MODULE 2
EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING: PROFESSION-SPECIFIC COMPETENCES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

2.3 PEDAGOGICAL PROFESSIONALIZATION

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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 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 PEDAGOGICAL PROFESSIONALIZATION

Professionalization or to be more exact professionalize, the process that leads to professionalization, means to turn an activity into a job, for which a specific kind of education or training is necessary. It also requires a certain set of skills and relevant knowledge (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n.d.). Another characteristic of professionalization is the focus on "mental abilities" as opposed to "physical labour" (Yusuf, Afolabi, & Oyetayo, 2014, p. 109).

> A profession is an occupation or vocation that requires skills, knowledge of some department of learning and qualification to especially one with high social status. It is a job that requires special skills or knowledge through special training with a high level of education; it is a job that utilizes functional education and mental ability rather than manual or physical labour. (Yusuf et al., 2014, p. 109)

Another characteristic would be "a continuum representing the way members of an occupation share a practice in exercising that knowledge on behalf of clients" (Robards, 2008, p. 18). The process of professionalization is the process in which a job is transformed into a profession. It is a sociological process that increases a vocation's social status and raises its perception in society. (Yusuf et al., 2014) In order to consider teaching a 'professionalized' profession, it would need to encompass all the aforementioned characteristics. This is why Robards (2008) chooses the term 'semi profession' instead. Most professions that have gone through the process of professionalization are easier defined as they include only one discipline, and sometimes other closely related disciplines might be part of the main discipline. The teaching profession, however, is an interdisciplinary profession. This means it is not simply defined by the knowledge or skills in one specific field. Moreover, it is differently perceived depending on the school level, school reputation, the subject taught and the respective teacher's qualifications. (Salmhofer, 2020) Part of the professionalization process is skillful professionalism (cf. effective

teaching). Regarding this aspect it should be noted that professionalism – especially in teaching – always relies on the context and situation in which the profession is being practiced. This implies that the state of professionalism is fragile as it needs to be created and maintained through communication. This maintenance requires reflective practices by the teacher (Salmhofer, 2020). In conclusion the main concept of professionalization is to have the knowledge, the skills, the ability to convey and justify this information to others (Stolz & Bücker, 2018).

1.1 Process of Pedagogical Professionalization

As previously explained, professionalization is an ongoing process, but what makes the process of professionalization in teaching differ from other professionalization processes is the ongoing change of how it is defined and perceived. Due to the lack of an exact definition of teaching, the professionalization process becomes more difficult (Salmhofer, 2020). It seems to be quite difficult to define or promote professionalization of the teaching job even though it is "often described as the mother of all professions" (McDonald, 1956, p. 8). According to this view, any kind of profession is basically the result of teaching since nurses, doctors, lawyers, engineers etc. have to be schooled in order to be able to work in their profession (Nwosu, 2017).

The educational landscape is continuously changing and these developments have also increased the demand of professional teachers and thereby influenced the professionalization process. (Salmhofer, 2020) The teacher's continuing education becomes essential to be able to exercise their profession effectively. In order to achieve that result, a process of institutionalization is required; a process that paves the way for a person-related service profession such as teaching to be considered professionalized. (Salmhofer, 2020) However, the institutionalization process of teaching itself has prerequisites such as the institutionalization of the respective disciplines as well as

professionalized service and the de-culturalization of the profession's scientific aspects (Reinmann, 2017).

1.2 Importance of Pedagogical Professionalization

The main reason why the pedagogical professionalization process is so important is because it ensures a constant improvement of the teacher's skills and performance. Improving and learning constantly means that the educator has the tools to provide a successful learning experience to their students and knows how to use these tools. (Reinmann, 2017) The idea of professional development in the teaching context is that teachers keep actively learning. To make sure these programs are successful, the following points need to be considered:

- When trained teachers study, they do so with their previous learning experience.
- The older the students, the more they differentiate form each other and have individual needs and interests.
- Adults need to be able to self-direct their learning.
- It is essential for adults to have the option to choose what they learn according to their interests or their students' needs.
- Reflective practice is an imperative.

(Trotter, 2006, p. 11f.)

The professionalization process is impacted by the teacher-student relationship and the different role a teacher may occupy depending on the country, social status of the school, students' ages etc. This also implies that the role of a teacher is difficult to define. These aspects have to be put into consideration in teacher training. This means that not only is professionalization an ongoing process but also the education or training process of a teacher is an ongoing one (Robards, 2008). Aspects that might be standing in the way of further promoting the professionalization process in the pedagogical field might be:

- Materials that are not suitable
- Inadequate or conflicting curricula

- Insufficient communication about effective instruction
- Insufficiently planned lessons (e.g., new approaches)
- Lack of basic teaching knowledge

(Darling-Hammond et al., 2017, p. 24)

The above-mentioned aspects emphasize the importance of the teaching profession and its professionalization. It is crucial for the teaching profession and needs to be done on three different levels:

- Learning Environment
- Lesson/Course Planning
- Organization

(Salmhofer, 2020, p. 62).

Studies have shown that in order to provide a successful learning experience, professionalized learning is imperative in combination with a 'model curriculum' as well as suitable materials. Students who are missing one of these components have less fruitful learning experiences compared to those who are offered all components (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). To sum up the significance and role of pedagogical professionalization and professional development: It cannot be part of the solution or the improvement of the teaching profession's current state unless it stops being part of the problem (Tooley & Connaly, 2016).

