

MODULE 2

EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING: PROFESSION-SPECIFIC COMPETENCES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

2.1 TEACHING COMPREHENSION: ROLES, TASKS AND FUNCTIONS

Excellence in Teaching: Profession-Specific Competences of Primary School Teachers. Teaching Comprehension: Roles, Tasks and Functions.

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Introduction

What is the CONTESSA course?

The CONTESSA course is one of the results of the “Contemporary Teaching Skills for South Asia” project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Program of the European Union. Its aim is to be a contribution to establishing successful teacher education programs for primary teachers, particularly in Cambodia and Sri Lanka, which will create a long-lasting positive impact on the overall educational systems.

It is increasingly important for successful educators to stay up-to-date with contemporary skills and methods to use inside and outside of the classroom. The CONTESSA course therefore offers five carefully selected modules, each of which contain three focuses aimed at the development of contemporary teaching skills. The modules and their focuses are as follows:

Module 1. Building Blocks of Primary Education

1. Twenty-First Century Teaching and Learning
2. Lesson Planning and Methodological Skills: Concepts, Tools and Application
3. Designing Learning Environments

Module 2. Excellence in Teaching: Profession-Specific Competences of Primary School Teachers

1. Teaching Comprehension: Roles, Tasks and Functions
2. Assessing Learning Results
3. Pedagogical Professionalization

Module 3: Learner-Centered Primary Education: Enhancing Co-Created Learning Processes

1. Individual Development and Problem-Solving Skills
2. Lifeworld-References and Future Prospect
3. Self-Determination, Empowerment and Self-Efficacy

Module 4: Embracing the Differences: Pedagogic Approaches to Diversity, Heterogeneity, Special Needs

1. Inclusive Pedagogy: Approaches and Strategies
2. Teaching and Learning in Diversity: Preparation, Realization, Assessment
3. Diversity-Sensitive Classroom Management

Module 5: Digital Teaching and Learning

1. E-Pedagogy and Digitally Enhanced Learning Environments
2. Digital Media and Technology: Tools and Formats for Educational Purposes
3. Online-Based Lesson Preparation and Conduction

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to implement newly acquired contemporary teaching skills, engage all students in classroom activities and learn new ways to help students reach their full potential.

Who is the CONTESSA course for?

The “Contemporary Teaching Skills for South Asia” project aims at promoting contemporary teaching skills for pre-service and in-service teachers working in primary schools. The following document is specifically adapted for pre-service teachers.

Furthermore, the CONTESSA course is available for anyone interested in staying up-to-date with contemporary teaching skills.

This is the English version of the CONTESSA course. Material is also available in Khmer, Sinhala and Tamil.

What is the structure of the CONTESSA course?

As mentioned before, the CONTESSA course consists of five modules, each worth the equivalent of 3 ECTS. Ideally, the modules are all used together since individual modules refer to other modules, but they are also designed in a way that each one can be used on its own.

Each module contains three thematic focuses and documents are available for each focus. This makes a total of 15 documents available in the CONTESSA course. Each document contains a theoretical introduction to the focus, followed by practice exercises based on the theory. **STEP 1 – THEORY** – is meant as a revision of what has been read in the theoretical introduction. Practice exercises check the comprehension of the text to make sure that the underlying theory has been understood. **STEP 2 – EXPERIENCE** – offers examples of real teachers and how they practically implement the theory explained before in the theoretical introduction. These examples are again connected to practice exercises which are meant to allow for the application of the previously learned theoretical knowledge. **STEP 3 – (SELF-)REFLECTION** – includes reflection questions based on each focus. **STEP 4 – PRACTICE** – is the final STEP where a teaching project is created based on what has been seen before in STEPs 1 and 2.

The practice exercises in STEPs 1 and 2 can be directly completed in this document. STEPs 3 and 4 are part of a separate portfolio document which has to be created by each individual. A template for this portfolio is available as a separate document.

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1 TEACHING COMPREHENSION

To a music lover watching a concert from the audience, it would be easy to believe that a conductor has one of the easiest jobs in the world. There he stands; waving his arms in time with the music, and the orchestra produces glorious sounds, to all appearances quite spontaneously. Hidden from the audience—especially from the musical novice—are the conductor’s abilities to read and interpret all of the parts at once, to play several instruments and understand the capacities of many more, to organize and coordinate the disparate parts, to motivate and communicate with all of the orchestra members. In the same way that conducting looks like hand waving to the uninitiated, teaching looks simple from the perspective of students who see a person talking and listening, handing out papers, and giving assignments. Invisible in both of these performances are the many kinds of knowledge, unseen plans, and backstage moves—the skunk works, if you will, that allow a teacher to purposefully move a group of students from one set of understandings and skills to quite another over the space of many months. (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005, p. 1f.)

The quotation above unfolds the complexities of a teacher’s roles, tasks and functions in producing a final product in a student life. During the lesson, one tends to see and appreciate the outcome forgetting the labor that is spent on producing it. In any outcome, there is unseen labor in the background. Let us look at this often unnoticed work of a teacher by considering the roles, tasks and functions that are embedded in his/her work.

1.1 The Teacher's Roles

It is clear that the **role** of a teacher is influenced by both internal and external factors. On the one hand, expectations come from outside. These are institutional, social or curricula requirements, coming from colleagues, superiors, students or their parents. The government, who imposes the curriculum, has different expectations of a teacher than the students who are being taught by the teacher. The parents' expectations might again differ, as well as the other teachers' expectations from their colleagues. Additionally, there are social expectations or assumptions about what the greater public expects from this role, which always vary according to the cultural and geographical background of the teacher and the school. (Makovec, 2018) And on the other hand, there are the teacher's own expectations of their own role, the self-image of a teacher. These expectations are particularly shaped "by the experience and knowledge they [pre-service teachers] acquire during their education for the teaching profession" (Makovec, 2018, p. 34), "as well as based on their own experience gained through their schooling with different teachers" (Makovec, 2018, p. 35). These expectations naturally change over time with the experience pre-service teachers gain as they become in-service teachers.

Pereira, Lopes, and Margarida (2015) describe "different narratives that characterise the professional work of the teacher" (p. 453):

- The pedagogue centred on the nature of the work that he or she does with the children; with the justifications and value judgments that he or she pronounces on it, with reference to a humanist ethic;
- The specialist highlighting the [...] [competence-oriented] dimension of the teaching task; justifying a [...] [cognitive, affective and psychomotor/sensory] rationale and an ethic of expertise;

Role: A socially expected behavior pattern usually determined by an individual's status in a particular society. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n.d., online)

- The mediator focusing on the mediation between children and the social mandates governing school education, between science and pedagogy, and between the experience of infancy in the world of life and socio-educative action; appealing to an ethic of subjectivity and of service;
- The professional ‘under construction’ referring to the professional researcher; reflective, critical, questioning and self-training; capable of calling his own work into question; guided by a critical and self-transforming ethic;
- The professional at a critical point highlighting the professional challenges involved in working with children and the difficulties of implementing the ideas demanded of him or her; revealing a critical and reflective attitude towards teaching; and a sense of ethical responsibility.

