

## The Mandatory Principles of Teaching and Teaching Skills required by Basic School Teachers for Effective Curriculum Implementation

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### **Abstract**

*This paper focuses on the mandatory teaching skills required by a basic school teacher for effective curriculum, implementation. This paper becomes necessary at this point in time because the phrase “teacher competency” is spoken by every individual in the community. Teachers are often at the heart of implementing curricula with little support. Teachers are wrestling with a lot of issues e.g. reflection-in-and-on practice, emerging pedagogical paradigms, understanding content, learners, and instructional culture. These ongoing discrepancies experienced and realized by implementer presents an important problem for discussion, calling for an on-going forum and form of professional development. It is on this basis that this paper presents different skills required for effective teaching such as being able to state clear objectives for your teaching, being grounded in various skills suitable for teaching at all levels. The paper also explicated on the need for proper orientation to the beginning teacher in order to be able to handle teaching with great magnitude of professionalism. The paper further recommended that all newly employed teachers be subjected to retraining on the principles of teaching and teaching skill acquisition.*

**Keywords:** Principle of teaching, Teaching Skill Orientation, curriculum implementation

### **Introduction**

Teaching means different things to different people. It is complex activity that takes different form. Teaching can be seen as any interpersonal influence aimed at changing the ways in which other person can or will behave. It is as well viewed as an interaction between the teacher and the learner. It also means to impact knowledge or instruct someone as to how to do something (Peterson 2007). Teaching is a systematic, rational and organized process of transmitting knowledge, attitude and skills in accordance with professional principles. Those who do not perform the act in accordance with professional principles are therefore not teachers. It is not enough to just involve in teaching without observing and applying the main principles that revolve round it. It is the principle that makes the act of teaching more professional.

Didau (2015) defined teaching as a process of attending to people’s needs, experiences and feelings, and making specific interventions to help them learn particular things. A teacher on the other hand is a person who helps others to acquire knowledge, competencies or values (Smith 2015). Wandate (2014) defined a teacher as a person who has undergone approved professional training in education at appropriate levels capable of

imparting knowledge, attitude and skills to the learner. The approved professional training that is referred to here has the required principles of teaching inclusive.

The aim of sending a child to school is to have him educated, which is to change his behaviour positively as well as prepare him for future challenge. This cannot be achieved without the teacher. The teacher is at the center of events involving the pupil, the parent and the society as a whole. He contributes most significantly to the success of the desired goals of education by imparting his knowledge, attitude and skills to the learner. Apart from his educational attainment, a teacher's success or failure depends on the profession or development of certain qualities. These qualities can be looked at from three aspects: dedication, professional conduct and personality. Teachers should be able to give their heart, body and soul to their job. They must be committed to it even though this might involve a lot of physical and mental effort.

As a professional teacher, for your teaching to be effective, you must be guided by certain principles (Hattie & Yates 2014). The principles are as follows:

1. **Clear Objectives:** Teaching is goal oriented. In order to achieve the goals, there should be set objectives. In preparing to teach, the objectives to achieve must be clearly stated, this serves as a guideline in teaching. The objective used in the classroom is the behavioural objective. If the objective for a particular task is not properly stated, the aim of the task is totally defeated. there are times that teacher's objective may not be adequately written to cover all the domains. Also there are times that teachers stated objectives are not embedded in the content for the lesson. the teacher trainers have to be very careful while training the pre-service teachers to ensure they grasp the principle of stating their objectives clearly.
2. **Previous Experiences:** Every child has some experiences before going to school. The teaching should be built on these experiences. This is where experiences from home have to be transferred to the classroom. The pre-service teacher needs to be trained on how to link current experiences with those experiences the learner brought to the class
3. **Pupils Readiness:** The teacher should ensure that the pupils are physically, mentally and emotionally stable before the teaching and learning process. Efforts must be geared towards inducing the learners on the learning experience. Are the children physically alright, emotionally alright, psychologically alright? In a situation where the teacher cannot establish the readiness of the child or his state of readiness before commencement of the teaching the entire exercise may end up as a misplacement of priority.
4. **Individual Differences:** It is known that individuals are different from one another in many ways. These differences must be realized by the teacher. He should recognize this difference and use variety of methods and materials to teach. There is need for the careful and be very conscious of the learners he/she is handling individually so that nobody is left behind in terms of knowledge and skill acquisition. the teacher should be able to come down to the level of every individual during teaching.
5. **Opportunity for Active Learning:** The learners should be encouraged to be active participants in the teaching and learning process. Principally, the teacher is to direct and guide student's participation e.g. introduction of newspapers for teaching of vocabularies. It has been clearly pointed out by Peterson (2007) that majority of the classroom teachers are always in haste to leave the class and therefore give no room

to learners' active participation. Adequate room ought to be actively given to learners to actively participate during the teaching process.

