

## TEACHERS' COMPETENCIES LEADING TO THE EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Ana Živković<sup>166</sup>  
Radovan Tmušić<sup>167</sup>  
Stanko Bulajić<sup>168</sup>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31410/limen.2018.534>

---

**Abstract:** *Having in mind the new educational environment imposed by actual multicultural society and IT development among other factors, one cannot fail to notice the new generation of students with different aspirations and demands. The students of today are surrounded by devices and gadgets that provide prompt information. The educational system should adapt to the actual reality and keep the pace with the upcoming challenges. Therefore arises the need for development of new teachers' competencies with the ability to respond to demands and needs of the contemporary society. In this paper we suggest the possible solutions to this problem that would be applicable to the new so called "digital natives" of the future.*

**Keywords:** *teacher's competencies, teacher's role, effective learning, classroom management, digital natives*

---

### INTRODUCTION

The students of today have different references than the previous generations. Mostly they are individualists, consumerists, attached to their mobiles and tablets who feel free and independent in the world of liberal democracy which was impossible a decade or two ago. They are living in the era of Internet Technology surrounded by devices and gadgets that provide prompt information. Social Media and Networking allow them to connect with people all around the globe and share their views and information. The various resources have never been closer to them than today. Accustomed to gain the information with not more than one click on their smartphone or iPad, the 21<sup>st</sup> century students want prompt information that can be used at the time in the real word. (Živkovic, A, 2018: 325-328)

Goleman (2016) implies that nowadays students are more oriented towards technologies than to other persons. The students use technologies to communicate with others their point of views, interests and attitudes. Impacted by various media of communication and social network, their values, aspirations as well as demands vary and have tendency to change rapidly.

In the world overwhelmed with information arises the need for conceptual and coherent knowledge. The accumulation, selection and coherent synthesis of the information becomes one of teacher's challenge of today. One of the issues in the teacher's job nowadays is to choose relevant content suitable for their students. Therefore, arises the need of developing skills to search for the information, select the most relevant ones, and finally understand and interpret what we have found out. The fact we should never forget is that students do not even have to

---

<sup>166</sup> Autonomous University of Madrid - Spain, School of Education and Teacher Training

<sup>167</sup> School of Engineering Management, Belgrade, Serbia

<sup>168</sup> School of Engineering Management, Belgrade, Serbia

---

go for the information. On the contrary, the information finds a way to them in the most amusing and interesting forms compared to the scholar ones. The schools seem to fail being the main source of knowledge. The new school should guide, organize and teach the students the most effective ways to learn and socialize themselves.

Having in mind this complex and diverse environment and world standards for teacher competence, in this paper we are proposing some possible changes and additional skills the teacher should have so as to create a conducive environment for the effective learning and classroom management.

## **TEACHER COMPETENCIES FOR AN EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT**

At the very beginning we would like to point out the difference between the terms *competence* and *competency*. McConnell (2001:14) describe the term *competence* as a comprehensive concept of capabilities, while *competency* is more specific and narrower concept used to refer to particular abilities and forms as a part of *competence*. In other terms the competence mainly refers to functional areas. On the other hand, competency refers to behavioral areas, describing skills, knowledge, experience, as well as other personal traits or attributes that are necessary for the task or job performance.

Analyzing the behavior of some professors considered good, Muttray and Renaud (1995) find that those teachers tend to speak expressively, move through the class, and tend to be enthusiastic and clear, call the students by their names, ask questions, respect their students and keep good communication with them. Another researcher, Henry (1994), makes the difference between expert teachers (twenty years of teaching exercise) and experienced teachers (sixteen years and over teaching). The studies of Bernieri (1991) indicated the relationship between the student's performance and the interpersonal sensitivity of the teachers. Research by Helmke and Schrader (1991) showed that students learned more if teachers: a) were sensitive, tolerant, and patient; b) were able to adapt to individual differences; c) presented the contents in an interesting and motivating way; d) provided an affective environment, integrating humor and praise; e) presented the information in a clear way and checked if the students understood the matter. The researchers also paid attention to how teacher listen to the students. (Oldfather, 1993:3).

Cano, E. (2007:41) points out that when considering teaching skills, it is necessary to take into account the disciplinary competency, the methodological competency, the social competency and the personal competency, as well as to know how to apply all these competencies integrated in each context. Referring to the university context, Zabalza, M.A. (2007:70-169) proposes the ten teaching competencies as follows:

- to be able to monitor the teaching-learning process
- to select and prepare disciplinary content
- to provide understandable and well-organized information and explanations (communicative competency)
- to manage new technologies
- to design the methodology and organize the activities
- to communicate and interact with students
- to conduct tutoring with students and colleagues
- to evaluate learning and acquisition processes
- to reflect and investigate the teaching, to recognize the weak and strong points for the continual improvement

Having in mind previous research findings, and in regard to competency concept of the authors Bernal Agudo and Texido Saballs (2012), in continuation we propose, in our opinion, the most important teaching competencies that teachers should possess or develop in order to manage the class effectively.