“Traditional role conceptions such as teaching as knowledge transmission or teaching as a craft may well have become obsolete.” (Buchberger 2000, p. 39) Instead, teachers’ roles have to become more dynamic “oriented on a new professionalism in general and pedagogical professionalism in particular” (Buchberger, 2000, p. 39). Teaching as ‘knowledge transmission’ or teaching as a ‘craft’ are teacher-centered approaches to education, where the teacher is viewed as all-knowing figure who conveys a certain set of knowledge that is deemed worthy of being known by everyone in society. Moving away from teacher-centeredness, teachers should not simply transmit their academic knowledge, but they should embed this knowledge in relevant teaching and learning situations. Only if children can relate to what is being taught, learning becomes meaningful and can thus contribute to a holistic education. In order to develop this ‘new professionalism’, teachers have to be open and flexible, and constantly reevaluate their competences. (Buchberger, 2000)

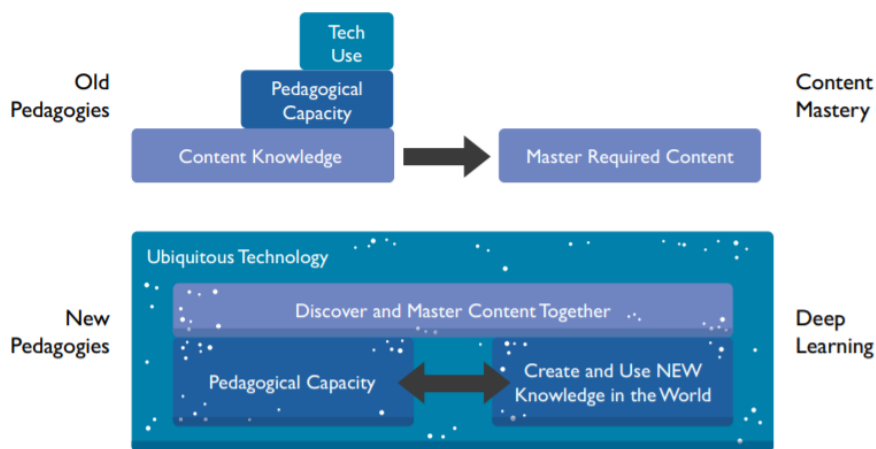


Figure 1: Old Pedagogies vs. New Pedagogies ¹

Here is a list of roles teachers take on, which can be categorized into the above-mentioned narratives:

- **Facilitator.** *You* need to provide appropriate learning opportunities for children and encourage them to freely present ideas and talk about important issues in a constructive manner.
- **Manager.** To be a successful facilitator, *you* must plan well and carefully guide the discussions, giving every child a chance to express their views.
- **Observer.** Observation of the children as they work in a group, in pairs, or alone will help *you* understand the way the children learn and to plan even more specific learning activities. *Thereby you can find out, for example, if an activity that two students do well together can be expanded into a group activity. The usefulness of having the first two students be the group's leaders could also be considered.*
- **Learner.** *You* become [a] learner when *you* reflect on *your* lessons and how well the children have [...] *become active and engaged in the learning process. You* can then develop ways to make what is being learned even more meaningful. For instance, *reflecting on what kind of*

¹ Taken from Fullan & Langworthy (2014, p. 3). CC BY 3.0.

activity was effective in helping children understand a difficult topic or concept and figuring out if this activity could be applied to other topics and concepts.²

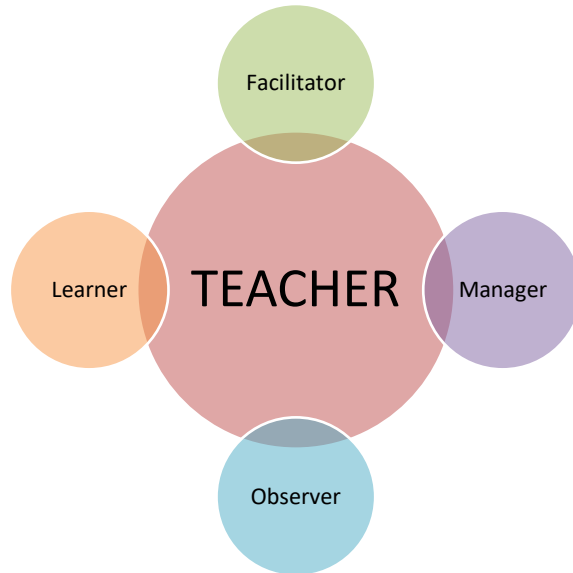


Figure 2: Roles of Teachers

A teacher's own **perception** about the role and the views of the before mentioned stakeholders helps form a notion about the nature of their role. (Makovec, 2018) This variation creates a difficulty in formulating one definition for the role of the teacher. As such, every teacher should be aware of their own perceptions and also about the expectations of the stakeholders when determining the role they have as a teacher. External expectations do not have to be accepted without questioning. They can be discussed, clarified and negotiated in order to successfully navigate their work as an educator.

Perception: A belief or opinion, often held by many people and based on how things seem. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d., online)

² Taken from UNESCO/Booklet Four (2015, p. 52). CC BY-SA 3.0 IGO. Changes made to all CC BY texts in this document are indicated in italics or square brackets.

1.2 Teaching Tasks

As with any occupation, teachers are expected to be competent in their profession. They are therefore supposed to promote their students' learning. However, when children reach schools with widely varying capacities and goals, born from culturally and economically diverse backgrounds, the variables that ease or impair learning are countless. Teachers must also ensure that all students in their classes are successfully trained so that teaching goals are met. Good teachers are also expected to track their students for something that is likely to affect their learning performance. To ensure the effective competence acquisition of all of their students, teachers have to take whatever steps are needed (TTA, 1997). Teachers must therefore have both a comprehensive understanding of the core principles of pedagogy as they relate to successful teaching as well as a good sense of how these principles can be implemented on a daily basis in the classroom to better meet the needs of particular students.

