

The Role of the Teacher in the Classroom**Mohammad Al Ghafri¹****Ms. Tahaseena Syed²****Younes Audeh³**¹Head of the English Department^{1,2,3}English Department -Ibri College of Applied Sciences-Oman

P.O.Box 14, Ibri, PC 516- Sultanate of Oman

Abstract

This paper sheds some light - in detail-on the many different and diverse roles teachers play in classrooms. In order to provide the reader with the ultimate results of this study, a questionnaire has been distributed among a group of second- year Information Technology majors at Ibri College of Applied Sciences -- the Sultanate of Oman. We have found that students respect all roles played by their teachers provided that they- teachers- are more dynamic, energetic, caring, and utilizing technology in teaching. Suggestions, applications, implications, and conclusions will be thoroughly reported and discussed throughout this paper.

Keywords: dedicated teachers, highlight, parent, quizzes, role, tests, technology.

Introduction

Traditionally, the teacher plays a very important role, not only in the classroom, but also in the local society. In addition to providing his students with knowledge, he is treated as a model of virtue and extreme conduct and ethics. He controls the classroom very well; students sit in a traditional order: rows of benches, facing the blackboard, listening carefully to their teacher so as to grasp the ultimate knowledge offered. The teacher's role seems very much like a social worker: he solves students' problems, though personal, sometimes, and plays the role of a parent in many cases. This paper highlights the many different roles played by the teacher in the classroom in the present time.

Literature Review

The role of a teacher is clearly more than just planning and executing lesson plans. In some senses, because the teacher spends so much time with the students, she or he can become the student's third parent. Teachers can be a constant positive role model for their students, particularly for children that lack a solid family foundation. (Cox, 2018, Para.4).

Almost all students around the globe do need their teachers' care. Some of them are real orphans and need somebody to lean to, some others seldom see their fathers because of the nature of their work. Normally, the need for teachers' care depends very much on the student's age. "Elementary school teachers play an important role in the development of students. What students learn in their formative years can shape the men and women they will become" (Cox, 2018, para. 3).

Successful and devoted teachers are fully aware that the time spent for teaching is so short-- just a fraction of the whole time they spend at school; sometimes they have to contact, or deal with parents to discuss the progress of their sons and daughters. On some other occasions, they work with their colleagues at the same level in order to have a certain strategy or plan to follow in order to make sure their students are doing well. Moreover, they make and mark quizzes, tests, and final exams. All of these roles are played by teachers with no complaint. Activities are also included in teachers' plans as well--they might be asked to organize some workshops at school, graduation parties, or participate in local conferences, etc. The teacher's role might expand globally.

The teacher's role is more than preparing students for the job market or getting prestigious positions and ranks in the society; he should promote his students' ambitions to think and behave globally. Students have to have a complete idea about how the whole world develops which needs a good curriculum that helps the teacher to create witted figures who can bear the responsibility as global thinkers.

In addition to acquiring basic cognitive and social and emotional skills, a solid Global Citizenship curriculum should be introduced in the school system even in the developing world. Understanding how his or her own country is organized, and how it connects to a globalized world, will be of great value for the student. (Costin, 2017, para. 13).

In this case, the teacher's role exceeds belonging to a certain geographical region and becomes a vital figure who belongs to "humanity" in general. "A teacher that believes she is part of humanity and not of a region or a country tends to foster the same perception in her students". (Costin, 2017, para. 13). The advantageous and diligent teacher can support students, not only academically, but emotionally. If a student has a certain problem, or scared, the teacher should act as a caregiver to make

him/her calm down, and then continue. It is worth mentioning that schools are not just solid and concrete buildings – they are domains where students can mix, socialize, acquire knowledge and exchange ideas. Teachers should encourage students to feel they are one family and behave in a friendly way, and be more secure.

Schools are often the central hubs of communities. It is in school where children make friends, community events are held, and adults meet and collaborate with one another. Therefore, a teacher must also be a community leader. (Hughes, 2018, para. 8).

Another role of the teacher in classroom is creating an atmosphere in which students feel they are really immersed in what they are studying-- having a warm and direct engagement with the content. In this situation, the teacher creates an authentic experience for students to live and witness a very exciting, intimate and close relationship with the curriculum. Moreover, the teacher also paves the way for them to express their opinions, positively and/ or negatively, on the material at hand. Teachers should urge students to be critical thinkers; not to take things blindly, and should inform them that all curricula are designed, written, and introduced by human beings, not super creatures.

