

A General Look On 'The Criteria Of Effectiveness'

Ayfer Onan*

ÖZET

Bu çalışma, etkin eğitim kriterlerinin genel bir sunumunu ortaya koyma çabasıdır. Bir taraftan konunun geçmişi irdelenirken öte taraftan konuyla bağlantılı araştırmalar irdelenmiştir. Aynı zamanda, eğitim alanında geçerliliğini koruyan yaklaşımlara aşina olan eğitimcilere genel bir bakış iletilerek eğitim kriterlerinin dünü, bugünü ve yarını ile bağlantılı bir fikir alışverişi yapılması ümit edilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Etkililik, öğretme yetisi.

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to put a general introduction to the criteria of teaching effectiveness. Needed background information is provided, on one hand, and relevant research, on the other. Also, by presenting a general look to the field of teaching that would be sufficient to teachers who are familiar with perspectives of current methodologies, it has been aimed that the reader will have idea of where the criteria of effectiveness has been, where it is, and where it may be headed.

Keywords: Effectiveness, teaching ability

What is teaching? The answer of this question must be as follow. It is primarily and always the stimulation of the learner. Burton claims, "Teaching is not inculcating subject

matter, nor conveying information, nor passing on the cultural heritage of the race" Burton claims and goes on his discussion by saying:

'It is all of these and more. Learners awakened and inspired by good teaching will do far more than absorb the cultural tradition of their society, they will understand it. The learner once awakened to inviting and adventurous nature of learning will not stop exploring, evaluating, and deciding. He will continue his own growth and development, increase his respect for the values of his society, and endeavor to that society (Burton, 1962 p. 246).

*Ayfer Onan, Yrd.Doç.Dr., DEU Buca Eğitim Fakültesi Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Bölümü, İzmir. ayfer.onan@deu.edu.tr

It is a must for a teacher to know that each individual is unique and he is one who is to aid his learners to develop a courageous attitude toward our chancing, emerging, often frightening world.

Wilson (1998 p.18) contributes to the discussion of the criteria of the teacher effectiveness by making use of the findings of Traver. He suggests that Traver's review of different criteria of 'good' teaching over the centuries concludes that different conceptions of 'Good' have prevailed at different times. Socrates, the Sophists and the Savants of the medieval universities were 'good' because they attracted fee-paying students, by the 17th century teachers viewed themselves responsible for the learning itself, by the 19th century, as witness 'payment by results', securing learning was unmistakably the teacher's responsibility.

Yet Wilson adds that "teachers today would view their role as 'enabling': All the great teachers have traditionally possessed three kinds of skill. First, charisma, or the power of the magnetic personality. Second, knowledge of the subjects to be taught, and high standards of correctness in grammar, punctuation and spelling. The skill of the teacher is variously referred to as pedagogic or 'craft skills'.

Berliner's term 'modelling' is included to Wilson's discussion. For Berliner, modelling has to be of the relevant skills. He claims that 'the single most important factor in predicting whether or not a teacher will be effective is whether the curriculum that is delivered to

students in his or her classroom is linked logically or empirically to the outcomes that are desired'.

For Wilson, curriculum delivery is both about what the teacher does, and more significantly what the teacher enables the pupils to do. The balance between these is important' (1988 p. 69).

Wilson, sums up the importance and the necessity of the balance between curriculum delivery and the objectives aimed by the institution and the society... it is obviously of crucial importance that the teacher chooses content relevant to the objectives, knows what she is talking about, and, can explain herself that will be clearly understood by her pupils (1988 p. 70).

Match and personal capacity are two factors which affect quality of performance. An effective teacher is one who is to have subject knowledge of what to teach and adequate training for teaching students at the stage concerned besides having sufficient appropriate resources of accommodation, teaching learning materials and time. Thus, unless the teacher retains traces of training and formative experiences in her attitudes or behaviour, these experiences cannot affect the teacher's classroom performance.

