Elements of Good Teaching and Good Teachers: A Theoretical Framework and Effective Strategies for Special Educators

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Abstract

Within schools in the United States, teachers must now acquire the skills and dispositions necessary to effectively teach students with a wide variety of needs. As an important first step, the effective behaviors of successful teachers need to be considered. The author has identified three key components that are integral to that process; namely, (a) relationship-building, (b) pedagogical skills, and (c) subject knowledge. One framework that appears to be useful in identifying specific skills common to "good" teaching and good teachers is Kennedy's (2008) three criteria of effective teaching behaviors: (a) personal resources; the qualities that the teacher brings to the job (b) teacher performance; teachers' everyday practices that occur in and out of the classroom and (c) teacher effectiveness; the relational teacher qualities that influence students. In a relevant investigation, the author and colleagues conducted research that identified effective teacher strategies, such as awareness of body language, flexibility in accommodating different learning styles, active listening techniques, the use of eye contact, teacher availability, and incorporating a variety of teaching methodologies. Other research-based strategies are discussed relative to their implications for effective (good) teaching.

Introduction: A Mandate for Becoming an Effective Teacher

As the inclusive classroom continues to develop into standard practice throughout the United States, classroom teachers can no longer claim students with special needs and behavioral challenges are not their responsibilities. Frequently, within the inclusion model, special and general educators are paired to serve students with a variety of needs – gifted, average, learning disabled, and emotionally disturbed, in a single classroom. As a result, all teachers must now acquire the skills and dispositions necessary to effectively teach students with a wide variety of needs. Teacher preparation programs and schools must find ways to insure that preservice and novice teachers are prepared to address the increasingly diverse needs of all students assigned to their classrooms. As one step in the reflective process of teacher preparation and professional development practices, the effective behaviors of successful teachers need to be considered.

In discussing the needs of some of our most challenging students, Cavin (1998) encourages teachers to,

> *…remember that these kids with all of their problems, their criminal records, their probation officers, their idiosyncrasies, their unlovable characteristics, and their strange families are still kids. They need someone to care. They need someone to accept them. They need to know they are somebody. If you are willing to provide these ideals, you can be the connection that bridges the gap from drop-out to diploma*. (p. 10)

A further incentive to stay the course with challenging students was provided by a former colleague, who observed (after a very discouraging week when it seemed that all the writer's

efforts to teach a lesson were foiled and he began to have second thoughts about my calling), "for some kids, these days in school may be the best of their lives: the safest, the happiest, and the most secure." The author never forgot this insightful pronouncement and it helped change his attitude about teaching even the most oppositional, defiant students.

A final inducement to persevere with difficult students comes from recent data provided by the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice. In 2010, according to their records, 70, 792 juveniles were incarcerated in the U.S., the greatest number worldwide. In fact, the incarceration rate for juveniles (school-age children) in the U.S. in 2002 was 336 for every 100,000 youth - compare that figure to the country with the next highest rate, South Africa, with 69 of every 100,000 youth in detention (as cited in Mendel, 2011). In response to these abysmal statistics and his own extensive experience, DeMuro (2010), the former commissioner of the Pennsylvania Juvenile Corrections system, describes the current state of juvenile justice in the U.S. as "iatrogenic" (preventable harm introduced by the caregiver, in this case, the juvenile justice system) (as cited in Mendel, 2011). Mendel (2011) notes further that while education and treatment at most juvenile detention facilities is non-existent, the average annual cost to house an incarcerated youth in a detention facility is approximately $88,000; whereas, the cost to provide that same individual with effective intervention services in a public or specialized school is approximately $10,000. Moreover, the recidivism rate for incarcerated youth in New York State, for example, three years or more after release, ranges from 73-89 percent (www.aecf.org/noplacefor kids, 2011).

Similarly, a 2006 investigation revealed that only 33 percent of youth released from a Pennsylvania corrections camp program who said they would return to school did so (Hjalmarsson, 2008). Since there are, effectively, no rehabilitation programs in most juvenile corrections facilities, youths detained in them actually can become more antisocial and more inclined to engage in criminal behaviors after their release. Thus, the data clearly suggests that the last, best hope for most of these at-risk youth is in school, and perhaps the best models of prosocial behavior are their teachers.