2   BEING AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER

As in any other profession, people aim to get the best results under their given circumstances. Teachers should also aim for the most effective way of teaching, meaning to make the session as useful as possible for their students. This chapter elaborates on what effective teaching is as well as presenting effective teaching methods (Stronge, 2018).

The idea of effectiveness is difficult to clearly define in the teaching context. It depends on what is considered successful in the classroom. Some research

puts the focus on the students' academic performance, other research concentrates more on students' feedback, or the reactions of administrators. Even though there might not be a clear definition of effective teaching, it is a major factor in assessing a teacher's performance. The difficulty of describing a 'good teacher' or 'effective teacher' also lies in the numerous different roles a teacher may have inside and outside the classroom. (Stronge, 2018) A teacher's role is multi-facetted as they have to teach, manage, motivate, administrate, advise etc. (Yusuf et al., 2014).

"As a teacher's influence is far reaching, it is challenging to define what outcomes might demonstrate effectiveness and how those outcomes should be measured." (Stronge, 2018, p. 4) However, the result of effective teaching is certain: It has a long lasting, positive impact on the students' lives. Studies have shown that students that have been taught by effective teachers are more likely to attend university or be economically more stable compared to those that have not been taught by effective teachers. (Stronge, 2018)

Another significant question to ask when it comes to the effectiveness of teaching is whether a teacher's methods are effective for all of their students or just a few. A study focusing on this aspect has been conducted and the results show that a teacher who is able to help students perform well academically, can do so, regardless of the student's native language. (Loeb, Soland, & Fox, 2014) In this context it is important to note that there are students who are 'at risk'.

A high-risk student is: "Any child who is unlikely to graduate, on schedule, with both skills and self-esteem necessary to exercise meaningful options in the areas of work, leisure, culture, civic affairs and inter/intra personal relationships." (Cox & Sagor, 2013, p. 1) These are also the students who are very likely to struggle with instructions as well as adequate behavior in the classroom. Some students are considered to be or become high-risk due to their financial, societal or ethnic backgrounds. These students are also referred to as 'defeated and discouraged learners'. Even though there are high-risk as well as highly motivated students, the teacher's goal should remain to effectively teach

every student in their class. (Cox & Sagor, 2013) Ronald Edmonds, a pedagogue who paved the way to effective schooling, explains that it is possible – regardless of the student's background – to teach and school each student effectively as it ultimately lies in the educator's hand to do so: "We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us [.]" (Edmonds, 1979, p. 23)

On the other end of the spectrum there are 'high-ability' students. Researchers have yet to agree on a specific description of 'high-ability' students, but they have agreed on two different kinds of students in the high-ability category: 'gifted' as well as high-achieving students. Generally, the following attributes are associated with high-ability students:

- Psychomotor abilities
- Visual/art performing abilities
- Creative/productive thinking
- Leadership skills
- Intellectual skills

(Stronge, 2018, p. 9)

Teachers have a great impact on their students. For both gifted as well as high risk students, it is crucial to be taught by an effective teacher in order to support them and teach them in a useful way. Studies have shown that often talented students are not sufficiently encouraged or supported. (Stronge, 2018)

In order to teach effectively, the following components are crucial: Professional Knowledge, Instructional Planning, Instructional Delivery, Assessment, Learning Environment, Professionalism (Stronge, 2018).

Figure 1: Qualities of Effective Teaching[1]

2.1 Professional Knowledge

'Professional Knowledge' or 'competence' is "a set of cognition, orientation and skills that a teacher can achieve in the process of education to promote the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development of students. These competencies fall into three areas: cognitive, emotional, and skillful." (Moghtadaie & Taji, 2018, p. 565)

Professional knowledge refers to the educator's understanding of the subject content, their students' needs as well as of the curriculum. It also implies that the teacher is aware of cultural and social differences within the classroom. A teacher's professional knowledge further includes an understanding of children's development and learning abilities. To be able to teach effectively, it is also important to have undergone school education and training in order to be able to manage a class. Having the accurate education will be helpful when figuring out different teaching strategies as well as to understand and meet each student's needs. (Stronge, 2018)

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[1] Adapted from Stronge (2018, p. 12).

There are four components to professional knowledge:

- Knowledge
- Verbal ability
- Preparation & certification
- Experience

2.1.1 KNOWLEDGE

There are three different types of knowledge that are relevant to effective teaching (Mehta & Doctor, 2013):

- Content Knowledge is knowledge of the subject matter. It is crucial for a teacher to have a thorough understanding of the subject matter as this will help them to convey the content and explain it in an understandable manner. This implies that a teacher needs to be able to offer their students different explanations for the same content. (Childs & McNicholls, 2007)
- Pedagogical Knowledge is the general knowledge about teaching. A teacher's knowledge about teaching itself is vital for a fruitful learning experience for their students. This knowledge and competence includes their own professional beliefs as well as their motivation to teach. These have a heavy impact on the way the teacher instructs and subsequently on the academic outcome. (Stronge, 2018)
- Pedagogical Content Knowledge is the knowledge about how people learn and how this process takes place. This kind of knowledge is important in order to choose the suitable teaching approach in the respective situation depending on the students and the content that is being taught. (Mehta & Doctor, 2013)

The teacher needs to have in-depth knowledge about the subject matter in order to be able to explain a concept. To be able to do so they need to know the scientific background of teaching and they need to be able to offer different kinds of explanations to make sure they reach all their students. "[I]f the pupils don't understand once I've given my one and only explanation, then I'm stuck, as I don't have another way of explaining." (Childs & McNicholls, 2007, p.

