

DINAMIKA BAHASA & BUDAYA

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Rina Supriatnaningsih
Sugeng Purwanto (Ed.)

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Agnes Widyaningrum



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TEACHERS: THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN TEFL

By: Katharina Rustipa & Timotius Lukito Santoso

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ABSTRACT

There are several factors influencing the result of teaching such as students, teaching materials, teachers. Teachers play the most important role in teaching because they manage the other factors. In teaching, teachers do various kinds of duties, i.e. supervising students, planning programs, managing time, material, knowledge, students, etc. Thus, teachers must fulfill certain characteristics such as must know the material to teach, must be able to manage, must be able to supervise, must be able to make decision, must be able to organize, must be able to communicate.

Keywords: Teachers, Students, Materials, Teaching Principles, Teachers' Characteristics

A. INTRODUCTION

Definitions of teaching have been stated by numerous experts in various kinds of books. One of the definitions is "the purposeful imparting of information or skills or both to another individual or group (GEK, 1995: 134). Another definition is "a systematic presentation of facts, ideas, skills, and techniques to students (Bram and Dickey, 1990: 164). Teaching may involve textbooks, television, and other media, however, it is still the human teacher who decides the content and the means of instruction. So, human teachers who makes decision.

Teachers are individuals who practice teaching. Teaching involves various kinds of duties, i.e. supervising students, planning programs, managing time, material, knowledge, students, etc. Teachers are expert communicators with their students and other people within the school, and they are decision makers, making numerous decisions in a class. Thus, teachers must fulfill these characteristics:

1. must know the material to teach,
2. must be able to manage
3. must be able to supervise
4. must be able to make decision
5. must be able to organize
6. must be able to communicate

B. FACTORS INFLUENCING THE RESULT OF TEACHING

1. Students

The students that we are going to teach determine the materials that we will give and our way of teaching. Finocchiaro states that in order to teach effectively it is important for us to know as much we can about our students. Some of our teaching procedures will vary depending on the students we are teaching. Factors of age, ability, aspirations, needs, native language, previous language experience need to be considered in teaching (1974: 31).

The age of our students will determine the way of teaching and choice of materials. If our students are children, we can teach them through games and songs since they prefer to learn language through games and songs. If our students are adults, whose native language habits are more deeply implanted and who will want to analyze the new language, we can ask our students to compare and analyze the native and the target language.

In teaching, we also need to consider the ability of the students we are going to teach. Are there wide differences among the students in our class? If there are wide differences among them, we should vary our materials and way of teaching so that both of the bright and weaker students can follow the lesson well. We should also try to find a way to use the ability of the bright students to help the weaker ones.

Before starting our teaching program, it is better if we ask our students their aspirations and needs in studying English. Do they need to learn English to get a job, to do a further study, to take a trip? Etc. It is particularly for adult students. After knowing their aspirations and needs, we decide the materials. Thus, the material we give to the students will be interesting and appropriate.

The native language of the students also needs to be considered in teaching English. Are there similarities with English? These similarities will facilitate in learning English, while the differences will cause difficulties in learning English. Therefore in teaching English, we should emphasize the different elements.

Before teaching, teachers should try to know the students' previous language experience, e.g. by giving pre-test. By this, we will understand how much English they have mastered already. Afterwards, we just decide the teaching materials, namely which will continue the materials that they have mastered.

Other factor which is also important to be considered is students' motivation. Motivation has an important role in studying English. There are two kinds of motivation: instrumental motivation and integrative motivation. Instrumental motivation is motivation to