Is Teaching an Art or a Science, or a Little of Both?

This question raises the specter of a very old debate, effectively described in N. L. Gage's book, *The Scientific Basis of the Art of Teaching* (1978). In that book, Gage defined *teaching* as "…any activity on the part of one person intended to facilitate learning on the part of another" (p. 14). Of course, given the diversity of students in today's K-12 schools, I think we need a more inclusive definition. I would suggest one; namely, that teaching has been transformed in the Twenty-first Century to incorporate a more expansive job description, one that acknowledges that, in addition to facilitating learning, today's teacher serves as a role model for prosocial behavior, provides examples of civil discourse, and, in some cases, acts as a surrogate parent. What has precipitated this revolutionary change? One only needs to examine the changing social structure that surrounds our children; specifically, the volatile economy, which determines how we live in society and has required a radical increase in the number of hours spent working, and, as a result, has all but eradicated the luxury of the "stay-at-home" parent. Absent parental guidance, many American students have found themselves without the traditional role model who once taught and reinforced prosocial behaviors and discouraged antisocial ones.

Now to the age-old debate that Gage (1978) so famously addressed: whether teaching (in school) is an "art" or a "science." In his examination of these positions, he noted that, "…even in the fixed programs of computer-assisted instruction-there is a need for artistry: in the choice and use of motivational devices, clarifying definitions and examples, pace, redundancy, and the like" (p. 15). Gage (1978) suggested that, rather than teaching being considered an art or science, it should be, in its highest form, considered an amalgam of both. He further delineates the term "science" used in association with teaching, to be construed as "the scientific *basis*." He differentiates these two designations by suggesting that a science of teaching, "...implies that good teaching will someday be attainable by closely following the rigorous laws that yield high predictability and control" (p. 17). In contrast, teaching, like medicine and engineering is not a science, but, like medicine and engineering, teaching '…requires a knowledge of much science, concepts, or variables, and their interrelations in the form of strong or weak laws, generalizations, or trends" (p. 18).

Palmer (1998) asserts further, that "…good teaching cannot be reduced to techniques; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher" (p. 10). He suggests that teaching cannot be reduced to technique, but is fundamentally connected to identity and integrity. In a more expansive view, the author would propose that, like Gage (1978), effective teaching and effective teachers must possess a "scientific basis" for teaching that is construed as an expertise in the subject matter as well as the passion that is integral to an "artistic" pedagogy, but would here add the facility to build relationships with students. This enlarged characterization is delineated in the author's "framework for good teaching," which follows.

A Framework for Good Teaching

After reviewing the relevant literature concerning the elements common to most good teachers, the author has distilled three that he believes to be prototypical; namely, (a) relationship-building, (b) pedagogical skills, and (c) subject knowledge, in that order.

Relationship-building. What is meant by *relationship* as it pertains to teachers and students? Simply put, the term refers to the rapport the teacher builds with the student, a connection that fosters trust and that facilitates learning. Truth be told, such meaningful and affirming relationships are the reasons most of us want to teach in the first place. Good teacher-student and student-teacher relationships are often the reason that students choose to stay in school, acquire an affinity for a particular subject, feel good about their school experience, look forward to coming to class, and report feeling a sense of self-efficacy. Teacher-student relationships like any other human relationship can be either healthy and reciprocally validating or unhealthy and destructive. Boynton and Boynton (2005) note that students are more likely to do what teachers ask when they feel valued and cared for by them. Similarly, Thompson (1998) states that, "The most powerful weapon available to [teachers] who want to foster a favorable learning climate is a positive relationship with our students" (p. 6), and Canter and Canter (1997) suggest that students who enjoy a positive relationship with their teachers will be more inclined to comply with their requests and work conscientiously on assignments.