In order to be able to fulfil easily defined consumer standards, many occupations (e.g., carpentry or plumbing) are focused on the acquisition of a specific set of **skills**. For many jobs, acquiring additional skills is optional, depending on the ambitions of the individual. For a competent teacher, however, this is not an option: They should be inspired to learn new skills to further boost the growth of their students' learning progress and their own personal ambitions. Therefore, continual developments in teaching methods and curriculum subject matter to meet the changing needs and demands of society mean that lifelong learning is an integral component of becoming and remaining a professional teacher.

This implies that a skilled teacher does not only have the requisite expertise but has also mastered a range of abilities to foster the students' progress in their care. Even though teachers acquire a basic set of teaching skills throughout their education, qualified teachers still need to constantly

Skill: A particular ability that you develop through training and experience and that is useful in a job. (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d., online)

keep learning and updating their skill set to be able to implement their respective curriculum (Nessipbayeva, 2012). Due to a desire to participate in life-long learning, one's teaching abilities are continuously being strengthened and improved (Johnston, Chater, & Bell, 2007). The pedagogically educated teacher is therefore continuously reflecting on their methods and making educational choices based on a simple concept of how their own students are influenced by theories and practices (Moore, 2014). This consequently means that neither a bag of tricks nor a set of abstract concepts is the key to successful teaching. However, it can be achieved through the teacher's adaption to the reality of their current classroom and their students' individual backgrounds. Active teachers need to participate in quality planning and training, prepare a supportive environment for the classroom, use validated teaching practices and demonstrate professional behavior. This implies that the differences among students need to be taken into account to optimize learning: several variables can affect growth, teaching and learning (Moore, 2014).

The actions mentioned above help to recognize a professional teacher's wide range of skills. More basic skills for successful teaching can be easily identified: for example, the importance of the consistency of the lesson, variety of instruction, orientation of instructor assignments, student participation in the learning process and success rate for students (Borich, 2017). However, during their day-to-day classroom work, even the most comprehensive structures have to be implemented in response to unique situations by the teachers. Perhaps most relevant is the need to plan for teaching classrooms where students with diverse attitudes to the learning process come from different backgrounds.

The following section provides a way of dividing the basic types of teaching skills into five broad categories, all of which are of equal importance:

- Subject Matter Expertise

- General Knowledge-Sharing Skills
- General Classroom-Management Skills
- Individual-Responsive Skills
- Overall Attitude

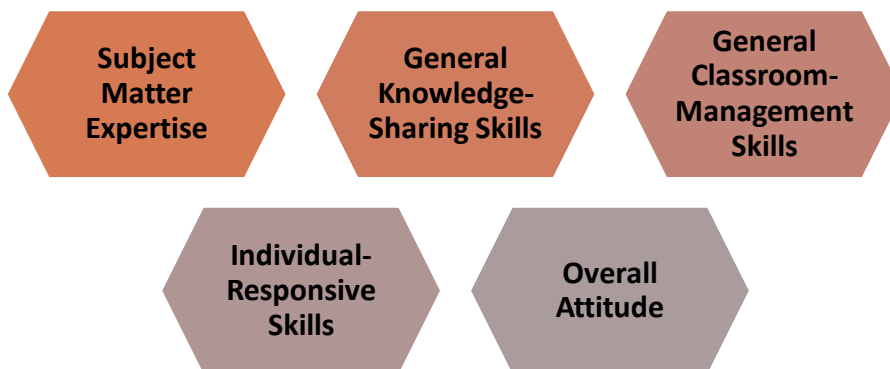


Figure 3: Basic Types of Teaching Skills

These five aspects form the basis of the initial qualification to become an educator. In the following sections, the aforementioned skills will be explained.

1.2.1 SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTISE

When teachers are confident and proficient in their subject matter knowledge, they are able to more easily communicate that knowledge to their students. Subject matter expertise combined with the appropriate knowledge of pedagogy drive effective teaching. However, the acquired teaching skills can be significantly challenged depending on the ever-changing curriculum, classroom or school environment. For example, a teacher may be teaching in a language that is not every student's native language. In order to get their students off to a good start when teaching in a foreign/second language, teachers need to have an appropriate level of skill in that language: Teaching early basic language errors can only

cause uncertainty and frustration when their students begin their studies. In this example, the teacher would need to further their knowledge of that language enough to support their students. Just as students are increasingly gaining new subject knowledge, teachers must also focus on developing theirs.

1.2.2 GENERAL KNOWLEDGE-SHARING SKILLS

General knowledge sharing skills relate to the presentation of the pre-arranged curriculum of the subject to be studied.

Explanatory Skills.

- It is not sufficient to only know and understand the information to be learned. There is a need to transform knowledge in a way that makes it more comprehensible to the students.
- This skill shows the instructor's willingness to illustrate clear points and clarify any misunderstandings that may occur.
- The explanatory skills depend on the management skills of the instructor to ensure that the requisite curriculum is followed in a timely manner.
- The teacher is able to express learning goals as competences necessary for students to develop. The development of these competences is achieved through "student's direct involvement in the studied reality, [and] on the refinement in real contexts of knowledge, skills and learned values" (Tudor, 2015, p. 460).

Planning Skills. In the broadest sense of the program as a whole, a successful teacher should be able to clearly plan the goals for each class. Planning ahead of time gives the teacher a better idea of possible learning arrangements and how the topic will tie in with what was already taught and will be taught in future lessons. Long-term preparation includes holidays and unforeseen occurrences to be addressed.

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Time Management Skills. When creating an overall lesson plan as preparation for a class, it is important to ensure that learning processes are accompanied by pedagogical considerations, sequences are structured and pre-defined time frames are respected. There is little room for recognizing these aspects while being in the process of teaching.

- This involves giving the class a good example by beginning promptly and finishing within the given time frame.
- Monitoring the time is crucial to making sure that the work required from the students is feasible within the given time frame.
- It needs to be emphasized that teachers should schedule their time in a way that allows them to prepare for the next lesson.

1.2.3 GENERAL CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT SKILLS

General classroom management skills provide the framework for the successful implementation of the points covered in the two sections referred to above.

Transparent Framework for Learning Processes.

- To ensure active involvement and engagement on the part of the learners, the teacher has to encourage them to develop their study and work habits.
- It is also important to make the students see the beneficial aspects of learning in order for them to develop or maintain interest in the subject matter.

Good management skills in the classroom start with agreeing on certain ground rules to emphasize the importance of integrity in the classroom.

- Effective educators set a good example.
- They try to treat all their students equally.
- In the classroom they have exemplary behavior and a positive attitude.

Class Engagement Skills. To build a learner-friendly, productive and secure learning atmosphere in classrooms, it is crucial for teachers to develop a good relationship with their students. Teachers should show compassion in their interactions, along with a profound sense of caring and kindness by showing empathy, specifically by listening to problems their students face.