1632) The message students receive from an effective teacher should be: "I can explain in a variety of ways, and when you are confused, I will help you understand." (Ferguson, 2016, p. 9)

For example, a teacher with strong math pedagogical content knowledge will know the kind of errors that students are likely to make when they first encounter fractions and thus what explanations, questions, or exercises are likely to help students understand the concept (Mehta & Doctor, 2013). A lack of content knowledge in the educator can have a significant negative impact on the student's achievements. Developing countries especially suffer from this phenomenon. (Piopiunik, Bietenbeck, & Wiederhold, 2016) To counteract these negative outcomes, most developing countries tend to use additional learning materials. However, according to numerous studies, this method has not improved the average student performance. Piopiunik et al.'s study (2016) showed that even though more resources would not solve the problem, it is part of the solution, however it requires a simultaneous improvement of the teacher's content knowledge. To ensure that their way of explaining is understood, teachers need to constantly make sure the students have understood. This can be done by questioning, quizzes, monitoring their work etc. Furthermore, the teacher needs to clarify misunderstandings and address them in a useful and comprehensible manner (Ferguson, 2016).

2.1.2 VERBAL ABILITY

Verbal abilities are closely linked to communication skills, which are essential for teaching in general. Studies have shown that students of teachers with higher verbal skills are more likely to perform better academically. Being able to speak and communicate clearly is a prerequisite for an effective teacher. (Stronge, 2018)

2.1.3 PREPARATION AND CERTIFICATION

Teacher education usually consists of a university education. Traditionally, the degree focuses on instruction techniques, assessment methods, child

development and material that is related to the content that will be taught. After completing the courses, preservice teachers have to gain teaching experience to finally become certified teachers. However, it has to be noted that according to research, current teacher preparation programs' efficiency has been closely investigated. This roots in the variation of effectiveness in teachers and the fact that the gap between the individual teacher's effectiveness is bigger than the varieties between the different teacher education programs (Stronge, 2018).

There are alternative ways of teacher preparation which allow the teacher to start participating and gaining teaching experience earlier compared to traditionally trained teachers. Their course work consists of a 5–7-week time period. This alternative preparation style is becoming more popular; however, the question of its effectiveness remains unclear – especially compared to the traditional way of teacher education (Boyd et al., 2012).

2.1.4   EXPERIENCE

The teacher's experience is crucial to their students' achievements. The more experience a teacher has, the more methods and techniques they have acquired to transmit their knowledge and convey the content of the subject matter. The most beneficial teacher for a student is an experienced and effective teacher. A teacher's experience has an even more noticeable impact on their lesson planning, their classroom management as well as their questioning style. (Stronge 2018) In order to work on the professionalization process of the teaching profession and the teacher development, working on different levels is required. The teacher needs to be aware of three components when teaching. The first one is their professional identity which consists of

- epistemic ability;
- attitude ability; and
- skill ability.

The second one is their self-development, which consists of improving their

- attitude;
- skill; and

- behavior.

The third component is <u>competences</u> an effective teacher needs to have in the following areas:

- Pedagogy
- Technology
- Research
- Social-emotional matters
- Moral support

(Moghtadaie & Taji, 2018, p. 566)

The following table shows the dimensions and components of teachers' professional competences:

Table 1: Teachers' Professional Competences[2]

Components	Subcomponents
Knowledge	- Professional knowledge - Knowledge of curriculum and educational content - Teaching strategies and skills - Measurement and evaluation - Planning, implementation and monitoring of teaching - Use of materials and technologies of teaching
Skill	- Managing students and groups - Supervising, adopting and evaluating of teaching strategies and processes - Collection, analysis, and interpretation of documents and data - Efficiency sense - Critical attitude to own teaching - Reflective Teaching
Attitude	- Desire to promote students' democratic attitudes and activities - Commitment to promoting and enhancing learning of all students - Desire for change - Flexibility - Professional development - Collaboration with parents

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[2] Adapted from Moghtadaie & Taji (2018, p. 566).

	• Positive thinking • Desire for teamwork, cooperation
Ability	• Negotiating skills (with students and parents) • Cognitive and metacognitive abilities
Personality Characteristics I	**Subjective:** • Critical/analytical thinking • Active learning ability • Mental resilience • Maturity • Judgment ability • Creativity • Intelligence • Open mind
Personality Characteristics II	**Individual:** • Honesty • Integrity • Confidence • Morale • Self-control • Patience

2.2   Instructional Planning

Instructional planning is the process of the preparation of activities during a lesson and how the session is structured to meet the students' needs. The sources used to engage in this process are the school's curriculum as well as the state's standards (Stronge, 2018).