6. **Teaching should be systematic:** The principles of teaching is very important such that every pre-service teacher need to be intimated on how to use it. Teaching is an orderly activity in which one needs to follow the right process when carrying it out. the effectiveness of teaching depends on how systematic the teacher carries it out. Every teacher should be able to start from the known to the unknown., from simple to complex. every practicing teacher should endeavour to put this principle into practice during teaching.
7. **Use of well-prepared lesson plan:** Writing of lesson plan is a serious issue in the teaching profession. it is one of the aspect that supervisors critically inspect during supervision of teaching exercise. to teach effectively, the teacher should use his or her own well prepared lesson plan. the preparation of the lesson plan should take into consideration the knowledge of the learners, the subject matter and locality (Guga and Bawa, 2012).
8. **Motivation:** The principle of motivation is very important for positive response from the learners during teaching and learning process. there is need to inculcate the principle into every pre-service teacher. in order to teach effectively, the teachers knowledge of the subject matter and interest of the learners are very important. when the learners are encouraged, their effort will be reinforced.
9. **Use of variety of teaching methods:** In teaching exercise, every subject has its suitable method for teaching it. There is need for pre-service teachers to be properly exposed to the methods of teaching. When planning the lesson, the teacher should think of the best possible way of teaching it. Variety of methods should be combined to produce effective learning.

The above discussed principles of teaching will be more effectively used by the pre-service teacher if they are as well equipped with the following instructional skills given by (Oke, 2001) as discussed below.

### Set Induction

This is a skill that set the instructional situation in motion by securing the attention and interest of the learners though stimulating induction aims at preparing the mind of the learners towards the task in which they are about to learn.

**Re-enforcement:** The skill of re-enforcement concerns encouragement in any form that a teacher gives with a view to increase the rate of the student's response in order to encourage subsequent participation.

The following are the kinds of re-enforcement

- a. **Verbal Re-enforcement:** These are verbal expressions from the teacher to show appreciation on the response of the student's behavior.
- b. **Gesture Re-enforcement:** These are body expressions that speak louder than words. The teacher can use such gestures as smile, clapping, nodding, etc.
- c. **Material Re-enforcement:** This has to do with given student an item certainly not edible or money in order to encourage and increase the probability of occurrence of positive response.
- d. **Activity Re-enforcement:** This is a form of reward to students by asking him or the class to perform an activity that can entice him or the class.

### **Motivation**

This skill is being used as an encouragement that aims at eliciting a behavior. In other words, it is an encouragement given to assist and propel a student to come with a positive response.

### **Stimulus Variation**

Stimulus variation refers to any purposeful change that is introduced into the classroom consciously or unconsciously to keep students awake, alert and attentive. Ohuche (1990) described stimulus variation as the ability of a teacher to change the environment in such a manner that pupils are stimulated to learn. Human being especially children have short attention span and can lose interest after some period and turn to something else. This is in support of the adage that said that monotony kills interest while variety is the spice of life. Think of when you wear a cloth continuously for a week. At first, people will admire you because the cloth looks nice and you will like the way you look. But at the second and third day, no eyes will be on you anymore. This is because they have seen and are tired of seeing you on the same cloth. This also happens when a word is repeated for a long time or even when a particular meal is served continuously for many days, it becomes monotone and change is desired. This is also applicable in a classroom setting. Stimulation should be employed through the use of different methods and materials so as to increase and sustain the attention of the learners thereby promoting learning.

### **Planned Repetition**

Planned repetition in a teaching situation is made for exhausts. Teachers, especially beginning teachers find it difficult to know when and why a point should be stressed or repeated. It should be noted here that habitual repetition of everything said by a teacher is not good because it leads to waste of precious time. Through micro-teaching the teacher can master the use of repetition for emphasis. The skill is divided into four as follows:

- a. **Simple Repetition:** It involves repeating a word, phrase, concept, idea, etc, sooner than later it is said.
- b. **Spaced Repetition:** This is much more deliberately planned than simple repetition. The essence is to repeat a major point of discussion at intervals during class teaching, such that students internalize and retrieve it for use.
- c. **Cumulative Repetition:** Occurs when all prior major points are highlighted before new ones are presented. This is used especially when a number of distinct and difficult concepts are involved in a lesson.
- d. **Mass Repetition:** Occurs as a summary of a lesson. It involves a repeat of all the major or important points or main deals of a lesson.