Curriculum is content, but when contextualized, it comes alive for students. The role of teachers in the curriculum process is to help students develop an engaged relationship with the content. Active learning will increase the focus and retention of the curriculum, resulting in exciting learning environment. (Maier, 2018, para.3).

Mentoring has very effective results in classrooms--teachers encourage students to work harder and do their best to enjoy their presence in the class. By being mentors, teachers become closer to students and start listening to and dealing with in a very positive way. Moreover, students become more confident, more industrious and successful, and become excellent figures in both, classrooms and future daily life.

Part of mentoring consists of listening to students. By taking time to listen to students say, teachers impart to students a sense of ownership in the classroom and their own contributions. This helps build their confidence and helps them want to be successful. Mentoring is a way a teacher can encourage students to strive to excel in the classroom and future. (Barren, 2018, para.6).

We-researchers- have been teaching English as an EFL/ESL for decades and every day we learn, develop, uncover, or explore something new in the teaching arena. We

strongly believe that the teacher is not just an image in a venue called “classroom”, and his role is not just to stand in front of a group of people and teach in a formal manner, either. His role is much more important--sharing and caring. The teacher should be humble, friendly, cooperative, and represent the source of knowledge and experience, not only in the educational field, but also in his students’ daily life matters, where he has already been years ago.

There is no wonder that there is a day called” Teacher’s Day”, which is a sign of respect for this person who exerts all efforts in order to promote the whole society.

Teaching profession has a powerful effect in changing societies positively. This cannot happen unless teachers are free, patient, and willing to perform their job in a relaxed environment.

If you are looking to make a positive difference in the lives of young people, you may want to consider this rewarding profession. Each day you will exercise your creativity, patience and communication skill as you present engaging lessons. (Maier, 2018, para.1).

Students become creative when given trust and freedom, whether in or out of class. This requires an experienced teacher who always makes them feel responsibility so as to take part in the whole process.

students work harder when teachers give them a role in determining the form and content of their schooling-- helping them create their own learning plans and deciding the ways in which they demonstrate that they have, in fact, learned what they agreed to learn”(Lanier, 1997, para.15).

Teaching is dynamic; it copes with all sorts of development in the society. In the age of technology, it seems that education has taken a new trend--using all possible means in making teaching easy, enjoyable, and fun. Therefore, a good number of teachers have utilized technology in this field--teaching.

The gift of the internet to the classroom gives teachers the chance to give their students a holistic view of any given subject while still giving students the guidance to find the right sources. In-classroom internet research gives teachers the opportunity to teach their students how to assess the quality of the information they find online while removing the one-sided restrictions of a textbook. (Mata, 2015, para.5).

All students’ progress in utilizing technology in learning should be supported by their teacher’s skill in this field. He should spend some time teaching them to be familiar with getting useful information from the Internet. The teacher- with the

cooperation of the computer teachers at school- should organize some workshops to train his students to use the latest ways of technology so as to be familiar with the technological development. Technology can be utilized in different ways.

The use of social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, etc. can also be used by teachers in different ways such as forming online groups through which tasks could be shared and done, video-conferences conducted, discussions performed, etc. All that can support the teacher's role and weave strong ties with his students even while they are out of school. Mata (2015, para. 13), concludes: "unlike in previous decades modern teachers recognize the critical importance technology plays in teaching tomorrow's leaders. If a school district decides to implement or encourage technology, they probably won't experience much (if any) backlash from educators".

A good number of teachers believe in education with no boundaries. They encourage their students and let them enjoy having good chances to collaborate and keep in touch with other students in different continents. This helps all students to exchange ideas and knowledge. Savvidis (2016, para. 5), stresses that "technology can encourage collaboration with students in the same classroom, same school and even with other classrooms around the world". When lessons are explained in different ways, they attract students' attention and become more enjoyable. Smart teachers might play the role of "producers" in the classrooms by mixing technology with the material at hand. In this case, students become, both, more focused and more productive.

Technology provides different opportunities to make learning more fun and enjoyable in terms of teaching [the] same things in new ways. For instance, delivering teaching through gamification, taking students on virtual field trips and using other online learning resources. What is more, technology can encourage a more active participation in the learning process which can be hard to achieve through a traditional lecture environment (Savvidis, 2016, para. 2).

Some old teachers fear the vast spread of technology in teaching and believe that this affects and threatens their job security; as they are not so clever at introducing the material in the most proper way. Their role in class, as a result, might become limited.