Furthermore, Marzano (2003) suggests that students who feel genuinely cared for and respected by their teachers are less likely to be discipline problems. In a similar way, Kohn (1996) asserts that, "Children are more likely to be respectful when important adults in their lives respect them. They are more likely to care about others if they know they are cared about" (p. 111). Likewise, Daunic, Smith, and Algozzine (2010) assert that, "research has consistently shown that a positive relationship with an adult is a critical factor in preventing violence at school" and recommend, as a result, that schools provide opportunities for teachers and students to spend "quality" time together (p. 215). Jones and Jones (2012) further posit that both academic achievement and behavior in the classroom are directly influenced by the "quality of the teacher-student relationship" (p. 95). Important to that relationship, of course, is the passion that the teacher feels for her subject and enthusiastically imparts to her students. Indeed, in support of that, Rose (1996) observes that, "it is what we are excited about that educates us" (p. 106).

Similarly, in his investigation of teacher-student interactions at both the elementary and secondary levels, Hargreaves (2000) underscores the frequently unheralded importance of emotional connection or relationship. In examining this critical aspect of good teaching, Hargreaves (2000) offers, "Teaching is an emotional practice. This use of emotion can be helpful or harmful, raising classroom standards or lowering them…Emotions are located not just in the individual mind; they are imbedded and expressed in human interactions and relationships" (p. 824). Lastly, Zehm and Kottler (1993) have suggested that students will *never* trust or truly attend to teachers without an established sense of mutual valuation and respect.

Additionally, as in all aspects of the human condition, it is vital that we, as teachers, integrate our personal and professional selves. It is important that we explore and reflect on our own concepts of self and our beliefs about the essential qualities of good teaching, good teachers, and good character to cultivate an "integrated" self and thereby develop authentic relationships with students and colleagues.

Maya Angelou, the acclaimed poet, author, and solon once wrote, "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel" (https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/3503.Maya_Angelou). The author would suggest that, in a sense, the quality of a relationship is determined by the way those in the relationship "feel" about it. Thus relationship, genuine and affirming, provides the foundation for all else that we strive to do as teachers. It opens the doors of students' minds to learning, to see education as something worthwhile, to want to acquire the knowledge and skills that we, as teachers, so want to impart. In short, without such quality relationships, there can be no real teaching and learning.

Pedagogical Skills. Similarly, "good" teachers must be steeped in the "art and science" of effective teaching; this is what we refer to as *pedagogical knowledge*. According to the Cambridge Dictionary Online (2012) the term "pedagogy" is defined as: "the study of the methods and activities of teaching (*n.p.*);" essentially, the word denotes the "art and science" that constitutes effective, systematized instruction. There is no shortcut to attaining this vital skill set, which is really honed and refined throughout the professional lifetime of the teacher. Frankly, if teachers do not know *how* to teach subject matter or impart knowledge about a topic or skill, it matters little that they have much to teach and possess a vast knowledge base. We all know of

individuals who are recognized widely for their expertise in a particular area or subject, but do not possess the pedagogical skills to effectively impart that knowledge to others.

Undeniably, sound pedagogical skills must be acquired through effective training, reflective practice, and more reflective practice. As Loughran (2002) notes, "If learning through practice matters, then reflection on practice is crucial, and teacher preparation is the obvious place for it to be initiated and nurtured" (p. 42). Ideally, the foundation of a sound pedagogy should be established in a reputable college-based teacher preparation program.

Cogill (2008) states that pedagogy, as it pertains to the teaching profession, is multi-faceted and thus difficult to simply define. Watkins and Mortimer (1999) describe the term as "any conscious activity by one person designed to enhance the learning of another" (p. 3). Alexander (2003), expands on this definition by adding, "It is what one *needs* to know, and the *skills* one needs to command in order to make and justify the many different kinds of decisions of which teaching is constituted" (p. 3). Cogill (2008) suggests that teacher knowledge is integral to pedagogy and cites Shulman's (1987) seven categories as a schema for understanding the nuanced term. We think this "framework" is very helpful in understanding pedagogical skills as they pertain to the teaching profession. It might be instructive to list them here: (a) content knowledge, (b) general pedagogical knowledge [e.g., classroom control, group work], (c) pedagogical content knowledge [we refer to this simply as "content or subject knowledge"], (d) curriculum knowledge, which is more specific to instructional design, (e) knowledge of learners and their characteristics, (f) knowledge of educational contexts [e.g., schools and their communities], and (g) knowledge of education purposes and their values [for students] (as cited in Cogill, 2008, p. 1-2). Simply put, pedagogy is the "how to" in effectively imparting a skill to another.