**1. Competency to synthesize the information and conceptualize knowledge/interdisciplinary aspect**

As the society is making progress accompanied by development in information and communication technology, the new knowledge is being incorporated in different school subjects and programs. One of the challenges of today is to choose the adequate content relevant for our students.

Other possible issue is how to structure this information and organize it in a way that is applicable for students. This aspect implies new teachers' skills and competences, so as to help their students to use the information selectively and make the learning process more effective. Abundance of information and use of ICT in the classroom brings within a need for an interdisciplinary approach to the teaching/learning process.

**2. Competency for life-long learning and continual improvement** – As we witness the world changing rapidly, we can take it for certain that the knowledge we impart in our schools today is relative and has the expiry date. The learning process needs to keep the pace with these rapid changes making the learning process continual and life-long. One should never stop improving his/her knowledge. In the USA is being speculated the idea of establishing the expiry date for university degrees and possible need for renewing licenses.

**3. ICT Competency** – Prensky (2011) finds that the role of technology in education is to give support to the “partnering pedagogy” and to enable each student to personalize the learning process.

On the other hand, the integration of technology, and in particular, Internet Communication Technology (ICT) changes the role of teacher, shifting it from earlier information transmitter's role rather to facilitator's or supervisor's role in the learning process. The teaching process is oriented towards the students and their individual needs and interests making the learning process more personalized and unique. (Bernal Agudo; Saballs, 2012:201)

The Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) might represent the powerful tool for improving both efficiency and effectiveness of education. The impact of ICT on learning process mostly depends on teacher awareness of its power as well as on teacher's motivation to implement it in the classroom. The issue we are facing today, according to Prensky (2011), is that while the students are behaving like “digital natives” our teachers behave more like “digital immigrants”, as they still keep adapting to the world of technology, being always one step behind. The challenge of today is how to help our students to better organize and understand the information and continuously transfer it to useful critical knowledge.

The integration of the ICT in education implies the new role of teacher as Information consultant, group coordinator, knowledge facilitator, supervisor. On the other hand, this new learning environment makes student more independent, responsible and collaborative.

R. Davis (2008) points out that possible teachers' dissatisfaction with use of ICT in the classroom does not come from technology itself, but from inadequate training on how this technology should be used.

As proposed by UNESCO (2008), both teachers and students must use the ICT effectively. In this process the main role of the teacher is to help the students to gain these capabilities, and to design learning opportunities. For this task, the teacher needs to be ICT literate and to know to use ICT adequately. Therefore, it is not only necessary to know how to use these tools, but also to know all the potential they bring together, and to know to choose the most relevant one for the application in classroom. The effective teacher nowadays needs to link the way of teaching process with the subject content and relevant technology to be used in the teaching/learning process. This leads to a new teaching approach called TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge). The teachers should support the critical thinking of the students and assist them in developing the cognitive and meta-cognitive skills.

4. **Communication competency** – implies receptive, comprehensive and expressive capabilities. Therefore, different types of communication competency the teacher needs to dominate: *Linguistic competency*, *Didactic communication competency* (ability to establish communicative exchange with pedagogical and didactical effect on students' achievements). Apart from the didactics the teacher should have social and cultural knowledge in order to facilitate the learning process. Exposing subject content in front of the students requires both preparation and reflection. On the other hand, the contemporary teachers are not only transmitting the information, they are rather performing a communicative exchange in form of constant interaction, dialog, or reflection. *Interactive Communication Competency* is more related to emotional and affective aspects. The teacher needs to establish affective relationship with all parties involved in education system, manage conflicts and emotions, which implies good empathic skills and ability to listen to others. *Social Communication Competency* refers to teachers' persuasive capabilities as specific type of communicative skills. The teacher needs to know to how to persuade others as well as to collaborate on social network.
5. **Collaboration Competency** implies that teachers' knowledge has limitations. A teacher is a person and not an omnipotent being who knows everything. Therefore, arises a necessity for collaboration with other teachers. The teachers should work in teams so as to learn from others. Exchanging experience and ideas with others, opens the mind to different possibilities and solutions. The teachers should overcome the old days' habit to give lectures and preach. They should admit to themselves that they need to listen and learn from others, both their colleagues and students alike. Therefore, they should create open and friendly environment that encourages the team spirit, collaboration and mutual respect.
6. **Interpersonal Relationship Competency** – contains two aspects: *relationship with others*, reflected in empathy skills, treating others with respect and affection, negotiation skills, cooperation, active listening, dealing with stress, nonverbal communicative skills; and *Intrapersonal relationship* or self-acceptance, reflected in self-esteem. In teacher-student interaction, the first impression the students have is the emotional structure of the teacher. This is why the teachers' vision of themselves is very important. The teacher who lacks self-esteem will find it very difficult or impossible to build the self-esteem of others, especially when trying to transmit dignity and respect. The relationship in this respect is a complex one, as the teacher establishes connection with group as the entity and needs to communicate individually with each student with special attention to their individual differences.