The well-experienced teacher can determine the suitable role to play in the classroom. He can ask students to form groups, or work in pairs to discuss a certain issue. He might sit a side or move around and observe their work. Once a group gets

stuck and needs urgent assistance, he interferes for help. Now he is playing the role of a facilitator.

The teacher's main role is as a facilitator—there to offer support and advice when needed, and to provide the necessary scaffolding and teaching of skills when necessary. It is vital that teachers remember to teach and instruct their students in any particular skill or piece of mathematical knowledge that is required for the task. (Tout, 2016, para.4).

Teachers can play their roles virtually—they can give lessons, or deliver lectures via the Internet. Students should get computers first and start learning. Some educational districts, or teachers provide students with CDs and other guiding and helping resources to make it easier for students to learn. Online learning has solved the problem of those who cannot join academic institutions because of certain circumstances: living in remote areas, having no time to be regular students, already having jobs, but they are desperate for certificates for promotion, etc. Thus online learning with the use of technology has more significant potential to improve the quality and productivity of education. “A perfect blend of classroom education and online learning can help students achieve success”. (Thomas, 2018, para.8).

Methodology and Procedures

The population participating in this study are students in the Information Technology Department at Ibri College of Applied Sciences - the Sultanate of Oman. The researchers, randomly, selected a group of second year majors: 20 male and female students. They are in the Fall semester of the academic year 2019-2020. The researchers briefed them about the content of the questionnaire, and told them that their participation is just for academic purposes, and their names will be top confidential. In order to make sure they understand everything in the questionnaire, we provided them with an Arabic translation, in case there are some vague items.

Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study is to shed some light on the different and diverse roles that teachers play in classrooms. It was conducted by means of a questionnaire given to second year Information Technology students. It follows the “Objective” type of questions.

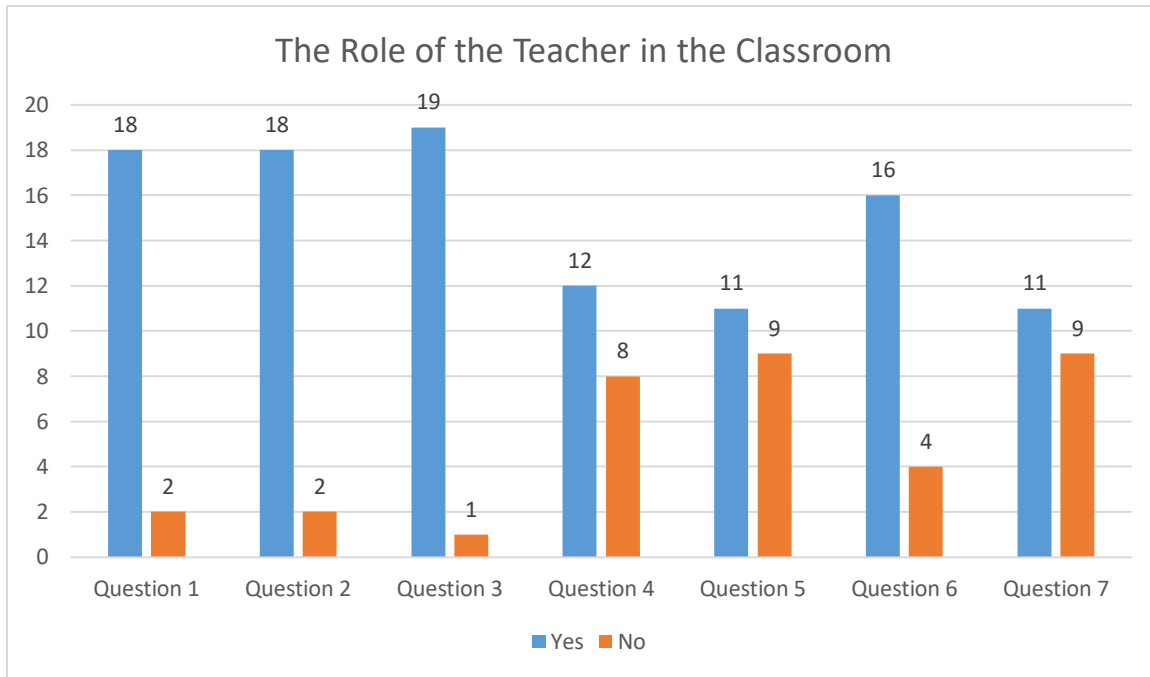


Table1: Shows students' responses to the role of the teachers in the classroom.