Wilson, sums up the difference between training and formative experiences of an effective teacher in Biddle's terms:

Such properties have two features in common: they are hypothetical constructs in psychology, thus they are presumed to characterize the individual teacher in a consistent fashion, and serve to explain her behavior in response to a variety of situations. It is also presumed that such properties are laid 'within' the teacher and are not amenable to direct observation in the same way that behaviour can be observed' (1988 p. 21).

What makes a teacher? Is it what he knows? Is it his IQ? Or how his mind works? Is it how he talks and what he says? Is it the warmth of his personality? Is it his sensitivity to other people?

The questions above put forward by Morris and others reminded us of that old cliché: "Teachers are born, not made". Morris and others suggest that:

'To say that 'teachers are born, not made' is like saying 'mothers are born, not made. But some mothers mother well and some mother poorly. What is true of mothering is true of teaching... Teachers do teach by 'feel'. Just as aviators sometimes 'fly by the seat of their pants': But we have to come to know enough about boys and girls, about human motivation, about the psychological and emotional climate of the classroom, about the effects of

reward and punishment and of success and failure, about the whole dynamic network of interpersonal relationship between teacher and pupil, to justify our belief a teacher's work as 'flying by pants pressure is for the aviator (1963 pp. 3-4).

Teaching is the establishment of a situation, complicated and made up of many constituents, in which it is believed that effective learning will take place. First of all, a learner, or more usually a group of learners must be brought together in some fashion and classified in some way, as, for instance, by age or brightness, or educational status. Then, there must be facilities such as a stated time for meeting, stated periods, a convenient place, books and other printed materials on hand, maps, charts, instruments, tools, blackboards, stereopticons, motionpicture projector, pianos, phonographs. Then, an orderly and understood procedure which may be routine and regular or highly varied in character, for presenting, discussing, collating, and checking up on ideas and experiences must follow. Then, it high time that there should be some way of grading, or marking, or evaluating work done, so that all concerned, including the learners, will know how it is coming along within this extensive context, the teacher will sometimes tell the students what to do, and sometimes help them to work out their own plans. Teaching, more than most human activities, demands the use of judgement, imagination, initiative, and enthusiasm.

Particularly does it demand the use of freely working and creative imagination.

Gary Belkin suggests that "the teacher is more than a giver of knowledge..., teaching is the implementation of the learning principles. In this respect, the teacher is a guide who leads his or her students to higher levels of knowledge and ability" (1979 p. 159).

But an effective teacher, being much more than this, must also resolve the many obstacles along the way, overcome the many blocks to learning, inspire students even before teaching them, serve as a model for the student, understand and anticipate what the student is not capable of seeing.

The findings of Heil, Powell and Feifer about teaching and teaching effectiveness have been brought forth by Clarizio, Craig and Mehrens. Having related student achievement to interaction between teacher and student personalities they compared the various teacher-student combinations in terms of measures of student achievement, teacher knowledge, and classroom ratings:

The well-integrated (self-controlling) teachers were the most effective with all types of students, whereas the weakly integrated (fearful) teachers were ineffective with everyone except the children identified as 'strivers'. The third type of teachers (turbulent) identified by these investigators is similar to a defensively intellectual person in using intellectualization as a mechanism of defense. The turbulent teachers were found to be effective with children who had been categorized as 'conformes' or 'strivers' (1970 p. 565).

Clarizio, Craig and Mehrens also suggested the findings of Sears. For him, 'teachers who like pupils tend to have pupils who like each other'. When students are asked to list

characteristics that they would like a teacher to possess, they usually include all or most of the following traits. This list has been presented out by the Crows.

- 'Interest in students
- Patience
- Adaptability
- Knowledge of subject matter
- Reasonable
- Good organization of subject matter
- Daily preparation
- Attention to the needs of individuals
- Stimulation of thought

Ability to control class
 Sincerity
 Enthusiasm and cheerfulness
 Friendliness
 Consideration of others
 Tactfulness
 Cooperation
 Sense of justice
 Sense of humor
 Impartiality (1964 p. 28).