They also need to work on these skills in all the classes being taught, other than the early need to develop and maintain a general relationship with the students.

A learning goal is more likely to be achieved by making the educational content more interesting for the students. This can be done using a broad variety of different techniques such as presenting the topics with visual aids, e.g., videos, or by promoting a discussion.

It is important to note, however, that teachers are unlikely to find a one-size-fits-all strategy as teaching aims to satisfy people who learn by various strategies and unique inputs.

1.2.4 INDIVIDUAL-RESPONSIVE SKILLS

As mentioned before, effective teaching can be complex. Whilst the aim is to teach the class as a whole, the class consists of individuals with different backgrounds, motivations and abilities. This can indicate variations in:

- Socio-economic status and the time and/or access available to services for class participation; and/or
- The students' opinion of the benefit of attending classes.

This means it is necessary for the teacher to track the performance of individual students and to try to assist them as needed. This can be done by:

- Recognizing that individual students have individual needs, which could create barriers to class attendance and/or completion of assignments (see above).
- Encouraging the students to consider the possible long-term benefits to be achieved by actively engaging in class.

Observation Skills. The performance of individual students must be supervised by a professional teacher. They should be aware of potential cognitive, emotional and social challenges and how to prepare for them at a personal level, as well as how to accommodate them in a better way without the risk of losing face in front of the class as a whole.

Strong communication skills with students and parents. A successful teacher needs to be able to make an effective and positive follow-up after having established concerns with individual students. Simple communication skills focused on empathy and compassion are fundamental.

Issues with students should be addressed with the student and if possible, with their parents or guardians in order to try to motivate the students to be more pro-active in planning and attending classes, as well as doing any assignments.

1.2.5 OVERALL ATTITUDE

The following subsection captures many of the points that have been implied in the previous sections and identifies what a good teacher's main attributes should be.

Passion. Even though being enthusiastic about teaching is not exactly a talent or something that can be learned, it is a necessary pre-requisite to being an effective teacher. Passion provides the necessary basis to being receptive to the requirement of lifelong learning and the skill to

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continuously develop one's progress as a trained instructor, which will result in their students' achievements.

Patience and Positivity. As mentioned before, in every class there are students with different talents and skills as well as a variety of socio-economic backgrounds (and therefore contrasting or different demands). This means within the class, there is the need to operate on a case-by-case basis with individuals while ensuring that the program as a whole is implemented without sacrificing the curriculum and individual goals.

This requires not only patience, but also a positive attitude: The goal is to inspire lower-performing students to become more active in regard to themselves and to their schoolwork. The use of disciplinary measures can be avoided by attempting to address the needs of particular students: The latter is not only detrimental for the individuals involved but also more likely to have a negative effect on the environment of the classroom as a whole.

The teacher can also act as a role model for their students by taking care of their colleagues and others.

2 THE SITUATION IN CAMBODIA

The report *Teaching in Cambodia* (Benveniste, Marshall, & Araujo, 2008) points out that “[t]he legacy of the Khmer Rouge period represented a monumental setback to the education sector as the Cambodian teacher cadre suffered enormous casualties” (p. 66). Since then, the number of trained primary school teachers has again increased and the education sector has seen numerous changes. The report highlights how teachers play “a critical role in the learning process and their classroom behavior is an important dimension in a student's educational experience” (Benveniste et al., 2008, p. 71). Teachers are supposed to apply principles



of learning-friendly teaching. However, the Cambodian education system still relies mainly on frontal teaching and rote learning. (Benveniste et al., 2008)

3 THE SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

In Sri Lanka, primary education was made free for all by Dr. C.W.W. Kannagara Reforms in 1944, which consequently saw a leap in the country's literacy rate (Sedere, 2016). The primary curriculum has been changed intermittently since then, with a shift of focus from teacher-centered to student-centered education in the present day. However, the Sri Lankan education system is still heavily examination and academic oriented, focusing primarily on low order thinking skills (i.e., knowledge and understanding – see Bloom's taxonomy ➔) (Sedere, 2016). In the **Three Key Stages**, the curricula consists of three elements which are 'guided play', 'activities' and 'desk work'. They are differently distributed depending on the stage. While the teacher should be able to employ many teaching methods to do more guided play and less desk work in Key Stage 1, Key Stage 3 is more focused on desk work, which should be less guided. (Little, 2000)

In addition to subject specific knowledge, teachers are expected to consolidate morals, instill values, develop tolerance in students and teach them to appreciate other social groups and cultures and find out ways to live in harmony with each other (Little, 2000). Thus, the role, tasks and functions of a primary teacher in Sri Lanka are multi-faceted.

Little (2000) commenting on the nature of primary teachers in Sri Lanka says that “[t]hroughout the learning-teaching process children will be assessed continuously, placing emphasis on informal methods of assessment” (p. 8). A teacher in this sense should provide activities essential in their real life for the students to believe that they are learning



➔ See Module 1, Focus 2 “Lesson Planning and Methodological Skills: Concepts, Tools and Application”

Sri Lankan Primary curriculum is taught in **Three Key Stages**: Key Stage 1 being Grade 1 and 2, Key Stage 2 being Grade 3 and 4 and Key Stage 3 being Grade 5.

something valuable. Understanding the multi-ethnicity in a classroom on the other hand will help the teacher to identify marginalized students, which in turn will help to cater to include them in the community of the class.

4 CONCLUSION

To sum it up, we can say that nowadays a teacher's roles, tasks and functions are multifaceted and complex, as opposed to the traditional role. The complexity of the new role lies in the context connected to both personal and social functions. In order to live up to these a teacher is required to improve personally as well as professionally and be able to cater to varied demands of a variety of students. This means a teacher has to understand their own self and that of each individual student they teach. A primary grade teacher is considered a pedagogue who needs to put in extra effort towards their students. A teacher will therefore have to understand the "connection between professional and pedagogical-psychological skills in the role of the teacher" (Makovec, 2018, p. 35).

5 KEY POINTS

- ✓ A teacher's roles are multifaceted and influenced by both internal and external factors.
- ✓ A successful teacher is one who has sufficient knowledge and understanding of what they are teaching and can pass this on in a pedagogically effective and attractive way to the students in their class.
- ✓ In order to meet the needs and desires of the class as a whole, it is vital to plan lessons ahead that are based on the curriculum.

- ✓ Instead of being a strict disciplinarian, teachers should aspire to rather become team leaders by inspiring their students to achieve their goals for everyone's benefit.
- ✓ To be able to help students achieve their goals, a professional educator must recognize that each student is different in regard to a variety of aspects (e.g., social and cultural background).
- ✓ A professional educator must strive to understand the challenges each of their students face and have educational options and resources available in order to take these challenges into account when supporting their students' learning processes.
- ✓ Not only is it crucial to be professionally equipped for the job of a teacher, but it is also vital to have a positive mindset towards this career and a drive to succeed for the sake of the students.