Question one shows that 18 students (90%) out of 20 agree that their teachers set good examples in the classroom. Moreover, they are teachers- honest in performing their duties and always do their best in the classroom. The second question that deals with the teachers' readiness and vigilance while teaching scores high; 18 students answered positively (90%). Teachers not only provide students with knowledge, but also assess them through class discussion, tests, and quizzes. Regarding the use of technology in the classroom -question3-, 19 chose "yes", which is a good sign of utilizing Technology in teaching: (95%). Question four shows that 12 students believe that teachers -sometimes- play the role of social workers; solve students' problems whether in or out of class.

Question five, whether the teacher plays the role of a surrogate parent, 11 students believe so, which is more than (50%) of the total number, whereas 9 students chose the negative option; "no". To be honest, students in the Arab World- in general- do respect their teachers and consider them as their parents or models of good deeds. Omanis are, by nature, so polite in all aspects of life, and do respect their teachers much. Question six was really astonishing-- 16 students said that their teachers play different roles in the classroom: facilitators, counselors, teachers, supervisors, and mentors. With regard to students' psychological conditions- question 7-, 11 said their teachers care about this case and normally allow for some fun when bored.

To conclude, students have clearly said that teachers play different roles in the classroom-- they are well prepared and vigilant, use technology to make the class as interesting and fun as

possible. Moreover, they allocate much time for conducting tests and quizzes, preparing for some local conferences or academic events, and many more.

Recommendations

-teachers should be strict, serious, but fair in teaching.

-teachers should avoid being bias, as students, sooner or later, will notice this unethical behavior.

-teachers should treat every student equally and evolve them all in class activities and programs based on their efforts, not on personal feelings.

-in case some noise occurs in class, teachers' reaction should be calm and balanced: know the cause of that and be understanding; students may have got fed up. Tell a joke so as to refresh them.

-teachers should establish positive expectations among their students. This behavior will let them feel secure and push them to more attraction and success.

-teachers may motivate their students by different ways: watching a short interesting video or exercise, some candy, provided that this should not be on a daily basis, or routine.

-lessons should be planned according to a flexible plan: monthly, quarterly, or annually.

-teachers should focus on positive things while dealing with their students; they may ask about the causes of students' absence, bid visits to the sick ones, smile in their faces, always encourage them to follow and spread positive values and always remind them that they are the leaders of tomorrow.

-there must be clear and understandable discipline rules that enhance teacher's mission applied to anyone who violates the expected behavior. Teachers should be careful not to leave any gaps in the discipline rules which students may use to escape questioning or punishment.

-be careful of confrontation: always be careful of the confrontations that make the student see you as opponent, rival, or enemy.

-remember that you are educating them. You must maintain your position as a teacher and father in the eyes of your students.

-your move to the humiliating confrontation of the student will turn the relationship into enmity,

and you will be the biggest loser when you give up your high moral position.

Conclusion

The roles and responsibilities played by teachers in classrooms are so vital; they help promote the educational level and create smart and industrial learners who can play important roles and become brilliant figures in developing their societies in the future.

It is really disappointing and frustrating not to have skillful teachers who cope with whatever possible and useful to push forward the educational process in classrooms in particular, and in the whole educational institution they belong to, in general. They can achieve that by lots of things --- being parents, teachers, counselors, facilitators, models for their students, etc.

In the age of technology, teachers are required to be aware of knowing the basics and principles of technology to utilize in the classroom. They should work according to plans, methodology, and constructive feedback to evaluate students' performance, and always keep them on the right track to get the ultimate benefit of learning.

Acknowledgment

The authors would like to thank all participants who played a vivid and vital role in getting this job done.

About the authors

Dr Mohammed Al Ghafri is a full-time lecturer and currently is the head of the English Department at Ibri College of Applied Sciences- Oman. He holds a PhD in TESOL / University of Leeds, where he also got his MA in Education. He has had different positions: an assistant dean, English supervisor and head of follow -up and training in the Sultanate of Oman.

Tahaseena Syed is an English Language instructor at the Department of English- Ibri College of Applied Sciences, Ministry of Higher Education- the Sultanate of Oman. She holds a Masters Degree in English, Masters Degree in Education and Post Graduate Diploma in English Language Teaching. She has been teaching English for EFL/ESL undergraduate and postgraduate university students for more than 10 Years. Her research interests include reading, academic writing, interaction between reading and writing and challenges in EFL education.

She has also finished many professional development certifications from Cambridge and Alison Learning.