### **Use of Instructional Materials**

Materials help explain ideas and make understanding not only easier but retentive. The skill is sub-divided into three as:

- a. Use of material at the beginning of lesson. This is purposely to introduce the lesson and or to arouse the interest of the learner.
- b. Use of material at the middle of a lesson. Material is used at the middle of the lesson in order to develop the lesson. It has the purpose of clarifying concepts and to stimulate discussions.

- c. Use of materials by the end of a lesson: When materials are used at the end of a lesson, it is purposely to summarize and or evaluate the lesson. When a teacher is using this skill, he/she is to focus on one aspect.

Other teaching skills include: use of chalkboard, use of examples, questioning skill and explanation skill, etc.

### **Professionalism for Effective Curriculum Implementation**

Curriculum implementation means actualization, concretization, making real the planned curriculum. It is the actual use of the curriculum plan. It is a critical phase in the cycles of planning and delivering a curriculum. Curriculum implementation focuses on both the actual use of the curriculum and the attitude of those who implement it. This is particularly important where there is very little supervision on the activities of teachers, as is the case in the Nigerian public schools. The attitudes of those who implement the curriculum do determine the extent and quality of implementation. In a nutshell, curriculum implementation can be seen as the actual carrying out of policies and changes spelt out in the new curriculum.

According to the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (2003), the following criteria must be met before a vocation becomes a profession. universal criteria that set a vocation apart as a profession:

- i. Theoretical and practical knowledge mastered exclusively by the practitioners.
- ii. Fairly long period of training in the field.
- iii. Continuous practice in the field.
- iv. Ethical code of conduct for practitioners.
- v. Regulatory body that licenses and disciplines as well as promotes the professional growth of practitioners.
- vi. Membership of the practitioners in the professional or regulatory body.
- vii. Rendering essential and qualitative services to society by the practitioners.

For any profession, the existence of the conditions stated above can guarantee: high status and dignity, societal recognition, prospect of job opportunity, job security, job satisfaction, high rewards and professional excellence.

### **Involving the Beginner Teachers in Practicing of Teaching Skills for Teaching Competency**

This aspect of the paper focuses on the beginner teacher's experiences in their field of teaching for effective implementation of the basic school curricula. It exposes the beginner to different roles required in their teaching. Despite its significance to teachers and their future profession, the paper exposes various teachers' experiences, positive and negative. The paper also proposes some recommendations not only for the betterment of the beginner teachers but also for the entire teacher education programme.

There is no teacher education that can be said to be complete without an effective acquisition of teaching skills. For example, teachers who study law cannot join the field of work in that profession without a postgraduate diploma in laws. Likewise those beginner teachers have to be exposed to teaching skills orientation to become qualified teachers. The concept of teaching skills acquisition is deeply rooted in the drive towards the education and training of competent professional teachers. What does teaching skills orientation entails?

- It is a professional preparation for interested persons aspiring to become teachers with a credible vision for sustainable human development.