See also Module 1, Focus 2 "Lesson Planning and Methodological Skills"

2.3   Instructional Delivery

One of the most relevant aspects in effective teaching is the amount and variety of teaching and instruction delivery techniques a teacher is able to offer. The idea behind today's education is to promote critical thinking among students. Furthermore, it requires a teacher to be able to deliver this information in an understandable and comprehensible manner (Ku, Ho, Hau, & Lai, 2014).

See also Module 1, Focus 2 "Lesson Planning and Methodological Skills"

2.4   Assessment

The term 'assessment' is used in the context of teaching referring to a process in which teachers collect and analyze data, and thereby monitor the students' academic development and achievements so they are able to provide feedback to students as well as their parents (Stronge, 2018).

See also Module 2, Focus 2 "Assessing Learning Results"

2.5   Learning Environment

"Learning environment refers to a teacher's abilities in governing the conditions, circumstances, and influences in the classroom that surround and affect the development and performance of students." (Stronge, 2018, p. 179)

See also Module 1, Focus 3 "Designing Learning Environments"

2.6   Professionalism

Caring is an essential part of the teaching and learning experience. Caring about students' general well-being as well as their academic success promotes a connection between teacher and student. Students who feel that their teacher cares about them are more committed to their schoolwork. Caring - just like effectiveness - is quite difficult to define, but 'caring' definitely implies honesty, trust, courage and patience (cf. table 1). Teachers who are perceived as highly effective by their students are often described as caring, motivating or encouraging. If students feel encouraged by their teacher, they are more likely to engage in class and are thereby more likely to improve their overall academic performance (Stronge, 2018). Care is part of the personal support an effective teacher offers to their students. The teacher can show they care about their students by building relationships and addressing their learning needs. In this context, it is crucial to comprehensibly convey this idea to the students so they know that their teacher cares about them. This can be achieved by respecting the students' opinions, encouraging discussions and asking for students' input (Ferguson, 2016).

Fairness and Respect also play an essential role whenever two parties interact. Students consider care, fairness and respect to be key characteristics of an effective teacher. It is important to mention in this context that these elements

are crucial to the teaching process regardless of the school level. (Watson, Miller, Davis, & Carter, 2010) Effective teachers treat their students with respect and make sure they do not feel patronized. Students further appreciate and learn more successfully when the teacher keeps treating them respectfully despite their errors and makes sure they do not find themselves in an embarrassing situation in front of their colleagues because of their errors. Not only should the teacher not humiliate the student, but they should also praise them for achievements. And lastly, the effective teacher is aware of different ethnicities and cultures as well as nationalities in their classroom but does not allow this to interfere with their work or make these students feel or become ostracized. (Stronge, 2018)

Interactions with students are not just the academic conversations that take place between student and teacher. These interactions are social interactions that are significant to the student-teacher relationships. These interactions should be positive as this may impact especially at-risk students (cf. effective teaching) to succeed despite their circumstances. This is even more relevant for students at the primary school level (Stronge, 2018). According to Hamre et al. (2013), student-teacher interactions happen in three different domains. The three domains are:

- Emotional Support (cf. fairness and respect & caring): This means that the interaction between teachers and students as well as among the students should motivate students and promote their self-confidence (Hamre et al., 2013). The teacher can show interest and respect by greeting every student individually when they come to class. Another way of emotionally supporting students is by talking to them in private when they seem upset and simply asking them if anything is bothering them (Ferguson, 2016).

- Classroom Organization (cf. learning environment): A well-organized classroom with a routine that is well known to the students will impact their interactions with each other positively. It will also improve the students' self-regulation skills.

- Instructional Support (cf. instructional planning): This kind of support lays the focus on the link between memorizing facts and 'usable knowledge' as well as creating a connection between the student's background and what is being taught. One type of instructional support would be giving (constructive) feedback (cf. assessment). (Hamre et al., 2013)

Enthusiasm and Motivation to learn are two essential aspects in a student's learning experience because enthusiasm shows a teacher's joy, passion and happiness in doing their job. Studies show that the teacher's enthusiasm is reflected in the students' motivation to learn and study and is therefore indirectly responsible for the academic outcome. Effective teachers should not only feel enthusiastic about their work itself but also about the content they teach. Being taught by a teacher who is enthusiastic about the subject matter, motivates students to learn even more. (Stronge, 2018) The teacher's enthusiasm for their work can reduce the level of burnouts among their students because the effective teacher believes in their own ability to teach and motivate students and therefore puts less pressure on the students. It further has positive effects such as being a positive influence on the students' cognitive skills and their enjoyment of school in general (Schiefele, Streblow, & Retelsdorf, 2013).

Attitude toward teaching is – as stated in the prior aspect – crucial to the students' learning experience. The teacher's attitude towards their profession reflects their effectiveness as well as their professionalism. Effective teachers consider themselves responsible for their students' success and teach accordingly. (Eren, 2014) Being an effective teacher also means to have an attitude that reflects faith in their students' abilities: Effective teachers truly believe that all students can learn. The effective teacher is passionate about their work, which is why they invest into their own education and continuously develop their skills (Stronge, 2018).