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STEP 1 PRACTICE EXERCISES



A Indicate if the following statements are true or false:

1. The role of a teacher can only be influenced by external factors. T/F
2. The teacher's role is based on their own views and views of the partners of education (e.g., students, parents, government, society). T/F
3. A teacher can only be influenced by their own expectations. T/F
4. Understanding the needs of stakeholders is not a compulsory requirement for a teacher. T/F
5. Having subject matter knowledge is more important for the success of students than having pedagogical competences. T/F
6. There are many different facets to a teacher's role. T/F
7. Most expectations to the role of a teacher are openly communicated. T/F



B Answer the multiple-choice questions about the text. There can be MULTIPLE correct answers:

1. Choose the most suitable answer about the 21st century teaching competences:
 - a) The teacher demonstrates a model leading role in the classroom.
 - b) Knowledge is not considered an essential competence for teaching in the modern era.
 - c) Self-reflection is a confusing practice for professional development.
2. What kind of individual-responsive skills should teachers have?
 - a) Teachers should be aware of potential cognitive, emotional and social challenges.
 - b) Communication is an important skill for teachers, including empathy and compassion.
 - c) Teachers should focus on the class but also recognize each student as individual.
 - d) The most important skill is to only see the class as a group and not focus on individual students.

- e) Teachers should address issues with students directly with them and if necessary with their parents or guardians.
3. Choose the most suitable answers describing the new role of teachers:
- Subject matter expertise is the most important feature of a teacher.
 - Students only learn successfully if the teacher is always involved in their learning process.
 - Even though our personal lives are shifting rapidly, students' needs have become more homogenous.
 - It is important that teachers recognize that individual students have individual needs.
 - Teachers must improve personally and professionally to meet their students' needs.



C Drag and drop the following principles regarding the roles of teachers into the appropriate category in the chart below. MULTIPLE principles can be assigned to the same category:

Plan well¹ – Self-reflection of own teaching² – Take a step back and have a close look at the students' performances³ – Provide appropriate learning opportunities⁴ – Encourage children to freely present ideas⁵

Facilitator	Manager	Observer	Learner



D Fill in the blanks with suitable words from the box:

Overall Attitude	Subject Matter Expertise	Individual-Responsive Skills
General Classroom-Management Skills	General Knowledge-Sharing Skills	

1. A teacher's _____ combined with the appropriate knowledge of pedagogy drive effective teaching. However, it is important to think of situations when this ability is challenged, for example, when teaching in a language that is not every student's native language.

2. _____ demonstrate the ability to encourage students to develop study and work habits and make them see the beneficial aspects of learning. Agreeing on certain ground rules to emphasize the importance of integrity in the classroom can be achieved through setting a good example as educators, treating all students equally and having exemplary behavior and a positive attitude in the classroom.
3. Part of the _____ of teachers are strong communication skills with students and parents and good observation skills to be aware of potential cognitive, emotional and social challenges and recognizing the individual needs of individual students.
4. The _____ of teachers should include three P's: passion, patience and positivity.
5. Explanatory skills, planning skills and time management skills are part of the _____, allowing the teacher to stick to the pre-arranged curriculum of the subject to be studied.



E Drag and drop the following characteristics describing the roles, tasks and functions of teachers into the appropriate category in the chart below:

Try to understand challenges of students¹ – Strict disciplinarian² – Recognize the heterogeneity of students³ – Put themselves above the level of their students⁴ – Become team leader⁵ – Pedagogical knowledge⁶ – Knowledge regarding their subject⁷ – Not show weakness or make mistakes⁸ – Treat all students equally⁹ – Focused primarily on skills, subject-matter and examination¹⁰ – Patience¹¹

Teacher-Centered Education	21 st Century Pedagogical Professionalism



F Drag and drop the following principles into the appropriate category in the chart below:

Children have to relate to what is being taught in order to learn effectively¹ – Teachers simply transmit their academic knowledge² – Teachers have to be open and flexible³ – Teachers embed their knowledge in relevant teaching and learning situations⁴ – Teacher is viewed as all-knowing figure⁵ – Learning has to become meaningful⁶ – Holistic education⁷

Teacher-Centered Education	21 st Century Pedagogical Professionalism

STEP 1 PRACTICE EXERCISES - SOLUTIONS



A Indicate if the following statements are true or false:

1. The role of a teacher can only be influenced by external factors. T/F (Correct Answer: The role of a teacher is influenced by both internal and external factors.)
2. The teacher's role is based on their own views and views of the partners of education (e.g., students, parents, government, society). T/F
3. A teacher can only be influenced by their own expectations. T/F (Correct Answer: On the one hand, there are the teacher's own expectations of their own role, the self-image of a teacher. And on the other hand, expectations come from outside - institutional, social or curricula requirements coming from colleagues, superiors, students or their parents.)
4. Understanding the needs of stakeholders is not a compulsory requirement for a teacher. T/F (Correct Answer: Every teacher should be aware of their own perceptions and also about the expectations of the stakeholders when determining the role they have as a teacher.)
5. Having subject matter knowledge is more important for the success of students than having pedagogical competences. T/F (Correct Answer: A successful teacher is one who has sufficient knowledge and understanding of what they are teaching AND can pass this on in a pedagogically effective and attractive way to the students in their class.)
6. There are many different facets to a teacher's role. T/F
7. Most expectations to the role of a teacher are openly communicated. T/F (Correct Answer: Expectations are often not openly communicated.)



B Answer the multiple-choice questions about the text. There can be MULTIPLE correct answers:

1. Choose the most suitable answer about the 21st century teaching competences:
 - a) The teacher demonstrates a model leading role in the classroom.
 - b) Knowledge is not considered an essential competence for teaching in the modern era.
 - c) Self-reflection is a confusing practice for professional development.

2. What kind of individual-responsive skills should teachers have?
 - a) Teachers should be aware of potential cognitive, emotional and social challenges.
 - b) Communication is an important skill for teachers, including empathy and compassion.
 - c) Teachers should focus on the class but also recognize each student as individual.
 - d) The most important skill is to only see the class as a group and not focus on individual students.
 - e) Teachers should address issues with students directly with them and if necessary with their parents or guardians.

