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Introduction

It must be widely believed that classroom teaching is a complex activity which is neither static nor linear. It is an evolving network of schools, education systems, homes and local communities. Lave and Wenger‘s (1991) proposed a well-known social practice theory in which the central ideas of the theory were ‘a commodity of practice’ and the ‘connectedness of knowing’. According to them the collective and individual knowledge evolve within the dynamics of spaces that people share and their participation in within those spaces. The paper is written with the understanding that teachers can foster positive student outcomes through their beliefs that all students have right to access education. Furthermore effective teaching is underpinned on interpersonal respect and sensitivity. It acknowledges the multiplicity of cultural heritage and realities that drive everyday classroom activities. Effective teaching is should be focused on maximizing outcomes of a number of desirable academic outcomes such as conceptual understanding, strategic competence, procedural fluency and adaptive reasoning. Besides academic outcomes effective teaching also put efforts to improve a number of social outcomes in the classrooms to ensure holistic development in the students for highly productive citizens.

Discussion

Characteristics of Effective Teaching

An Ethical Framework of Care

Effective teachers must facilitate learning by showing care about their students and engaging with them (Noddings, 1995). They built interrelationships to develop spaces to enable students develop cultural identities. The teachers must have high but realistic expectations to enhance students’ ability to think, communicate reason, reflect upon and criticize their own practice. It is important to let students ask about the logics for the activities in the class and what are the outcomes of such activities (Watson, 2002). Teachers must respect and value the cultures that students bring into the classroom. They should provide a secured and interactive environment (Boaler, 2008). However teachers must monitor students and discourage them if they see a tendency in students to get overly dependent on the teachers. Effective teaching should encourage students to think for themselves and to take intellectual risks (Ingram, 2008).

Daily class routine is an important element in students’ learning. Effective teaching ensures that all students are involved in situations where they need to struggle for themselves. For example throwing an open invitation in the classroom to contribute towards a mathematical

problem may not yield anything more than cooperation from the students. Effective teaching requires students to face obligations and expectations (Stipek et al., 1998).

Teachers are the source of students' identity. Their involvement plays important role in the development of thinking of a student as to how he/she thinks of himself/herself in the classroom (Walshaw, 2004). Effective teaching addresses the needs that evolve due to different home environment, different languages and different perspectives and capabilities. This creates a positive attitude in the classroom comforts the students to participate actively and in enlarging their knowledge base and increase their confidence. Confident in the understanding students are able to consider new ideas from teacher and other students which enables them to pursue new approaches.

Learning Arrangements

Effective teaching must have arrangements in a way that students are able to respond to their needs. There are several learning arrangements that are very useful and demonstrate different outcomes. All students need time to think independently without the interruption of varied and sometimes conflicting ideas and perspectives of other students (Sfard & Keiran, 2001). On the other hand sometimes they require partners and their assistance to share ideas thus learning and with and from others. Group discussions encourage engagements and generate higher level of learning through exchange of ideas (Ding, Li, Piccolo, & Kulm, 2007). Groups allow a variety of insights into the discussion. These insights and discussion increase the level of overall learning outcome. Effective teaching lays an important in group discussions and designate roles such as reading, writing, listening, questioning and assessing etc. Duties of each participant and expected performance from the group as a whole are explained and monitored (Hunter, 2008). Effective teaching involves challenges in the task and obstacles in the solutions either by removing some information or restricting the use of particular representation or by generalizations (Sullivan, Mousley, & Zevenbergen, 2006). Whole class discussions provide valuable opportunities for students and teachers. Students can use this discussion to increase their understanding and find solution to a challenging problem. Teachers can avail a broader forum to engage with students at different levels, interpret their level of learning by efficient ways of recording. Class discussions are an integral part of effective teaching and determine what students know and what they lack in their existing knowledge.

In planning the arrangements teachers must account students' level of knowledge and existing proficiencies by continuous assessment of different capabilities of their students such as reading and listening skills, language, logical reasoning and ability to deal with complexity.

For low achieving students effective teaching demands reduction of the complexity of the tasks as well as ensuring prevention of repetition and busywork (Houssart, 2002). The emphasis should be to enhance proficiencies rather than mediating the weaknesses (Carpenter, Fennema, & Franke, 1996). Mistakes arise out of numerous reasons such as insufficient time and care for a task.