Collaboration and Communication is what teaching or, generally speaking, education, is. It is in fact a collaboration between different teachers, students, parents and every party that is somehow involved in the process. A child's

education cannot be a single-person's job, even though a teacher carries a quite significant part of the responsibility. An effective teacher is aware of the network that is necessary to improve any child's education and therefore tries to reach out to other parties (e.g., other teachers, parents etc.) within the network. In order to make sure the education process takes place in an effective way, all the involved parties need to communicate in a useful way. (Stronge, 2018) An effective teacher's message to their students should be: "I invite, welcome, and respect your ideas and feedback." (Ferguson, 2016, p. 5) The teacher does not create the learning environment by themselves. It is created by the students as well. In order to create a promising learning environment, a good teacher-student relationship is vital. It is fostered by respectful communication. Students need to know that their thoughts, ideas and opinions are welcome, and the teacher provides respectful ways of communication. They also offer the students opportunities to have a say in learning activities or procedures (Ferguson, 2016).

3 REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

One of the first researchers to see a connection between (reflective) experience and learning was the philosopher and pedagogue **John Dewey**. He emphasized that experiencing and reflecting upon these experiences is the starting point of a learning process. Reflecting is an experience that happens through thinking and it is presented to the outside world by interacting and communicating with others (Dewey, 1916).

John Dewey (1859-1952) was an American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer.

This is also why reflective practice is considered a fundamental aspect of effective teaching. Reflective practice (teaching) operates as an umbrella term denoting various approaches, including teaching inventories and observation protocols, self-assessments, and consideration of student evaluations (Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning, 2017).

Numerous studies have been conducted showing that reflective practice is a fundamentally essential part of teaching - regardless of the school level. It is a

competence that can be obtained and learned and this should be done as this practice plays a major role in developing and improving the learning process and environment. This competence is deeply rooted in the teacher's professional personality. Furthermore, it is connected to the teacher's general attitude towards their profession (cf. professionalism) (Kruse-Weber & Hadji, 2020).

Generally, being reflective means to constantly self-evaluate and self-critique one's own performance as well as considering feedback when adjusting the way someone works in order provide a certain professional quality of work. Reflective practice at its core is just a very thorough and continuous type of self-assessment. Effective teachers invest their own time to improve their students' learning experience. In order to do so, they need to reflect not only about their teaching techniques and work performance but also about their own concepts of teaching and whether or not they may interfere with their profession and their students' learning process (Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning, 2017). Teachers who are very invested in reflective practice are referred to as 'introspective'. These teachers are attempting to understand their profession on a more profound level. It is important to mention in this context that teachers do not only accept and consider feedback, they also invite it and appreciate it (Stronge, 2018). Another aspect of self-reflective teaching is flexibility. Effective teachers do not blindly conform with given, established norms. They rather question whether the given norms need to be adjusted or changed in order to be as useful as possible to them and their students' current teaching and learning process. A major point of reflective practice is that effective teachers practice self-reflection because they are aware that their professional improvement and adjustment will ultimately be beneficial to their students and this is any effective teacher's goal. (Stronge, 2018)

Example of Self-Reflective Practice:

- Reflection Journal: It gives the educator an opportunity to look at details and have an idea of how their teaching process developed. In

this journal the teacher may reflect on questions such as, "What went well today? What could I have done differently? How will I modify my instruction in the future?" (Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning, 2017, online)

- Teaching Inventories: These are tools invented to help instructors assess the way they approach their work (e.g. multiple-choice questions).

- Video-Recorded Teaching Practices: The recording can be formal or informal. To be able to reflect upon the recorded session, an observation protocol is necessary. (Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning, 2017)

Examples of External Assessment:

- Student Evaluations: At the end of a term, instructors offer their students, e.g., an evaluation form to fill in. The self-reflective aspect is the teacher putting the feedback into consideration when planning the lessons and generally in their teaching and their interactions with their students.

- Peer or Departmental Observation: Asking colleagues for advice on feedback on one's teaching approach; and ask them to agree on a protocol to list aspects that need improvement. (Yale Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning, 2017)

Study your teaching for personal improvement **Reflect Regularly**	Evaluate your teaching using research **Action Research**	Link theory with practice **Use the Literature**
Question your personal theories and beliefs **Ciritcal Analysis**	Consider alternative perspectives and possibilities **Learning Conversations**	Try out new strategies and ideas **Innovation**
Maximize the learning potential of studens **Inclusive practices**	Enhance the quality of your teaching **Effective Practice**	Continue to improve your teaching **Professional Learning**

Figure 2: Nine Dimensions of Reflective Practice[3]

To sum it up, an effective teacher completes the '4 Cs of effective teaching'. This means that they CARE deeply about their work and their students. They are very CONSCIOUS of the content they teach and how they deliver it. Furthermore, an effective teacher is aware of COMPLEXITY and able to address it, and lastly, they are able to COMMUNICATE clearly and understandably. (Stronge, 2018)

4 KEY POINTS

✓ Teaching is a semi profession since it is an interdisciplinary profession and is also often described as the mother of all professions since without teachers, other professionals cannot be educated.

✓ Teachers have to continuously develop their teaching competences and skills.

✓ Effective teachers are trained to have professional knowledge related to content and pedagogical issues. They have the verbal ability to clearly communicate content as well as expectations of the students.

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[3] Adapted from Hegarty (2013).

✓ Effective teachers are able to plan and structure lessons in a way that meets the students' needs and offer a variety of teaching and instruction delivery techniques.

✓ Effective teachers create learning environments that support the students' learning process and continuously assess this process in order to adapt teaching strategies accordingly.

