers. If teachers are unaware of such problems, the decisions they will have to handle about that learner will be less than optimal.

II. Classroom management

One of the main tasks of a teacher is how to create social and physical environments for learning; classroom management, then, is a crucial concern to any teacher who seeks to achieve effective teaching. The very nature of classes, teaching and learners makes good management a critical ingredient for success. But is classroom management easily achieved? What are the special managerial demands of classes and the needs of learners of different ages?

II. 1. The need for organisation

Classrooms are by nature multidimensional, full of simultaneous activities, fastpaced and immediate, unpredictable public and affected by the history of learners' and teachers' actions. The teacher (manager) must deal with all these elements every day. Productive classroom activity requires learners' cooperation. Even if some learners do not participate, they must allow others to do so. Gaining learners' cooperation means much more than dealing effectively with misbehaviour. It means planning activities, having materials ready, making appropriate behavioural and academic demands on learners, giving clear signals, accomplishing transitions smoothly, foreseeing problems and stopping them before they start, selecting and sequencing activities so that flow and interest are maintained... Obviously maintaining cooperation is different for each age group. Young learners are learning how to "go to school" and need to learn the general procedures of school. Making work requirement clear and specific, providing needed materials and monitoring activities all add to engagement.

Definition of teaching

According to the Cambridge International Dictionary of English, teaching is defined as "the process of giving knowledge, instruction or training to someone". Generally speaking, teaching is frequently defined as the process of arranging conditions under which the learner changes his ways consciously in the direction of his own goals. It is often regarded as an art rather than a science.

I. 2. Characteristics of good teaching

What makes a good teacher? Is it warmth, humour and the ability to care about people? Is planning, hard work and self-discipline, what about leadership, enthusiasm, a contagious love of learning, and speaking abilities, most people would agree that all of these qualities are needed to make someone a good teacher. But these qualities are not enough. Expert teachers have elaborate systems knowledge for understanding problems in teaching. For example when, a beginning teacher is faced with learners' wrong answers on a particular test (like a history or language test), all the wrong answers may seem about the same – wrong. For expert teachers, however, wrong answers are part of a rich system of knowledge that could include how to recognize several types of wrong answers, the misunderstanding

or lack of information behind each mistake, the way to re-teach and correct the misunderstanding.... But what should teachers know that allow them to be successful? Indeed, teachers need to possess a minimum professional knowledge and the ability to be aware of their own thinking. Consequently, they know: ??Knowledge of the academic subject they teach The old joke which says "Q: What do you need to teach a horse? Indeed, the teachers needs to possess a set of strategies that apply to all subjects; motivating learners, managing the classroom, assessing prior knowledge, communicating ideas effectively, taking into account the characteristics of the learners, assessing learning outcomes and reviewing information must be attended to at all levels, in or out of schools. Several strategies may be applied (some of them have already been discussed when describing strategies to raise and keep learners motivation) II.3.a. Engaging learners: The format of the class affects learner involvement. A constructivist view of teaching Brown and Mc Inyre (1992; cited in Williams and Burden, 2000) report a study of the opinions of 75 learners in a comprehensive school in the UK, aged 12–13 years as to what made a good teacher. Teachers as reflective practitioners If teachers are to be effective in whatever approach they decide to take, they need to act consistently in accordance with their expressed beliefs though this does not frequently occur in any profession (not just the teaching one). These procedures involve descriptions of how materials and assignments be distributed and collected, under what conditions learners can leave the room, how the grades will be determined, etc. How these tasks are accomplished, however, differs widely according to ages of the learners, the objectives of instruction and other factors. In an attempt to improve teachers' self-awareness, many educational theorists advocate for the notion of critical reflection. Indeed, though there are no simple answers to successful teaching, the theoretical principles and research findings (particularly in educational psychology) provide a basis for planning and implementing instruction. However, teachers have to act as independent decision makers and apply these general concepts and principles in relation to their learners and educational objectives. Effective instructors know that the method of instruction used affects learning, so they apply principles drawn from the study of learning, motivation, development and teaching to tailor their approach the situation. A: more than the horse!" makes obvious the first thing a teacher must have is knowledge or skills that the learner does not have. However, although knowledge of the subject matter is necessary, it is not enough. Knowledge of how to transmit information and skills is at least as important as knowledge of the information and the skills themselves. Every one may remember teachers who were brilliant and thoroughly knowledgeable in their fields but who could not teach. For effective teachers, subject matter is not a question of being a "walking encyclopedia". However, although the writers could identify such elements of what they called professional 'craft' knowledge among teachers, they could draw no simple conclusions or generalizations about how this highly complex knowledge could be transformed into guidelines for action. Both the teacher and the learners reshape their ways of understanding, their knowledge structures and the meanings that they attribute to events and ideas as a result of this interactive process. A reflective practitioner is one who subjects his everyday professional practice to ongoing critical reflection and makes clear his own particular world view by means of such consideration. II .2 The Goals of classroom management Classroom management refers to the techniques used to maintain a healthy learning environment, relatively free of behaviour problem. When

the tasks provides continuous cues for the learners about what to do next, involvement will be greater. Jacob Kounin describes areas where successful problem preventers are skilled ? The settings in which learners learn– pairs, small groups, teams, classes, schools, and the community ? Creating a relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom ? An inner exploration of oneself appears rather than a search for the outward characteristics of the perfect teacher appears to be the radical solution. To do so teachers must take individual differences into account, maintain learners' motivation and reinforce positive behaviour. Helping learners with difficulties ??2.3.??