In a different vein, Korthagen (2004) posits a developmental model of pedagogical skills central to a good teacher. He refers to this model as "the onion" because the skills are equally important and interrelated. They flow from a central mission, through identity [of the teacher], beliefs [of the teacher], competencies [teaching], behaviors [relative to effective teaching], and, finally, the interaction of the teacher's environment with the teacher and her instruction (p. 80). In line with his model, Korthagen (2004) proposes "a more holistic approach towards teacher development, in which competence is not equated with competencies," but one that finds a middle ground between humanistic and behaviorist perspectives. He further suggests that the teacher educator understand her own core qualities in order to more effectively and authentically promote them in her prospective teachers (p. 94).

Subject Knowledge. Imparting subject knowledge to our students is, arguably, our "raison d'etre" as a profession and a professional. Relative to this assertion, Palmer (1998) describes an unforgettable professor who defied "every rule of good teaching" in that he lectured to such a degree and with such passion, that he left little time for student questions and was not a good listener. What he did impart to Palmer was his love of learning, his subject knowledge and his passion for it. Palmer recalls, "It did not matter to me that he violated most rules of good group process and even some rules of considerate personal relations. What mattered was that he generously opened the life of his mind to me, giving full voice to the gift of thought" (p. 22). He goes on to say that, "Passion for the subject propels that subject, not the teacher, into the center of the learning circle-and when a great thing is in their midst, students have direct access to the

energy of learning and of life. A subject-centered classroom is not one in which students are ignored. Such a classroom honors one of the most vital needs our students have: to be introduced to a world larger than their own experiences and egos, a world that expands their personal boundaries and enlarges their sense of community…A subject-centered classroom also honors one of our most vital needs as teachers: to invigorate those connections between our subjects, our students, and our souls that help make us whole again and again" (p. 120).

While the instructional technology revolution has forever changed the way teachers present lessons in the classroom for the better, in the opinion of most educators, the data suggests that the single most important aspect of classroom instruction is the *quality* of the teacher and her *knowledge* of the subject matter (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Croninger, Buese, & Larson, 2012; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Donovan & Bransford, 2005; Pantic & Wubbels, 2010). In response to this acknowledgement, Zimpher and Howey (2013) offer an exhortation to teacher preparation programs, school leaders, and future teachers:

> *Teachers must be equipped to prepare students to meet the requirements and demands of the 21st Century workforce—but to do that teachers and school leaders themselves need the right kind of rigorous, continuous education, in both pedagogy and content area expertise, in order to become the high-quality professionals students need.* (p. 419)

A report, commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education (2001), summarized what the research showed about five key issues in teacher preparation: subject matter preparation, pedagogical preparation, clinical training, pre-service teacher education policies, and alternative certification. The investigators conducted a meta-analysis of fifty-seven studies that met specific research criteria and were published in peer-reviewed journals. Ultimately, they found that these studies demonstrated a positive connection between teachers' preparation in subject matter and their performance in the classroom (Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001, p. 7). Similarly, Goldhaber and Brewer (2000) and Monk (1994) determined that not only was content preparation positively related to student achievement in subjects like math and science, but courses in methods of teaching, specific to subjects, also demonstrated a significant increase in student achievement.

Clearly, there is a very wide gulf between a desirable level of subject knowledge and the level of knowledge that most student-teachers display either at the start or, in many cases, at the end of their coursework. For example, Ma (1999) posed four simple arithmetical problems to a sample of teachers from both China and the U.S. and examined their responses relative to how they proposed to solve the problems and how they would, ostensibly, teach the process to their own students. Only 9 out of 21 American teachers answered the questions correctly, whereas all 72 Chinese teachers were successful. Furthermore, Ma (1999) found that even the successful American teachers were much less able than their Chinese counterparts to explain why the process they used produced the correct answer and thus were unable to provide exemplars (as cited in French, 2005). These findings indicate that teacher subject knowledge should be foremost on the agenda of educational administrators and policy-makers (French, 2005).