3. Choose the most suitable answers describing the new role of teachers:
 - a) Subject matter expertise is the most important feature of a teacher.
 - b) Students only learn successfully if the teacher is always involved in their learning process.
 - c) Even though our personal lives are shifting rapidly, students' needs have become more homogenous.
 - d) It is important that teachers recognize that individual students have individual needs.
 - e) Teachers must improve personally and professionally to meet their students' needs.



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Plan well¹ – Self-reflection of own teaching² – Take a step back and have a close look at the students' performances³ – Provide appropriate learning opportunities⁴ – Encourage children to freely present ideas⁵

Facilitator	Manager	Observer	Learner
4, 5	1	3	2



D Fill in the blanks with suitable words from the box:

Overall Attitude	Subject Matter Expertise	Individual-Responsive Skills
General Classroom-Management Skills	General Knowledge-Sharing Skills	

1. A teacher's **Subject Matter Expertise** combined with the appropriate knowledge of pedagogy drive effective teaching. However, it is important to think of situations when this ability is challenged, for example, when teaching in a language that is not every student's native language.
2. **General Classroom-Management Skills** demonstrate the ability to encourage students to develop study and work habits and make them see the beneficial aspects of learning. Agreeing on certain ground rules to emphasize the importance of integrity in the classroom can be achieved through setting a good example as educators, treating all students equally and having exemplary behavior and a positive attitude in the classroom.
3. Part of the **Individual-Responsive Skills** of teachers are strong communication skills with students and parents and good observation skills to be aware of potential cognitive, emotional and social challenges and recognizing the individual needs of individual students.
4. The **Overall Attitude** of teachers should include three P's: passion, patience and positivity.
5. Explanatory skills, planning skills and time management skills are part of the **General Knowledge-Sharing Skills**, allowing the teacher to stick to the pre-arranged curriculum of the subject to be studied.



E Drag and drop the following characteristics describing the roles, tasks and functions of teachers into the appropriate category in the chart below:

Try to understand challenges of students¹ – Strict disciplinarian² – Recognize the heterogeneity of students³ – Put themselves above the level of their students⁴ – Become team leader⁵ – Pedagogical knowledge⁶ – Knowledge regarding their subject⁷ – Not show weakness or make mistakes⁸ – Treat all students equally⁹ – Focused primarily on skills, subject-matter and examination¹⁰ – Patience¹¹

Teacher-Centered Education	21 st Century Pedagogical Professionalism
2	1
4	3
8	5
10	6
	7
	9
	11



F Drag and drop the following principles into the appropriate category in the chart below:

Children have to relate to what is being taught in order to learn effectively¹ – Teachers simply transmit their academic knowledge² – Teachers have to be open and flexible³ – Teachers embed their knowledge in relevant teaching and learning situations⁴ – Teacher is viewed as all-knowing figure⁵ – Learning has to become meaningful⁶ – Holistic education⁷

Teacher-Centered Education	21 st Century Pedagogical Professionalism
2, 5	1, 3, 4, 6, 7

STEP 2 PRACTICE EXERCISES



A Watch the following video regarding Student-Centered Learning (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEfK_ziDSOY&ab_channel=OpenLearning; audio transcription can be found in the appendix of this document) and complete the tasks below:

1. Below you will find a list of different descriptions of learning environments, some of them mentioned in the video above. Circle the ones describing the characteristics of a student-centered learning environment:

Tasks are designed around the students' needs – Teachers are lecturing knowledge to the students – The job of the student is to understand as much as possible – Teacher is the guide at the side of their students – Relationship between teacher and student is important – Students have to listen and learn – Class can take place anywhere – Students learn when teachers instruct them – Teachers create a motivating environment

2. How can you as a teacher make a student-centered learning environment possible? Circle the appropriate words in both categories:

Role, tasks and functions of teacher	Classroom resources and teaching methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creative - Open - Teacher as facilitator - Teacher as formal authority - Focus on a single discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible - Collaborative and supportive learning - Giving students the correct answers - Passive recipients of knowledge - Keeping students in their own seats



B Look at the pictures and complete the tasks below:



Picture Source: Zonal Education Office

1. How would you describe the teaching environment in the two pictures? Drag and drop the words into the appropriate category below:

Traditional teaching environment¹ – Interactive learning² – Frontal teaching³ – Teacher as main character⁴ – Teacher as all knowing figure⁵ – Static learning⁶ – Creative⁷ – Passive reception⁸ – Student centered⁹

Picture A	Picture B

2. Which picture most likely describes a teacher-centered education and which represents a student-centered education?

Picture A:

Picture B:



C Read the following description of two learning environments and complete the tasks below:

Classroom A:

The curriculum states that students should learn about the different trees and leaves. Mrs. Kamari asks the children to go outside and collect different leaves. Afterwards, the children have to look up the leaves they found in a textbook about trees and present their findings to the class.

Classroom B:

The curriculum states that students should learn about the different trees and leaves. For this, Mrs. Kumari has borrowed a textbook about trees from the library from which she draws leaves on the board and writes the important facts about the trees next to it. The children copy the texts and can ask questions about them.

1. Decide which description represents the traditional and which one the modern role, tasks and functions of a primary teacher.

a) Traditional teaching environment:

b) 21st century teaching environment:

2. Fill in the table below with the characteristics of primary teachers mentioned in the texts:

Children learn independently with guidance¹ – Frontal teaching² – Teacher as all knowing figure³ – Teacher as guide in the self-learning process⁴ – Children copy off the blackboard⁵ – Openness of teacher to new methods⁶

	Traditional	21st Century
Role, tasks and functions of primary teachers	<i>Examples:</i>	<i>Examples:</i>



D Design your own teaching environment:

Imagine that you are a primary teacher with the task to teach your students about different trees and leaves. You decide to give the students a paper with different kinds of tree descriptions. Then you ask them to go outside and find a leaf for every tree written on the sheet.

Think of your own role as a teacher using this method, what are your tasks and functions? Circle the appropriate role, tasks and functions of primary teachers from the list below:

Observing learning – Being open to different solutions – Making sure that the students find a solution to your task exactly how you intended it to be – Being available for students to ask questions – Doing the work for the students if they don't work fast enough



E Watch these two teachers talk about effective teachers. (Video File 2.1.1 – Teacher A + 2.1.2 – Teacher B; audio transcriptions can be found in the appendix of this document).