Classrooms Discourses

Effective teaching demands skilful teachers who are able to teach the students to elaborate and articulate explanations and justifications of their solutions (Walshaw & Anthony, 2008). Effective teaching encourages the use of oral, written and solid representations. Explicit strategies must be developed which can serve as a guide for the students to communicate their solutions (Hunter, 2005). Revoicing is frequently used technique in effective teaching. Teachers rephrase to expand on students' idea. This allows the teacher to highlight an important idea, to enhance the understanding of the idea, to discuss meaning of the idea and/or to add some perspective into the views or even direct the discussion into desired dimension (Forman & Ansell, 2001). Effective teaching allows the learning community to express disagreements and encourages resolution of conflicts. Teachers must support students to work more efficiently together and provide reasons for their views, ideas and opinions (Chapin & O'Connor, 2007). Effective teaching requires the teachers to get involved in the discussion and monitor the arguments and determine the opportunity to step in. Teachers must be able to resolve competing arguments as well as address confusions and misunderstandings (Lobato, Clarke, & Ellis, 2005). For example in mathematics as students' concentration shifts towards making sense of the mathematics and they start to think less about finding solutions of a problem and think more about the method that leads to the solution (Fravillig, Murphy, & Fuson, 1999).

Tools and Representations

Effective teaching involves a wide range of tools and representations to enhance students' development process. These tools come in many forms such as graphs, models, diagrams, images, analogies, stories, metaphors, textbooks and technologies. Teachers are the key factor in ensuring that students are able to use these tools to organize their reasoning and sense-making (Blanton & Kaput, 2005). These tools are very effective in communicating ideas and explanations that are otherwise very difficult and time-consuming to communicate. Teachers must be able to supply a basic guideline that reduces underuse or overuse of

technology. With adequate guidance technology can improve independent inquiry and shared knowledge building (Thomas & Chinnappan, 2008).

Teachers' Learning and Knowledge

The organization of classroom and lectures is very much dependent on the knowledge and learning of the teachers. Sound content knowledge allows the teacher to present the subject as a coherent and connected system (Ball & Bass, 2000). Using their robust knowledge teachers is able to evaluate current status of the students' understanding. This knowledge helps them to organize classroom resources, tasks, lectures material and content that must be used to achieve learning outcomes.

Adequate pedagogical content knowledge allows teachers to build students procedural proficiency in order to challenge and extend students' thinking. In addition teachers must be able to understand students as learners. This knowledge polishes teachers' on-the-spot decision making, enables teachers to understand the students by listening and questioning, assists them to in planning and helps to evaluate students' response insightfully (Hill, Rowan, & Bass, 2005). The enhancement of teachers' knowledge is majorly dependent on the efforts of wider schooling community to improve teachers' understanding of teaching and learning (Sherin, 2002). There should be professional development initiatives on regular basis that are aimed at increasing teachers' knowledge. Such initiatives must be equipped with necessary materials, systems, humans and emotional support. Such support may also be obtained by joint efforts of other teachers within the school (Kazemi, 2008).

Conclusion

Effective teaching is necessary at all levels and for all students. Effective teaching cannot be accomplished without the participation of staff, parents, community and educational regularities. Effective teaching has several characteristics that facilitate such a learning environment that maximizes students' learning and overall efficiency of the process. There are countless aspects of effective learning that can be a constituent of the list but there are some basic principal characteristics and the rest of all are their derivatives. Teachers must believe in caring for their students, their development and overall level of learning. They should define and follow an ethical framework that respects the backgrounds of students coming from different cultures. This framework encourages relationships and communication and builds a secured environment where students are able to express their understanding even if they are wrong and learn out of their mistakes. Classroom activities and learning plans are key elements of effective

teaching. Teachers must be skilful conductors of lessons and must evaluate the optimistic course of action. Students' existing knowledge and communication proficiencies are most significant aspects of learning plans as well as learning arrangements. Lessons should be aimed at enhancing existing proficiencies rather than addressing lacking. Classrooms discussions are also one of the most prominent characteristics of effective teaching. Students are able to express new ideas, express reasoning and logic and learn from other students as well. Class discussion also allows students to remove their mistakes. Teachers must actively get involved in classroom discussions and direct students and discussions towards desired dimension. Different tools and technologies are also very important in classroom activities. Both students and teachers can use innovative technology to express ideas and interpretations that are otherwise very difficult to elaborate. Teachers must help and encourage the use of technology. Teachers' knowledge and expertise on the subject is also crucial for effective teaching. Teachers must be able to evaluate students learning abilities and find effective ways for their development. Teachers must also have maximum content knowledge to be able to identify the level and direction of students thinking and learning.

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