✓ Effective teachers care about their students' well-being as well as their academic success. They are fair in the treatment of each student and respect them as individuals.

✓ Effective teachers are enthusiastic about their teaching and are able to spark the same motivation in their students. Additionally, they understand that a successful learning process is dependent on the collaboration and communication of different actors, such as colleagues and parents.

✓ Effective teachers reflect on their teaching and constantly self-evaluate and self-critique their own performance. Examples of self-reflective practices are reflection journals, teaching inventories or video-recorded teaching practices. Feedback can also come from the outside through student evaluations or peer/departmental observations.

✓ Effective teachers care deeply about their work and their students; are conscious of the content they teach and how they deliver it; are aware of complexity and able to address it; and are able to communicate clearly and understandably.

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STEP 1 PRACTICE EXERCISES

A   Fill in the gaps with one of the presented answers:

1. The teaching profession is _____ profession.
    a) a disciplinary
    b) an interdisciplinary

2. The 4 Cs of effective teaching are _____.
    a) care, conscious, complexity and communicate
    b) care, control, conscious, communicate
    c) concept, care, complexity and control
    d) communicate, conscious, collect and care

3. The state of professionalism is fragile as it needs to be created and maintained through _____.
    a) communication
    b) interaction
    c) education

4. The result of effective teaching is certain: it has a ___, ___ impact on the students' lives.
    a) long lasting (…) negative
    b) short term (…) negative
    c) long lasting (…) positive
    d) short term (…) positive

5. The following attributes are associated with _____ students: psychomotor abilities, visual abilities, leadership skills and intellectual skills.
    a) high-risk
    b) older
    c) high-ability

MODULE 2
EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING: PROFESSION-SPECIFIC COMPETENCES OF
PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS
2.3 PEDAGOGICAL PROFESSIONALIZATION

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B **Complete the image which represents the framework of effective teaching with the right words from the box. Some of the below terms will not be used:**

content knowledge – verbal ability – professional knowledge – experience – learning environment – attitude – assessment – competences – enthusiasm – instructional delivery – professionalism – interactions with students – instructional planning – classroom organization – teaching environment – reflective practice

C **Drag and drop the following subcomponents into the appropriate category in the chart below. MULTIPLE subcomponents can be assigned to the same category:**

mental resilience[1] – professional knowledge[2] – flexibility[3] – managing students and groups[4] – teaching strategies and skills[5] – supervising and evaluating of teaching strategies[6] – cognitive abilities[7] – self-control[8] – confidence[9] – creativity[10] – planning, implementation and monitoring of teaching[11] – collaboration with parents[12] – critical thinking[13] – desire for change[14]

Components	Subcomponents
Knowledge	
Skill	
Attitude	
Ability	
Personality Characteristics (subjective)	
Personality Characteristics (individual)	

D   Connect the phrases together to make a meaningful paragraph:

1. The teacher's continuing education becomes essential to

2. Professionalism always relies on

3. The main reason why the pedagogical professionalization process is so important is because

4. This implies that a teacher needs to

5. More resources would not solve the problem, it is part of the solution, however

6. Being reflective means to constantly self-evaluate and self-critique one's own performance as well as

a. the context and situation in which the profession is being practiced.

b. be able to offer their students different explanations for the same content.

c. considering feedback when adjusting the way someone works in order provide a certain professional quality of work.

d. be able to exercise their profession effectively.

e. it ensures a constant improvement of the teacher's skills and performance.

f. it requires a simultaneous improvement of the teacher's content knowledge.

E   Fill in the blanks with the statements from the box to match their definitions:

(1) This is the process in which a job is transformed into a profession.

(2) Any child who is unlikely to graduate on schedule with both the skills and self-esteem necessary to exercise meaningful options in the areas of work, leisure, culture, civic affairs and inter/intrapersonal relationships.

(3) It is a set of cognition, orientation and skills that a teacher can achieve in the process of education to promote the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development of students.

(4) This describes the general knowledge about teaching: their own professional beliefs as well as their motivation to teach.

(5) It is crucial for a teacher to have a thorough understanding of the subject matter as this helps them to convey the content and explain it in an understandable manner.

(6) This is the knowledge about how people learn and how this process takes place.

Pedagogical Knowledge		Process of professionalization	
Content Knowledge		Professional Knowledge	
High-risk student		Pedagogical Content Knowledge	

STEP 1 PRACTICE EXERCISES - SOLUTIONS

A Fill in the gaps with one of the presented answers:

1. The teaching profession is _____ profession.

    a) a disciplinary

    b) an interdisciplinary

2. The 4 Cs of effective teaching are _____.

    a) care, conscious, complexity and communicate

    b) care, control, conscious, communicate

    c) concept, care, complexity and control

    d) communicate, conscious, collect and care

3. The state of professionalism is fragile as it needs to be created and maintained through _____.

    a) communication

    b) interaction

    c) education

4. The result of effective teaching is certain: it has a ___, ___ impact on the students' lives.

    a) long lasting (…) negative

    b) short term (…) negative

    c) long lasting (…) positive

    d) short term (…) positive

5. The following attributes are associated with _____ students: psychomotor abilities, visual abilities, leadership skills and intellectual skills.