Thus, based on the apparent paucity of subject knowledge evident in many pre-service and novice teachers, Metzler and Woessmann (2010) suggest that a renewed emphasis on teacher

subject knowledge must become an important component in hiring policies, teacher training practices, and compensation schemes.

What is a "Master" Teacher and How Can I Become One?

It is difficult to find research that distinguishes the universally recognized characteristics of a "master teacher." Most of what we read in journals and online discussion boards simply reflects the subjective opinions or insights of the author with very little, if any, scientific bases. This may be due to the fact that the characteristics of acknowledged "master teachers" are germane to each. Therefore, absent a scientific criteria, we offer several lists of behaviors that are evident in most teachers that are recognized as exemplary, including those effective teacher behaviors identified in our own research. In addition, we encourage teachers who wish to achieve this status to be patient and observant of colleagues who are acknowledged as models of exceptional teaching. For example, Couros (*n.d.*) has suggested that the essential qualities of a master teachers might include: (a) connecting with students first, (b) teaching students first and curriculum second, (c) ensuring that the teacher emphasizes the relevance of the curriculum **to** the students' lives, (d) working with students to develop a love of learning, (e) modeling and celebrating lifelong learning, (f) focusing on learning goals as opposed to performance goals, (g) ensuring that "character education" is an essential part of learning, (h) being passionate about the content they teach, (i) seeing their role as a "school teacher," which is not confined to the classroom, and (j) developing strong communication skills. The author has provided a paraphrased elaboration for each of these qualities below:

(a) Connecting with students first. For all students to excel, teachers must learn about them and connect with each child. This is not just about finding out *how* they learn, but it is finding out *who* they are. It is essential that we get to know our students, learn their passions, and help them find out how we can engage them in their own learning.

(b) Teaching students first and curriculum second. Teachers must ensure that they differentiate learning and work to meet the needs of *each* student and understand how they each learn. I believe that students have different learning styles and if we can best figure out how to help them meet their own needs, students will excel in the subject areas we teach.

(c) Ensuring that the teacher emphasizes the relevance of the curriculum to the **students' lives**. The question, "What does this have to do with real life?" is something that I would prefer never be said in a classroom. Not because it is not a legitimate question, but because teachers should understand the relevance of everything they teach. A master teacher knows that it is essential to use technology in the classroom to enhance learning in a way that is relevant to students.

(d) Working with students to develop a love of learning. We are obligated to teach curriculum objectives but we are also obligated professionally to help students find their own learning style. A master teacher will try to tap into those ways that students love to learn and build upon them. Creating that spark in each student will lead them to continued academic success and growth.

(e) Modeling and celebrating lifelong learning. A master teacher knows that she will never become the "perfect" teacher since that is unattainable. Master teachers will seek to grow along with their students. Education is a constantly evolving discipline and a master teacher knows that she needs to change with it to maintain relevance. Growth is essential as a teacher. Society changes continuously and so do its needs. We need reflective practitioners in our workplace and teachers must show that they are committed to such "habits of mind."

(f) Focusing on learning goals as opposed to performance goals. In the book "Drive," Pink (2011) talks about the difference between performance and learning goals. A performance goal, he suggests, would be similar to having students desiring to receive an "A" in French; whereas, a learning goal would be represented in a student's desire to become fluent in the language. A master teacher sets goals based on learning not on simply receiving a grade.

(g) Ensuring that "character education" is an essential part of learning. Character education is just as relevant, if not more so, than any learning objectives set out in a curriculum. We live in a world where collaboration is vital to success and working with others is an important skill. Working with students to teach the fundamentals of respecting others and being able to listen and learn from others is vital. Students can understanding the learning objectives of a lesson, but not possess the ability to share these ideas with others in a respectful way. A master teacher ensures that students not only grow academically in class, but also socially and emotionally.

(h) Being passionate about the content they teach. If a teacher works in the area of math and loves the subject area that passion will spill over to the students he/she works with. A master teacher shares her passion and enthusiasm with her colleagues.