Answer the following multiple-choice questions. There can be MULTIPLE correct answers:

1. What kind of qualities of an effective teacher does teacher A mention?
 - a) A person with extensive knowledge
 - b) A person with higher education pedagogical psychology training
 - c) A person who has the skill to transfer knowledge
 - d) Someone who is always prepared before class (e.g., lesson plan)
 - e) A person who is flexible
 - f) A person who has good communication skills

2. What kind of qualities of an effective teacher does teacher B mention?
 - a) A person with extensive knowledge
 - b) A person with higher education pedagogical psychology training
 - c) A person who has the skill to transfer knowledge
 - d) Someone who is always prepared before class (e.g., lesson plan)
 - e) A person who is flexible
 - f) A person who has good communication skills with students, parents, and co-workers



F Watch this student talk about her teacher. (Video File 2.1.3; audio transcriptions can be found in the appendix of this document). Answer the following multiple-choice questions. There can be MULTIPLE correct answers:

1. What kind of effective teaching qualities in her teacher does the student mention?
 - a) She has higher education
 - b) She is always prepared before class
 - c) She is flexible
 - d) She provides the class with useful knowledge and practice opportunities
 - e) She is skilled in transferring knowledge

References

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEfK_ziDSOY&ab_channel=OpenLearning [2021, Mar. 03]. This publication is available in Open Access under the Attribution 3.0 Unported (CC BY 3.0) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/legalcode>).

Zonal Education Office. (2020). Ambalangoda, Sri Lanka.

STEP 2 PRACTICE EXERCISES - SOLUTIONS



A Watch the following video regarding Student-Centered Learning (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEfK_ziDSOY&ab_channel=OpenLearning; audio transcription can be found in the appendix of this document) and complete the tasks below:

1. Below you will find a list of different descriptions of learning environments, some of them mentioned in the video above. Choose the ones describing the characteristics of a student-centered learning environment:

Tasks are designed around the students' needs – Teachers are lecturing knowledge to the students – The job of the student is to understand as much as possible – Teacher is the guide at the side of their students – Relationship between teacher and student is important – Students have to listen and learn – Class can take place anywhere – Students learn when teachers instruct them – Teachers creating a motivating environment

2. How can you as a teacher make a student-centered learning environment possible? Choose the appropriate words in both categories:

Role, tasks and functions of teacher	Classroom resources and teaching methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creative - Open - Teacher as facilitator - Teacher as formal authority - Focus on a single discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible - Collaborative and supportive learning - Giving students the correct answers - Passive recipients of knowledge - Keeping students in their own seats



B Look at the pictures and complete the tasks below:



Picture Source: Zonal Education Office

1. How would you describe the teaching environment in the two pictures? Drag and drop the words into the appropriate category below:

Traditional teaching environment¹ – Interactive learning² – Frontal teaching³ – Teacher as main character⁴ – Teacher as all knowing figure⁵ – Static learning⁶ – Creative⁷ – Passive reception⁸ – Student centered⁹

Picture A	Picture B
1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8	2, 7, 9

2. Which picture most likely describes a teacher-centered education and which represents a student-centered education?

Picture A: **teacher-centered education**

Picture B: **learner-centered education**



C Read the following description of two learning environments and complete the tasks below:

Classroom A:

The curriculum states that students should learn about the different trees and leaves. Mrs. Kamari asks the children to go outside and collect different leaves. Afterwards, the children have to look up the leaves they found in a textbook about trees and present their findings to the class.

Classroom B:

The curriculum states that students should learn about the different trees and leaves. For this, Mrs. Kumari has borrowed a textbook about trees from the library from which she draws leaves on the board and writes the important facts about the trees next to it. The children copy the texts and can ask questions about them.

1. Decide which description represents the traditional and which one the modern role, tasks and functions of a primary teacher:

- a) Traditional teaching environment: **Classroom B**
- b) 21st Century teaching environment: **Classroom A**

2. Fill in the table below with the characteristics of primary teachers mentioned in the texts.

Children learn independently with guidance¹ – Frontal teaching² – Teacher as all knowing figure³ – Teacher as guide in the self-learning process⁴ – Children copy off the blackboard⁵ – Openness of teacher to new methods⁶

	Traditional	21st Century
Role, tasks and functions of primary teachers	<i>Examples:</i> 2, 3, 5	<i>Examples:</i> 1, 4, 6



D Design your own teaching environment:

Imagine that you are a primary teacher with the task to teach your students about different trees and leaves. You decide to give the students a paper with different kinds of tree descriptions. Then you ask them to go outside and find a leaf for every tree written on the sheet.

Think of your own role as a teacher using this method, what are your tasks and functions? Choose the appropriate role, tasks and functions of primary teachers from the list below:

Observing learning – **Being open to different solutions** – Making sure that the students find a solution to your task exactly how you intended it to be – **Being available for students to ask questions** – Doing the work for the students if they don't work fast enough



E Watch these two teachers talk about effective teachers. (Video File 2.1.1 – Teacher A + 2.1.2 – Teacher B; audio transcriptions can be found in the appendix of this document). Answer the following multiple-choice questions. There can be MULTIPLE correct answers:

1. What kind of qualities of an effective teacher does teacher A mention?

- a) A person with extensive knowledge
- b) A person with higher education pedagogical psychology training
- c) A person who has the skill to transfer knowledge
- d) Someone who is always prepared before class (e.g., lesson plan)
- e) A person who is flexible
- f) A person who has good communication skills

2. What kind of qualities of an effective teacher does teacher B mention?

- a) A person with extensive knowledge
- b) A person with higher education pedagogical psychology training
- c) A person who has the skill to transfer knowledge
- d) Someone who is always prepared before class (e.g., lesson plan)
- e) A person who is flexible
- f) A person who has good communication skills with students, parents, and co-workers



F Watch this student talk about her teacher. (Video File 2.1.3; audio transcriptions can be found in the appendix of this document). Answer the following multiple-choice questions. There can be MULTIPLE correct answers:

1. What kind of effective teaching qualities in her teacher does the student mention?

- a) She has higher education
- b) She is always prepared before class
- c) She is flexible
- d) She provides the class with useful knowledge and practice opportunities
- e) She is skilled in transferring knowledge

STEP 3 PORTFOLIO TASK – SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS



Write essay answers to each of the following self-reflection questions. Each essay answer should be approximately 300-500 words long and answered in a coherent text with full sentences. THESE ESSAY ANSWERS GO INTO YOUR PERSONAL PORTFOLIO!

1. How would you describe your future role as a teacher?
2. How would you compare and contrast modern with traditional roles, tasks and functions of a primary teacher?

STEP 4 PORTFOLIO TASK – TEACHING PROJECT



Create your own personal teaching project. Describe the different roles you as a teacher will have to take on to teach the lesson chosen for your teaching project successfully. This portfolio task should be approximately 800-1000 words long. THE TEACHING PROJECT GOES INTO YOUR PERSONAL PORTFOLIO!

