A Teacher as an Educator

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Abstract: This article discusses some issues related to the problems of being a teacher as an educator.

Keywords: educator, intellectual, moral, social, instruction, education, knowledge, experience, teach.

Educator is a person who educates pupils or students. He/she is a person who provides instruction or education. An educator is usually seen as a mentor, instructor, or a trainer. An educator does not merely teach, he/she gives confident his/her students intellectual, moral and social instructions. An educator is skilled at teaching; he/she focuses on development and evaluation. He/she evaluates pupils’ or students’ progress and adjusts the course or his/her teaching to suit the students’ level.

A person can be an educator without being a teacher. For example, parents are a child’s first and most influential educators. It is also important to note that some writers used the term educator as a more formal and elegant term for teacher. In such contexts, educator is really a synonym for teacher. Educator could also be someone who acts as a mentor and instructor or even a trainer. A teacher is someone who is in the teaching profession. They get paid and often require special training or formal qualifications, which is something that is not required of all educators but would depend on the type of educator and the content. The difference between the two may be thought of as formal and informal also. Informally, when a teaching role is taken on by anyone, that would be more likely to be considered an educator. But when it takes place in a formal setting, with paid professional teachers, it would be more likely to be called teaching. In settings that are informal, but still require the same degree of teaching, both terms can be used accurately.

An educator educates pupils or students and a teacher teaches pupils or students. This may seem like the same thing, but an educator does not simply teach, but can also give intellectual, moral and social instruction. The scope and depth of education that can be provided by an educator can be much broader than a teacher because their focus is on overall development and progress for the pupil or student. This often requires that the educator evaluate progress individually and adjust the material to fit the pupil’s or student’s needs. This is in contrast to a professional, paid teacher who will primarily focus on the pre-defined curriculum and syllabus for the term. This is what is taught to the entire class, regardless of their individual needs.

Teacher educators have diverse backgrounds and working circumstances.

Many teacher educators have been primary or secondary school teachers before becoming teacher educators. They have a bachelor's or master's degree in education or in the subject they teach. There are, however, also subject specialists and specialists in social studies with a master's or PhD degree, without previous teaching experiences, who become teacher educators.

Teacher educators work in schools, colleges and universities. For some it is their primary occupation, while others combine teaching at schools with being a teacher educator, or are professors in a subject area who hold an additional job in teacher education.

The scope of tasks and responsibilities of teacher educators is broad. Teacher educators teach a variety of subjects. They are responsible for the education of future teachers at both the
undergraduate and the graduate level. However, that is not their only responsibility. Those who teach the teachers are the linchpins in educational reforms of all kinds, which include taking diversity into account, ensuring that students pass high-stakes tests, developing the documentation required by professional accrediting agencies, complying with stringent new regulations, building genuine partnerships with schools or universities, parents, and other stakeholders, and developing curricula. In other words, new developments in education almost always affect teacher education and teacher educators. Beyond that, teacher educators are expected to set a good example for future teachers with regard to implementing these new developments in practice.

With regard to the content of the professional development of teacher educators, Murray (2005) concludes that the priorities for teacher educator induction are: acquiring the pedagogical knowledge and experience appropriate to teaching teachers, enhancing the scholarship teachers acquire through school teaching and developing it through published research outcomes, and becoming research-active. As far as acquiring the pedagogical knowledge and experience for teaching teachers is concerned, Murray's research shows that most former teachers have to discover in practice what it means to teach adults who are preparing to become teachers. In the following, we focus on the other priorities of becoming a teacher educator: enhancing scholarship and becoming research-active.

In the list of indicators which elaborate on this standard, teacher educators are required to systematically plan their professional development, stay updated in terms of theory and practical experiences, and document the process of professional growth for self- and external assessment purposes.

The aim is to guard both against the apprenticeship or tips-for-teachers model of learning to teach, which entirely school-based training might produce, and the irrelevance of theory to practice, which university-dominated training models may be perceived to produce.

Educators who come into contact with the chaos theory frequently liken curriculum and the process of developing it to strange attractors where the trajectories of learning cannot be predicted but, in the end, captured in the potential of one or the other attractor, only a small number of possible learning outcomes – one in the extreme – are achieved. To illustrate how this model is used as a form of scientific representation, let us examine a high school experiment involving a magnetic bob that moves back and forth across two magnets after it begins at a certain position in space and with some initial velocity (Roth and Duit, 2003). This constitutes a two-state system in motion in which its endpoint is unknown because even infinitesimally minute influences along its trajectory change not only the trajectory, but also the endpoint. Thus, the only certain prediction we can make is that the system will end up near one of the two attractors.

Self-study by teacher educators addresses the long-standing gap between what preservice teacher education programs set out to accomplish and the professional learning actually perceived by those who complete these programs and begin to teach. Those who engage in self-study recognize that learning to teach is more complex than those who enter teacher education programs might imagine. Self-study begins with a willingness to address the familiar gap between goals and realities by gathering data that can challenge and promote rethinking of long-standing assumptions. Principles of pedagogical practice are often an important issue in self-study research. Improving teacher education practices, at both personal and program levels, and fostering social justice have been significant focal points in much self-study research by teacher educators. The methodology of self-study is now well documented and the field is ready to more directly make contributions to our knowledge and understanding of major issues in preservice teacher education.

A pedagogy of teacher education then requires teacher educators to be involved in investigating teaching and learning in ways that will lead them to learn from practice while being involved in
practice. The issues, concerns, and dilemmas of practice become a major focus in explicating the problematic nature of teaching and therefore help to direct teaching of teaching.

Wrapping up the conceptual, theoretical, and empirical base in relation to teachers' beliefs results in a complex and especially challenging agenda for teacher educators. Though current conceptions about teachers' belief are rooted in a strong research tradition, it is not yet clear how teacher educators can cater to teachers' beliefs in an adequate way. Promising directions for future research and educational practice adopt a comprehensive view toward the education of student teachers and in-service teachers. They consider teachers as active agents with a central personal responsibility in the development of their professional competences.

The findings of several studies indicate that detailed descriptions of the contents of teachers' craft knowledge are relevant to student teachers. Researchers and teacher educators have suggested ways of incorporating such descriptions, often as cases, narratives, or stories, in teacher education. All these databases include interviews with the teachers, who comment on their videos by giving arguments for choices they made. Finally, links to relevant theories are provided. In this way, student teachers can easily access many teaching practices and are provided with information about the knowledge behind what is shown in the teaching fragments and how this relates to relevant theories.

**List of used literature:**

1. Bryant Jennings. Relationship between college teachers' use of humor in the classroom and students' evaluations of their teachers. Journal of educational psychology. 1980