    a) high-risk

    b) older

    c) high-ability

B **Complete the image which represents the framework of effective teaching with the right words from the box. Some of the below terms will not be used:**

content knowledge – verbal ability – professional knowledge – experience – learning environment – attitude – assessment – competences – enthusiasm – instructional delivery – professionalism – interactions with students – instructional planning – classroom organization – teaching environment – reflective practice

C **Drag and drop the following subcomponents into the appropriate category in the chart below. MULTIPLE subcomponents can be assigned to the same category:**

mental resilience[1] – professional knowledge[2] – flexibility[3] – managing students and groups[4] – teaching strategies and skills[5] – supervising and evaluating of teaching strategies[6] – cognitive abilities[7] – self-control[8] – confidence[9] – creativity[10] – planning, implementation and monitoring of teaching[11] – collaboration with parents[12] – critical thinking[13] – desire for change[14]

Components	Subcomponents
Knowledge	**2, 5, 11**
Skill	**4, 6**
Attitude	**3, 12, 14**
Ability	**7**
Personality Characteristics (subjective)	**1, 10, 13**
Personality Characteristics (individual)	**8, 9**

D   Connect the phrases together to make a meaningful paragraph:

1. The teacher's continuing education becomes essential to

2. Professionalism always relies on

3. The main reason why the pedagogical professionalization process is so important is because

4. This implies that a teacher needs to

5. More resources would not solve the problem, it is part of the solution, however

6. Being reflective means to constantly self-evaluate and self-critique one's own performance as well as

a.   the context and situation in which the profession is being practiced.

b.   be able to offer their students different explanations for the same content.

c.   considering feedback when adjusting the way someone works in order provide a certain professional quality of work.

d.   be able to exercise their profession effectively.

e.   it ensures a constant improvement of the teacher's skills and performance.

f.   it requires a simultaneous improvement of the teacher's content knowledge.

1D – 2A – 3E – 4B – 5F – 6C

E   Fill in the blanks with the statements from the box to match their definitions:

(1) This is the process in which a job is transformed into a profession.

(2) Any child who is unlikely to graduate on schedule with both the skills and self-esteem necessary to exercise meaningful options in the areas of work, leisure, culture, civic affairs and inter/intrapersonal relationships.

(3) It is a set of cognition, orientation and skills that a teacher can achieve in the process of education to promote the physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development of students.

(4) This describes the general knowledge about teaching: their own professional beliefs as well as their motivation to teach.

(5) It is crucial for a teacher to have a thorough understanding of the subject matter as this helps them to convey the content and explain it in an understandable manner.

(6) This is the knowledge about how people learn and how this process takes place.

Pedagogical Knowledge	4	Process of professionalization	1
Content Knowledge	5	Professional Knowledge	3
High-risk student	2	Pedagogical Content Knowledge	6

STEP 2 PRACTICE EXERCISES

A Regular reflection on your own way of working is important in order to improve your skills. Read the following examples on the left and combine them with the appropriate methods used by the teachers:

(1) After each day of school, Mrs. Pillai writes a kind of diary in which she answers questions about her class. This should help her to reflect on and improve her own teaching processes and didactic approach.
(2) After class, Mr. Tanner hands out a questionnaire to the students to get feedback from them about what he has done well and what he could improve.
(3) Mrs. Roth is filling out a multi-page questionnaire. She should also answer how often she has incorporated interactive elements into her lessons. The evaluation of the questionnaire should help her to optimize her teaching.
(4) Mr. Perea invited a colleague to his class to get professional feedback and concrete suggestions for improvement for his teaching.
(5) After the lesson, Ms. Chey presses the off button on her video camera. She recorded today's lessons and then reflects on it at home with the help of a protocol sheet that she received during a further education training.

Peer or Departmental Observation

Reflection Journal

Student Evaluations

Video-Recorded Teaching Practice

Teaching Inventories

B How would you relate the aspects to the six factors of effective teaching? Please drag and drop the words into the appropriate category:

basic calculation types (add, subtract etc.)[1] – teaching and learning goals[2] – knowledge of different mammals[3] – variety of methods[4] – measure students' progress toward learning objectives[5] – competence development of the learner[6] – determine parts of the sentence[7] – quality homework[8] – classroom is organized to facilitate learning[9] – brightness[10] – course plan: time, phases, learner activities[11] – offer different explanations for the same content[12] – continuous process of teacher reflection[13] – use assessment data to guide further planning and instruction[14] – respond to different needs and tailoring their choices to their students (strategies, content etc.)[15] – consider the abilities

of their students[16] – regular training and education (teachers)[17] – security and readiness to adapt[18] – space for exchange processes (spatial)[19]

C **Assign the individual aspects to the two categories on the right-hand side by connecting the boxes with a line. Which aspects have a positive and which have a negative effect on the professional process?**

only one teaching method
reflective practice
communication about effective instruction
rigid lesson planning
new approaches
lack of basic teaching knowledge
regular education and training (teacher)
conflicting curricula

positive effect

negative effect

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

Classroom A:

The curriculum states that students should learn about the formula for the area of rectangles and squares. Mrs. Chey had an advanced training course last week and learned to explain the area formula in different ways. In this way she can bring the learning content closer to the class in a creative way and also answer the questions from Steve, who has difficulties understanding the formulas.