As noticed, many of these characteristics have to do with human relationships. Teachers most admired by students are those who take a personal interest in them. They are those who encourage their students and give them self-assurance. They are those who arrange conditions in order to make their students do something worthwhile. They are those who establish an enthusiastic and purposeful work atmosphere. They are those who are good organizers who help the group and the individuals in it to discover, to formulate, and to clarify their own purpose. They are those who

encourage and value initiative. They are those who build on strength rather than emphasizing weakness. They are those who foster self-criticism and self-evaluation within the group. They are those who can make clear to the students that they should feel free to come to him for a chat if anything is bothering them concerning their progress or the class in general.

The followings are some of the important teacher characteristics which are summed up by Hamp-Lyons concerning the criteria of effectiveness:

Physical position:.... get as close to the students as you can.... Use the desk for lesson 'prop' if necessary.

Eye contact:....keep eyes lively, aware, and interested, moving around the room taking in everything fixing on a specific student long enough to make contact, but no long enough to seem to be staring and thus make the student uneasy, taking in the whole room again, fixing on another student and so on.

Posture:.... Control your body, be aware of the 'message' it is sending to your students.

Arms and Hands:.... always try to keep arm and hand movements meaningful otherwise they can become distractors instead of supporting your words.

Face:... The difference between a smile and a frown may be the difference between a student who learns and one who does not... try to become conscious of the expressions you commonly use and their effects on people (1981 pp. 276-277).

In studies of teacher effectiveness, warmth consistently appears as one of the most important qualities. Some teachers, by expressing their own feelings freely, welcome their students' open emotional response whereas some of them are far remote and impersonal. Thus, on one hand, there stands a considerable and friendly teacher-student relationship, on the other hand, a businesslike one. At this point the classroom atmosphere factor from the point of view of the teacher effectiveness should be emphasized. The classroom atmosphere factor is especially important in classes dealing with the teaching of foreign languages. The student should feel very much at home with his teacher

otherwise he will not be able to achieve the freedom necessary for learning to produce sounds that are strange to him. Any sense of strain or tension may prevent this freedom from being attained. This free atmosphere is a must for a teacher to give the student a feeling of satisfaction, to prevent him from being embarrassed, and to involve him more actively in the classroom process in activities that inter-student communication and cooperative efforts on their part. The affective characteristics-enthusiasm encouragement, humor, interest in student, availability, mental health- are the qualities on which a teacher's effectiveness depends. These are inborn in some of us, but they are also within the grasp of most teachers,

suggests Patricia Miller and adds that 'the classroom techniques of pace and fairness are often overlooked, but they can be crucial to effective teaching... the specific teaching of creativity and challenge are associated more with the types of materials and activities, and their level of appropriateness' (1987, p. 41).

So far many different factors were taken into account in different terms by different writers about the criteria of effectiveness. With these factors to take into accounts, an effective teacher needs to be well informed about the personality characteristics and educational

responses of his students so that he can easily understand if the aim of teaching has been achieved.

Briefly, the criteria of effectiveness consist of awareness of handling students and problems, flexibility, a proper sense of humor, ability to argue without argument, ability to recognize individual differences, and genuineness and consistency in dealing with the students; being honest with him and making sure the things he says and does accurately reflect his real thoughts and feelings.

WORKS CITED

1. Belkin, Gary S. (1979). Perspectives in Educational Psychology. Boston: Wm. C.Brown Co. Publishers,
2. Burton, William. (1962). The Guidance of Learning Activities. New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, Inc.,
3. Clarizio, Harvey F., Craig, Robert C. And Mehrens, William A. (1970). Contemporary Issues in Educational Psychology'. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.,
4. Crow, Alice and Crow, Lester. (1964). The Student Teacher in the Secondary School. N.Y:David Mc Kay Company, Inc.,
5. Hamp-Lyons, Elizabeth. 'Your Most Essential Audiovisual Aid-Yourself': A Forum Anthology from the English Teaching Forum. 1979-1983.
6. Miller, Patricia. (1987). 'Ten Characteristics of a Good Teacher'. The English Teaching, Forum. Vol. XXV, Number I.