In the multicultural environment of the XXI century, the diversity is natural occurring. The age of homogenous classroom is behind. The idea is not to provide students with the same possibilities, but, on the contrary, it is to show them different ways and resources for fulfilling their needs and demands.

7. **Leadership competency** – as one of the most important competencies in education, does not imply literarily classroom management. It is more like bringing certain dynamics to the class. The teacher should transmit high expectations to students, respond to different demands, assist them in the learning process, transmit trust, create conducive environment. All these is achieved more effectively if the teacher is gifted with certain attributes such as:
- Charismatic / Idealized influence
  - Individualized consideration
  - Intellectual stimulation
  - Inspirational motivation
  - Psychological tolerance
  - Participations
  - Innovation

It is not important what and how they teach, but how they treat their students as well. The teacher not only teaches by what is he/she saying, but also by what is he/she representing. The teacher educates by relationship established with students, and friendly and creative conditions. As a leader, teacher should implement ideas for change and improvement.

## CONCLUSION

The teachers should not only consider what to teach but even more important what and how their students are going to learn in the most effective way. That way they should be more focused on the learning process of their students and ways to make the subject they teach more attractive and amusing. In order to achieve this proactive and participative teaching/learning process, the teachers should direct their attention to the students and their way of learning. By teaching focused on teacher, as we had in past with ex cathedra lectures, the whole learning process consisted of exposing the subject, and then being memorized and comprehended by students. By directing our focus on students and the process of learning itself, we foment their active involvement in teaching/learning process, collaboration and independence. Drawing our attention to students implies adapting to their context and habits, which means that implementation of the ICT in the teaching/learning process is something that today goes without saying.

The possibility to reach the information in an easy way makes the digital natives pretty sure that the obtained information is the relevant and true one. On the other hand, this creates illusion that they easily become experts for certain matter of their interest. As we all know, the unlearned lesson is a problem, and wrongly learned lesson makes it double. The teacher, therefore, has and additional task, which is to teach the students in the most adequate way. That can only be achieved if the teacher and students speak the same language, and for that we need new competencies adaptable to the ICT era, but also some old ones that could be adapted.

## REFERENCE

- [1] Živković, A. (2018), "ICT Impact on Teacher's Role and Student's Motivation in Language Learning Process" in EMOnt 2018, VIII International Conference "Economics and Management – Based on New Technologies, Vrnjačka Banja: SaTCIP, pp 325-328
- [2] Goleman, D. (2016) *Fokusiranost*, Geopetika, Beograd
- [3] McConnell, E. A. (2001) *Competence vs Competency, Nursing Management, Vol 32, No,5*
- [4] Muttray, H., Renaud, R. (1995), "Disciplinary differences in classroom teaching behaviors" in Hativa, N. (Ed.), *Disciplinary differences in teaching and learning: Implications for practice (pp 31-40)*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
- [5] Henry, M. A. (1994) "Differentiating the expert and experienced teacher: quantitative differences in instructional decision making". Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Chicago
- [6] Bernieri F.J. (1991), "Interpersonal Sensitivity in Teaching Interactions", *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17 (1), 98 - 103
- [7] Helmke A. and Schrader F.W. (1991), "Cognitive, affective and motivational goals of classroom instruction: are they compatible?" paper presented at *American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting*, Chicago, 1991
- [8] Oldfather, P. (1993), "Students' Perspectives on Motivating Experiences in Literacy Learning" in *Perspectives in Reading Research; NRRC, No.2*, 1993
- [9] Cano, E. (2007), "Las competencias de los docentes" en *El desarrollo de competencias docentes en la formación del profesorado*, Madrid: MEC, p 41
- [10] Zabalza, M.A. (2007), "Competencias Docentes del Profesorado Universitario", en *Revista de Educación*, 70-149
- [11] Bernal Agudo, J.L.; Saballs. J.T., (2012) *Las competencias docentes en la formación del profesorado*, Síntesis, Madrid
- [12] Thirunarayanan, M.O. (2007) "Degrees that expire. An idea whose time has come" in *UBIQUITY*; <https://ubiquity.acm.org/article.cfm?id=1226691>
- [13] Prensky, M. (2011) *Enseñar a nativos digitales. Una propuesta pedagógica para la sociedad del conocimiento*, Ediciones SM
- [14] Davis, R. (2008): Utopia or Chaos? The Impact of Technology on Language Learning, University of Utah, available on: <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Davis-ImpactOfTechnology.html>
- [15] UNESCO (2008): *Estándares de competencias en TIC para docentes*. En <http://www.eduteka.org/EstandaresDocentesUnesco.php>