Classroom B:

The curriculum states that students should learn about the formula for the area of rectangles and squares. Mr. Perea completed his teacher training ten years ago and has not attended any further training since then. He is of the opinion that he has already learned all of this in his studies. When Steve asks a few questions, he explains the formula to him again. He tells him that he should already know how to calculate the area.

1. Decide which description represents a positive example for professionalization and which one a negative example:

    a) Positive example:

    b) Negative example:

2. What makes these examples positive or negative? Please drag and drop the words into the appropriate category below:

teaching is subject to a continued professionalization process[1] – using one teaching method[2] – no offering of different explanations[3] – individual learning assignments/arrangements[4] – teaching skills date from the time when they were teacher trainees[5] – new educational approaches[6]

Positive Practice	Negative Practice

STEP 2 PRACTICE EXERCISES - SOLUTIONS

A Regular reflection on your own way of working is important in order to improve your skills. Read the following examples on the left and combine them with the appropriate methods used by the teachers:

Examples	Methods
(1) After each day of school, Mrs. Pillai writes a kind of diary in which she answers questions about her class. This should help her to reflect on and improve her own teaching processes and didactic approach.	Reflection Journal
(2) After class, Mr. Tanner hands out a questionnaire to the students to get feedback from them about what he has done well and what he could improve.	Student Evaluations
(3) Mrs. Roth is filling out a multi-page questionnaire. She should also answer how often she has incorporated interactive elements into her lessons. The evaluation of the questionnaire should help her to optimize her teaching.	Teaching Inventories
(4) Mr. Perea invited a colleague to his class to get professional feedback and concrete suggestions for improvement for his teaching.	Peer or Departmental Observation
(5) After the lesson, Ms. Chey presses the off button on her video camera. She recorded today's lessons and then reflects on it at home with the help of a protocol sheet that she received during a further education training.	Video-Recorded Teaching Practice

B How would you relate the aspects to the six factors of effective teaching? Please drag and drop the words into the appropriate category:

basic calculation types (add, subtract etc.)[1] – teaching and learning goals[2] – knowledge of different mammals[3] – variety of methods[4] – measure students' progress toward learning objectives[5] – competence development of the learner[6] – determine parts of the sentence[7] – quality homework[8] – classroom is organized to facilitate learning[9] – brightness[10] – course plan: time, phases, learner activities[11] – offer different explanations for the same content[12] – continuous process of teacher reflection[13] – use assessment data to guide further planning and instruction[14] – respond to different needs and tailoring their choices to their students (strategies, content etc.)[15] – consider the abilities

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of their students[16] – regular training and education (teachers)[17] – security and readiness to adapt[18] – space for exchange processes (spatial)[19]

Professional Knowledge: (1) (3) (7)

Instructional Planning: (2) (6) (11) (16)

Instructional Delivery: (4) (12) (15)

Assessment: (5) (8) (14)

Learning Environment: (9) (10) (19)

Professionalism: (13) (17) (18)

C Assign the individual aspects to the two categories on the right-hand side by connecting the boxes with a line. Which aspects have a positive and which have a negative effect on the professional process?

only one teaching method	**negative effect**
reflective practice	**positive effect**
communication about effective instruction	**positive effect**
rigid lesson planning	**negative effect**
new approaches	**positive effect**
lack of basic teaching knowledge	**negative effect**
regular education and training (teacher)	**positive effect**
conflicting curricula	**negative effect**

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

Classroom A:

The curriculum states that students should learn about the formula for the area of rectangles and squares. Mrs. Chey had an advanced training course last week and learned to explain the area formula in different ways. In this way she can bring the learning content closer to the class in a creative way and also answer the questions from Steve, who has difficulties understanding the formulas.

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The curriculum states that students should learn about the formula for the area of rectangles and squares. Mr. Perea completed his teacher training ten years ago and has not attended any further training since then. He is of the opinion that he has already learned all of this in his studies. When Steve asks a few questions, he explains the formula to him again. He tells him that he should already know how to calculate the area.

1. Decide which description represents a positive example for professionalization and which one a negative example:

   a) Positive example: Classroom A

   b) Negative example: Classroom B

2. What makes these examples positive or negative? Please drag and drop the words into the appropriate category below:

teaching is subject to a continued professionalization process[1] – using one teaching method[2] – no offering of different explanations[3] – individual learning assignments/arrangements[4] – teaching skills date from the time when they were teacher trainees[5] – new educational approaches[6]

Positive Practice	Negative Practice
1	5
4	2
6	3

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. This is what characterizes me in my role as a teacher. These tasks are particularly important to me. This is a special feature of my teaching.

2. What do I need to teach in an effective and professional way?

3. This is particularly important to me for my own teaching. This is what I definitely want to avoid in my teaching.

4. What are your personal teaching competences? Which strengths do you already draw on in your teaching? Which ones do you want to further develop and what methods and measures appear to you to be suitable for this?

STEP 4 PORTFOLIO TASK – TEACHING PROJECT

Create your own personal teaching project. What competences do you need to be able to implement your concept chosen in Module 1.1 as efficiently as possible? Name and describe at least 5 competences and map them to your teaching project. This portfolio task should be approximately 800-1000 words long. THE TEACHING PROJECT GOES INTO YOUR PERSONAL PORTFOLIO!

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!