(i) Seeing their role as a "school teacher," which is not confined to the classroom. It is essential that master teachers not only impact the learning environment of the class, but also have an impact on the school culture. This can happen in sharing their passion through extracurricular activities or their discrete skills with colleagues.

(j) Developing strong communication skills. Sharing knowledge with colleagues is essential to the growth of the individual as well as the professional community. It is important that these skills are continuously developed. It is also imperative that teachers are able to effectively communicate with parents because they have great insights about how their child learns best. A master teacher will effectively draw upon this knowledge (http://georgecouros.ca/blog/archives/267).

Similarly, Jackson (2012) posits that some important characteristics of mastery teaching invariably includes: (a) start where your students are, (b) know where your students are going, (c) expect to get students to their goal, (d) support students along the way, (e) use feedback, (f) focus on quality, not quantity, and, interestingly, (g) never work harder than your students (*n.p.*).

Recently, Buskist, Sikorsky, Buckley, and Saville (2012) surveyed 916 undergraduates relative to the elements or qualities of master teaching and found the following ten to be perceived as the most representative (in order of importance): (a) realistic expectations/fair, (b) knowledgeable about topic, (c) understanding, (d) personable, (e) respectful, (f) creative/interesting, (g)

positive/humorous, (h) encourages, cares for students, (i) flexible/open-minded, (j) enthusiastic about teaching (p. 36). Simultaneously, the investigators presented the same list of qualities to 118 faculty members and a comparison of the results showed that, whereas there was no hierarchical consensus among the two groups, the faculty participants included six of the students' top ten qualities in their ten most representative qualities list. Specifically, the faculty members valued: (a) knowledgeable about topic, (b) enthusiastic about teaching, (c) approachable/personable, (d) respectful, (e) creative/interesting, and (f) realistic expectations/fair, in that order. Clearly some of these qualities could be considered pedagogical skills and others appear relevant to relationship-building.

Teacher Effectiveness based on the Author's Investigation

The concepts of effective teaching behaviors and teacher quality have proven difficult to define, so much so that the terms are frequently rendered useless (Kennedy, 2008). One framework that appears to be more useful is Kennedy's (2008) categorization of effective teaching behaviors: (a) personal resources; the qualities that the teacher brings to the job (b) teacher performance; teachers' everyday practices that occur in and out of the classroom and (c) teacher effectiveness; the relational teacher qualities that influence students. Utilizing these categories suggests a schema from which to discuss the qualities of teacher effectiveness.

Recently, the author and fellow researchers designed a study to investigate the practice of teachers qualified as "very effective," according to a rigorous, evidence-based protocol (Austin, Barowsky, Malow, & Gomez, 2011). The investigators employed a mixed methods approach, which included interviews, video-taped observations of practice, and student feedback via a survey. The results reflected the findings of several similar studies, but also revealed a few that appear unique to the authors' investigation, and these important outcomes are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

According to Kennedy (2008), teacher qualities that influence students are labeled as effective. One way that effectiveness can be identified is by questioning students. Pratt (2008) and Biddulph and Adey (2004) studied the topic of teacher efficacy from the perspective of the student. Biddulph and Adey (2004) found that it was not the content of the curriculum that peaked students' interest in a subject, but rather it was the quality of the teaching and meaningfulness of the learning activities that influenced students' opinions about a teacher and the subject area. Pratt (2008) noted that elementary-level students preferred teachers who made them feel like they were an important part or member of a community, provided choices in learning activities, allowed for cooperative projects, made learning seem fun and used authentic and meaningful assessments.

Other researchers also reported qualities related to humor as effective traits of teachers. Mowrer-Reynolds (2008) found teachers who were humorous, funny, and entertaining to be ranked highly as exemplary teacher characteristics. In addition to being humorous, teachers who were easy to talk to, approachable and provided outside help often were considered exemplary (Mowrer-Reynolds, 2008).