Younes Audeh is the Head of the Translation Committee, and a lecturer at the Department of English at Ibri College of Applied Sciences --- the Sultanate of Oman. He is an M.A. holder in Applied Linguistics from Indiana University of Pennsylvania- USA. He has been teaching English as an ESL/EFL for a long time. He has taught at a number of colleges and universities in different countries. His research interest is "Academic Writing".

References

Barren, V. J. (2018, June 25th.) Roles of a teacher in the classroom. Retrieved on Oct.

17th. 2019. Retrieved from: <https://classroom.synonym.com>

Costin, C. (2017, Aug.3rd.) What is the role of the teacher in preparing future generations?

Retrieved on June 9th. 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/what-is-the-role-of-teachers-in-preparing-future-generations>

Cox, J. (2018, July. 26th.) What is the role of the teacher? Retrieved on Oct. 17th. 2018. Retrieved

from: <https://www.thoughtco.com>

Hughes, D. (2015, Dec.19th.) What are the roles of a teacher? Retrieved on June 9th. 2019.

Retrieved from: [Https:// study.com](https://study.com)

Lanier, T. J. (1997, July.1st.) Redefining the role of the teacher: It's a Multifaceted

Profession, a closer look at what being an educator really means. Retrieved on June. 9th.

Retrieved from: <https://www.Edutopia.org/defining-role-teacher>

Mata, W. (2015, March 25th.) The importance of technology in the classroom. Retrieved on

June.10th. Retrieved from: <http://centretechnologies.com>

Meier, S. K. (2018, July 1st.) Role of teachers in the curriculum process. Retrieved on June

9th. 2019. Retrieved from: <https://work.Chrom.com/role-teachers-curriculum-process-5344>.

Html.

- (2018, Sep. 24th.) What is the role of teachers in education? Retrieved on: Oct.17th.2018.

Retrieved from: <https://work.chron.com/role-teachers-education-8807.html>

Savvidis, p. (2016, Feb.18th.) Top 6 benefits of using technology in the

classroom. Retrieved on: June 20th. 2019. Retrieved from

<https://www.webanywhere.co.uk>

Thomas, J. B. (2018, March 18th.) Role of technology in the

teaching methods. Retrieved on: June 21st. 2019. Retrieved from:

<https://www.poweulschools.org>

Tout, D. (2016, June 16th.) The teacher as a facilitator and resource

person. Retrieved on: June 20th. 2016. Retrieved from:

<https://www.teachermagazine.com.au>

Appendices

Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information for an article titled "the Role of the Teacher in the Classroom". This information will not be misused and you will not be identified. Thank you for your co-operation. "

الهدف من هذه الاستبانة هو جمع معلومات لمقالة بعنوان "دور المدرس في غرفة الصف"

Questions

المدرس مثال يحتذى في غرفة الصف؛ فهو يغرس فينا القيم مثل: الامانة، الادب، الاخلاق, وروح المسؤولية.

1. The teacher sets a good example in the classroom; honesty, politeness, ethics, and responsibility.

(A) Yes (B) No

المدرس دائما على استعداد ويقظة؛ فهو يزودنا بالمعرفة اللازمة، ويقومنا من خلال المشاركة الصفية والامتحانات والاختبارات القصيرة.

2. The teacher is always well-prepared and vigilant. He provides us with knowledge and assesses us through class discussion, tests and quizzes.

(A) Yes (B) No

المدرس يستخدم التكنولوجيا في التدريس

3. The teacher utilizes technology in teaching

(A) Yes (B) No

احيانا المدرس يلعب دور المصلح الاجتماعي: فهو يساعد في حل مشاكلنا سواء داخل غرفة الصف، ام خارجها

4. The teacher-sometimes- plays the role of a social worker; he solves our problems whether in, or out of class.

(A) Yes (B) No

شخصيا، اعتبر المدرس بمثابة والدي.

5. Personally, I consider my teacher as a "surrogate" parent.

(A) Yes (B) NO

يقوم المدرس بالادوار التالية في غرفة الفصل: الميسر،المستشار، المعلم، المرشد، الناصح الامين.

6. The teacher plays the following roles in the classroom: facilitator, counselor, teacher, supervisor, and mentor.

(A) Yes (B) No

المدرس يهتم بحالتنا النفسية، فعندما نشعر بالملل، فإنه يمنحنا شيئاً من الراحة

7. The teacher does care about our psychological conditions; when we get bored, he allows for some fun

(A) Yes (B) No