- It is a kind of apprenticeship stage during which the teachers are involved and given professional experience by translating all the educational theories they have acquired or learnt during training into practice (Rugyendo, 2011).
- It is a practical teaching activity by which the teachers are given an opportunity in actual school situation to demonstrate and improve training in pedagogical skills over a period of time. Grower, Walter and Phillips (2005) defines this practice as a situation in which a teacher receives practical training under the head teacher or other permanent teachers. Its aim is usually to improve the teaching skills and develop their awareness of what real teaching entails. Indeed, beginner teachers need such orientation in order to produce good result.
- It offers teachers an opportunity to determine whether they have chosen a good profession or not. It was found out that most of the beginner teachers “found their level” only when they started real teaching (given a class to handle on their own). It is the real beginning towards their profession, practically, with various experiences: challenges and opportunity, strength and weaknesses. They did not know what teaching was until they took part in teaching skills orientation.
- Orientation in teaching skills offers teachers an opportunity to explore their potentials as far as teaching is concerned. It is the real occasion to experience what teaching is and what effort should be put in. It is the time to explore weaknesses and strengths because of constant supervision and peer teaching. Grower, Walter and Phillips (2005), when they have chance to work with the regular teachers who may give counsel and guidance as far as teaching and learning are concerned.
- This is very central to any teacher. It was found out that it is not an easy activity and some times, may discourage some teachers from teaching at all. It is a time to prevent destructive behavior. Also it is an opportunity to manage classroom in terms of time (Kauchak & Eggen, 2008). If one is able to handle classroom management then he or she may make a very good teacher. There is need to involve the beginner teachers in entry activities that make for good classroom control such as keeping the classroom clean, keeping class record, organizing the classes good sitting arrangement, etc.
- Working with others as a team is crucial during the orientation for teaching skill in the teacher’s life. Here others include: staff members, head teachers and fellow beginning teachers. The staff members naturally may initiate one to teaching: fellow beginner teachers may advise and make one of them confident in his or her teaching. However, it is the head teacher whom the beginner teacher meets for the first time. The experience and expertise of the head teacher should be utilized although in most cases, this is not always so.
- It is an opportunity to utilize various teaching methods. The teachers (beginners) consider it a blessing to utilize various effective teaching methods. They try out all the methods taught while on training in classroom. This is done under constant supervision of head teacher or by any staff experienced in teaching. Therefore, orientation on teaching skills by teachers is an indispensable item in the life of a teacher/instructor.
- Exposure to professional activity is also mandatory. The need for various professional activities includes those duties, in addition to immediate classroom work with learners. Also, they take into account the preparation to teach well, being resourceful and creative under the guidance of the experienced teachers in the school. In other

words, apart from actual teaching, orientation in teaching skills exposes teachers to such professional activities that are part and parcel of teaching as a profession.

### **A Word for Teachers (Beginners)**

A good teacher should avoid the following: Lateness to work, absence from work without permission from the head teacher, leaving school during working hours, sending pupils on personal errands such as washing his/her clothes, cooking or purchasing items for him/her from the market, using abusive language on his/her pupils no matter the situation, dressing improperly to school, delegating responsibilities or teaching duties to senior pupils/class prefect, coming to school without adequate preparation of his note of lesson, inability to provide information about the progress, problems and activities of the pupils to the school authority and parents/guidance when required, lack of respect for both senior and junior colleague, inability to seek for assistance as a result of pride from colleagues in task beyond his/her management or professional ability when necessary.

Apart from all that have been started above, orientation on teaching skills for beginner teachers should involve some desirable traits of personality such as self discipline, friendliness, tact, fairness and impartiality and motivation. The teacher should positively motivate the pupils. This will bring out the best in his pupils and improve rapport (Wandate, 2014).

### **Conclusion**

The organizing of orientation in teaching skills for teachers is very important. It should form important aspect of the teaching profession. It is a time for experiment in teacher education and it is one of the few opportunities that one may ever have for trying out a new idea and having one or more critical but supportive observance. It will contribute greatly to teacher education and effective implementation of basic school curriculum. Through its adoption, the basic school teachers will improve in their teaching profession because it is a reflection of what has been theoretically taught. At the same time, the teacher (beginners) will gain a lot by putting into practice the theoretical part taught in class. It has a wide range of positive experiences.

### **Recommendations**

1. The process of organizing teaching skills orientation may require some logistics and funds but such exercise will cater for good mastery of teaching skills by the beginner teachers and enhance effective implementation of the basic school curriculum.
2. It will also reduce the problem with classroom management and control, lesson presentation, assessment and evaluation will also be lessened. It will reduce the problems normally faced by beginner teachers such as stage freight and having such problems organize will increase effectiveness and efficiency in teaching.
3. Also, the stakeholders in charge of recruitment of teachers should insist that the government should make provisions for funds needed in organizing appropriate teaching skill orientation training for them.
4. It is a fact that due to bad economic condition of the nation, nobody wants to take up a responsibility that encroaches into his or her income, hence all newly employed teachers should be given certain amount of money that will motivate them to fully participate whenever such orientation is organized for them.

5. Furthermore, this paper recommended that since the teachers are mostly being blamed for poor performances of learners, all teachers should endeavour to acquaint themselves with basic principles of teaching and teaching skills that can sustain the learners attention during teaching and learning process.

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