The teacher performance qualities are those observable characteristics of teachers; this is what they do in a classroom. All three data sources in our study found strong evidence that the

behaviors represented in this category are exhibited by the highly qualified teachers, they speak to the importance of these characteristics. Furthermore, students find these behaviors desirable in general and acknowledge them in their own teacher. Within this category, it is important to note that the four-videotaped teachers in our study (Austin et al., 2011) did not exhibit the same teaching style, nor was it necessary that they do so. One of the teacher participants ("Teacher 2") best represented this perspective in her interview response, noting that "…a mixture of teaching approaches and strategies are most effective" and that she purposely changes her approach every "…20 minutes or so…" to keep students focused and interested. Additionally she notes that having the ability to "…read a student and know how to change one's strategy if it's ineffective" is an essential skill that can be taught to novice teachers (Austin et al., 2011).

Qualities of interpersonal behavior have been identified as important in teacher effectiveness (Kyriakides, 2005). Others such as Goldhaber and Hansen (2010) suggested that the relevance of interpersonal factors cannot be discounted. Identifying teacher effectiveness must be included in teacher preparation. The highly qualified teachers' of students with emotional and behavioral challenges utilized for this investigation exhibited the interpersonal behaviors from this category in all three data sources. Specifically it was interesting to hear from all four teachers the strong endorsement for forming a relationship with the students in order to promote their well-being both academically as well as personally. Finally, effective teachers understand that the teacher-student relationship can be difficult (Austin et al., 2011).

To summarize, the research objectives of the author's investigation were to examine the effective teaching behaviors of highly qualified teacher participants who taught, primarily, students with emotional and behavioral problems and to identify those behaviors deemed teachable for future inclusion in teacher preparation and in-service professional development programs. In the course of the research, the behaviors of four highly qualified teachers were observed. After analyzing the data from the videotapes, interviews, and student surveys, the researchers identified effective teaching behaviors (Austin et al., 2011). The importance of Kennedy's (2008) framework for breaking effective teaching behaviors into teachable components for general educators was supported and was demonstrated to be applicable to teachers of students with EBD. Specifically, the effective behaviors of highly qualified experienced teachers of students with EBD fell within the three categories framed by Kennedy (2008) for general education teachers. In particular, the performance category presents teachable instructional and interpersonal behaviors. These included strategies, such as awareness of body language, flexibility in accommodating different learning styles, active listening techniques, the use of eye contact, teacher availability, and incorporating a variety of teaching methodologies (Austin et al., 2011).

Conclusion

The author set out to provide the reader with a theoretical framework consisting of three elements of good teaching and good teachers; specifically, (a) relationship-building, (b) pedagogical skills, and (c) subject knowledge as well as a rationale for their adoption. Subsequently, the reader was presented with the findings of several exemplary studies relative to the characteristics and dispositions of "effective" teachers. One of them was a recent study conducted by the author and his colleagues (Austin, 2011) employing the framework of analysis

developed by Kennedy (2008), which identified three strategic criteria by which to examine effective teacher behaviors; specifically, (a) personal resources; the qualities that the teacher brings to the job (b) teacher performance; teachers' everyday practices that occur in and out of the classroom and (c) teacher effectiveness; the relational teacher qualities that influence students. Using this framework, the author's study identified teacher behaviors such as awareness of body language, flexibility in accommodating different learning styles, active listening techniques, the use of eye contact, teacher availability, and incorporating a variety of teaching methodologies as the ones contributing most to effective teaching as perceived by students, investigators, and the teachers themselves.

As a final point, although there was some variation between studies in terms of the most important teacher skills and dispositions relative to "good" teaching, they all shared, in some way, the three elements identified by the author; namely, (a) relationship-building, (b) pedagogical skills, and (c) subject knowledge. The author's extensive review of the literature on effective teacher qualities and behaviors has revealed that many of the skills heretofore considered intrinsic and therefore unteachable, can, in fact be taught to novice and developing teachers. The only two ineradicable traits that appear to defy transmission are a teacher's belief in her students' ability to learn, and her unwavering commitment to that conviction. Indeed, the research clearly substantiates Dweck's (2008) assertion that, "The great teachers believe in the growth of the intellect and talent and they are fascinated with the process of learning" (p. 194).

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