Teachers' Personality

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Introduction

Personality is one of the most important factors for the second language learning not only students' personality but also teachers' personality. In fact, there are lots of teachers' personality traits shown in many researches. However, some of the important ones will be taken into account.

What is the personality?

A great number of books give different definitions on the 'PERSONALITY'. "The personality is the totality of character and behavioral traits peculiar to an individual. No two persons are alike in this respect, not even identical twins." (Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf, 2003, p.5) It is supported by Callahan (1966) that "personality may be viewed as the dynamic organization of those traits and characteristic patterns of behavior that are unique to the individual." In addition, it is stated that the personality is the performance of emotion, mind and behavior of each person which effect the environmental and social among people. (Trakoonngam, 1999, p.195 cited in Tungchitsomkid, 2001, p.132)

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The importance of personality

The personality is very crucial for the daily life of teachers. It affects their career. The most important aspect is the effect on students. Concerning the teachers' personality, it is important in controlling the lessons and the learning process. The interaction between teachers and students should be considered because personality plays an important role on it. (Lew, W. J.F., 1977, p.10) Moreover, it is true that what teachers do influences what students do. If they show some personality traits which are bad, their students will imitate on what they have done. “Many researchers believe that personality will be shown to have an important influence on success in language learning.” (Lightbown and Spada, 2003, p.56)

Teachers’ Personality

The first impression of students on their teacher may be external personality. It is very important and easy to demonstrate on the study. Consequently, there are five good personalities which affect the learners in the classroom.

1. Enthusiasm

To be enthusiastic teachers can create a lively and energetic classroom. Students will be satisfied with whatever teachers teach. Teachers can lead them in the learning process and they follow what teachers perform as well. (Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf, 2003, p.332) It is mentioned in learning and teaching (Kauchak and Eggen, 2000, p.132) that teachers are the models of good behavior. Enthusiasm is one of the most important factors. They use body language and interesting language to persuade and communicate with their students. “Teacher enthusiasm consists of at least two basic components which include (1) a sincere interest in the subject, and (2)
vigor and positive energy.” (Hamachek, 1990, p.399) The consideration is that teachers can communicate with speech, voicing and their gestures. Moving the body around the classroom, dancing and using their hands to explain something are preferable.

2. Warmth and Humor

To make students interested in the subject matter of the lesson requires teachers having good sense of humor. When teachers perform to laugh, it decreases students’ stress. (Fontana, 1977, p.170) It is supported that humorous teachers can make students awake all the time. (Hight, 1968, p.59) Besides, the warmth signifies the good interaction between teachers and students. If teachers’ personality is warm, students will dare to speak and express their idea. It seems that students perceive as teachers being second parents. (Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf, 2003, p.332) Tungchitsomkid (2001) mentions the sense of humor as one of the aspect being important. The classroom’s atmosphere will be fine.

3. Credibility

Credibility and trustworthiness which build a supportive and relaxed environment should be occurred in effective teachers. To make a decision whether teachers are credible or not depends on students’ judgement mostly happens at university level. (Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf, 2003, p.335) “Three elements seem important: your credentials, the messages you send students, and your behavior (Beatty & Zahn, 1990; Frymier & Thompson, 1992; Thweatt & McCroskey; 1998 cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf, 2003, p.335)
4. Knowledgeable

Many researches include the knowledge as one of teachers’ personality. Knowledge is essential for teachers. If they cannot memorize lots of subject, they will not be able to instruct students. Teachers have to remember everything that is important for their subject matter. Accordingly, being a professional teacher requires a good memory. (Hightet, 1968, p.64) Furthermore, the result from the research stated in *Teaching and the Teacher’s Personality* is shown that knowledge of subject is in the rank of the most important characteristics in two schools. Intelligence is necessary to take into account. The relationship between intelligence and second language takes place in the learners. Not only the high IQ learners can perform well, but also the low IQ learners can succeed in second language learning. (Lightbown and Spada, 2003, p.52) It is beneficial to be expert on the subject that teachers teach. Some researches have shown that the mastery of the subject is essential. In contrast, it is inadequate for effective teaching. (Chen & Ennis, 1995; Graeber, 1999; Peart & Campbell, 1999; Porter & Brophy, 1988 cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf, 2003, p.342)

5. Encouraging and Supportive

Successful teachers tend to be rather encouraging and supportive in their attitudes. (Wang, Haertel, & Walbang, 1993 cited in Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf, 2003, p.337) The overall findings and researches present that positive attitudes and motivation are relevant to achievement in second language acquisition (Gardner, 1985 cited in Lightbown and Spada, 2003, p.56) Motivated students succeed in second language learning not only by themselves but also by encouragement. It motivates students to endeavor on the lesson they might be unwilling to start. It is useful to help them learn from their abilities. Use the words or phrases to support the students when they face the obstacles. For instance, “You can
do it.” “What you’ve done so far is good. What could we do next?” “I understand how frustrating this is, but I know that you can do it” etc. This method may lead the students to be confident and can be successful in their tasks. (Cruickshank, Jenkins, and Metcalf, 2003, p.338)

Conclusion

Research about teachers’ personality is being continued. The personality of teachers mentioned in this article is important. However, to be an effective teacher, one needs to be qualified as this article outlines. Good personality of teachers is a tool to build up an impression and reliability. Each has an outstanding characteristic. Therefore, teachers should try to develop a good personality to become effective teachers.
References