APPENDIX

Transcript: Video

Presenter: As we've seen many students want to be empowered in their own learning, but as teachers and educators how can we focus on the student experience while ensuring learning happens effectively? Traditionally the teacher's role has been that of the content expert who delivers the information for students to learn. If we're empowering students to learn for themselves, does that mean the teacher is no longer relevant or needed at all or is there some way that we can have both? I spoke with a range of educators to find out how they view student-centered learning and what kind of shift in mindset is needed for teachers to fully embrace it.

Prof. Dr. Mushtak Al-Atabi: The world is the student-centered classroom.

Richard Buckland: The learning experiences and the way the class of the activities go are designed around the point of view of the student to achieve things for the student rather than being designed around the point of view of the teacher, being convenient for the teacher or the institution or mass production or any things like that.

Prof. Dr. Mushtak Al-Atabi: It's in a way going back to the origin of how we learn. So if we think of how we learned how to walk, how we learned how to talk.

David Collien: The way that I had been taught was that teachers were describing or lecturing or sort of disseminating knowledge to me and they were centering themselves, centering the course structures, resources, readings, texts etc. as an authority. That was the way that the course was to be then pushed to you and it was your job as a student to understand as much of what was coming at you as possible.

Prof. Dr. Mushtak Al-Atabi: So the question is for you as a teacher is: you've taught have they learned?

Prof. Dato Dr. Mohamed Amin Ebi: The role of the teacher should now shift from the 'sage on the stage' to 'the guide by the side'. I think teachers are no more the sole providers of knowledge.

Prof. Dr. Mushtak Al-Atabi: It differs in a number of ways. So, it differs in its technique and it differs and its objectives.

Richard Buckland: It's really when there's a relationship between the teacher and the learner, when they are on a more equal footing; there's not all this "shut up and listen" but there's to and fro and when you don't get something as a student you can ask a question and you can control the flow; you can affect, things can move in directions you are interested in, and when inquiries pop up, the class can address those queries.

Prof. Dato Dr. Mohamed Amin Ebi: But I think the role now is more to motivate learning, to guide the learner and the key word now is to facilitate. Now what can we do to facilitate a meaningful learning experience?

Prof. Dr. Mushtak Al-Atabi: So, a good teacher could actually design a learning experience in a classroom, in a bathroom, in a bedroom, in a boardroom, at the supermarket, at the school, at home. So, it's about how do we engineer the learning to take place?

David Collien: I think there's a whole bunch of skills that really help you to be a fantastic teacher in a student-centered environment. One of those skills is being familiar and having a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Prof. Dato Dr. Mohamed Amin Ebi: Good teachers are those who ask or force the correct questions.

2.1 TEACHING COMPREHENSION: ROLES, TASKS AND FUNCTIONS

Richard Buckland: People learn not when you say things at them, when you teach at them; people learn when they undergo transformation because they're learning, it's a change in them. So we really need to think about them in their environment on their mental state.

David Collien: And it's creating a wonderful environment, an encouraging environment, a motivating environment. That's what a student-centered learning experience is all about.

Presenter: So, we can see student-centered learning really is a powerful tool for deep learning. It's a different way of conceiving the relationship between teacher and student and can lead to amazing transformative learning experiences. These are the kinds of experiences we want to create for our students and empowering them is a critical first step.

Transcript: Video File 2.1.1

Teacher A: Hello! My name is Phorn Sopoun. I am a primary school teacher at a private school in Phnom Penh. Today I would like to share some qualities related to effective teachers. What are the qualities of an effective teacher? It is a person with extensive knowledge; a person who has undergone higher education pedagogical psychology training. Good teachers are always ready before class: they have a lesson plan, teaching material and techniques prepared. Effective teachers have the skill to transfer knowledge to students. A person who is flexible in any circumstance. It is a person who has good communication skills with students, parents and co-workers.

Transcript: Video File 2.1.2

Interviewer: Hello sister. I'm Dalin, I'm from the College of Education at the University of Cambodia. Today I would like you to share some technique and share some type of how to teach effectively. So first please introduce yourself.

Teacher B: Hello everyone. My name is Kanika. I am a primary teacher at a private school in Phnom Penh.

Interviewer: Yes, thank you. So now to our question. So, I want you to share some technique and some type that made you become an effective teacher.

Teacher B: I have three points, the first one focuses on extensive knowledge, and the second point talks about pedagogical psychology training and the last one talks about higher education. Now to the first one, extensive knowledge. As a teacher you must have this extensive knowledge and appropriate skill to address or share to the students. An effective teacher who is a person, for example, under the circumstances, a person who can communicate with students, students' parents and co-workers. They practice to become a better teacher through learning from experience. And a nice point talks about psychology training. Psychology training as an effective teacher who has pedagogical psychology is always ready before class, with lesson plan, teaching materials and good techniques. A teacher who has pedagogical psychology training always has psychology techniques to help the students. For example, how do teachers prepare a technique before class? Actually, there are many techniques. For the teacher it is easy and they know before their teachings or before their class. It depends on the tutor themselves and the students in a class also. And the last point is also about higher education. The teacher who got higher education always knows well with their students, for example what kind of students are there. There are so many students, like fun learner and silent learners. So, the teacher needs to know about individual students we have here. Then find appropriate techniques for students to make it easy for them to understand. For methodology, the teacher can choose from many easy and good methods. For me, I choose the observation method. This means that I let students observe the speaker or lesson and then describe it. And one more thing, I can know the student they say what they see and what they think. I use this

to encourage critical thinking. It can make it easy for the student to remember it and it is also the method appropriate for the lesson.

Interviewer: Thank you so much, sister, for your time and I wish you good luck. Thank you and goodbye.

Teacher B: Thank you. Goodbye. Good luck.

Transcript: Video File 2.1.3

Interviewer: Hello sister, please introduce yourself.

Student: Hello. My name is Young Chanthidaa. I study in Grade 5 at Sovannaphumi School.

Interviewer: What is your teacher's attitude?

Student: My teacher shows good behavior: she is honest and has a high education.

Interviewer: Does your teacher prepare lesson plans?

Student: My teacher is always well prepared before class.

Interviewer: What do you think about her teaching?

Student: Her teaching is very good because she always makes things easy. She teaches us how to live in society. She provides us with useful knowledge and practice opportunities. She is skilled in transferring knowledge to us students.

Successful educators not only need to be knowledgeable on the subject matter, but they must also continually develop their teaching skills. In this module, you will explore the various pedagogical roles, tasks and functions of a teacher. One central task is assessing learning results which will be treated analytically and reflexively. Additionally, there will be a focus on the teacher's pedagogical professionalization and the value of not only knowing a subject but also understanding how the information needs to be delivered so that students learn effectively.



Enjoy!

