

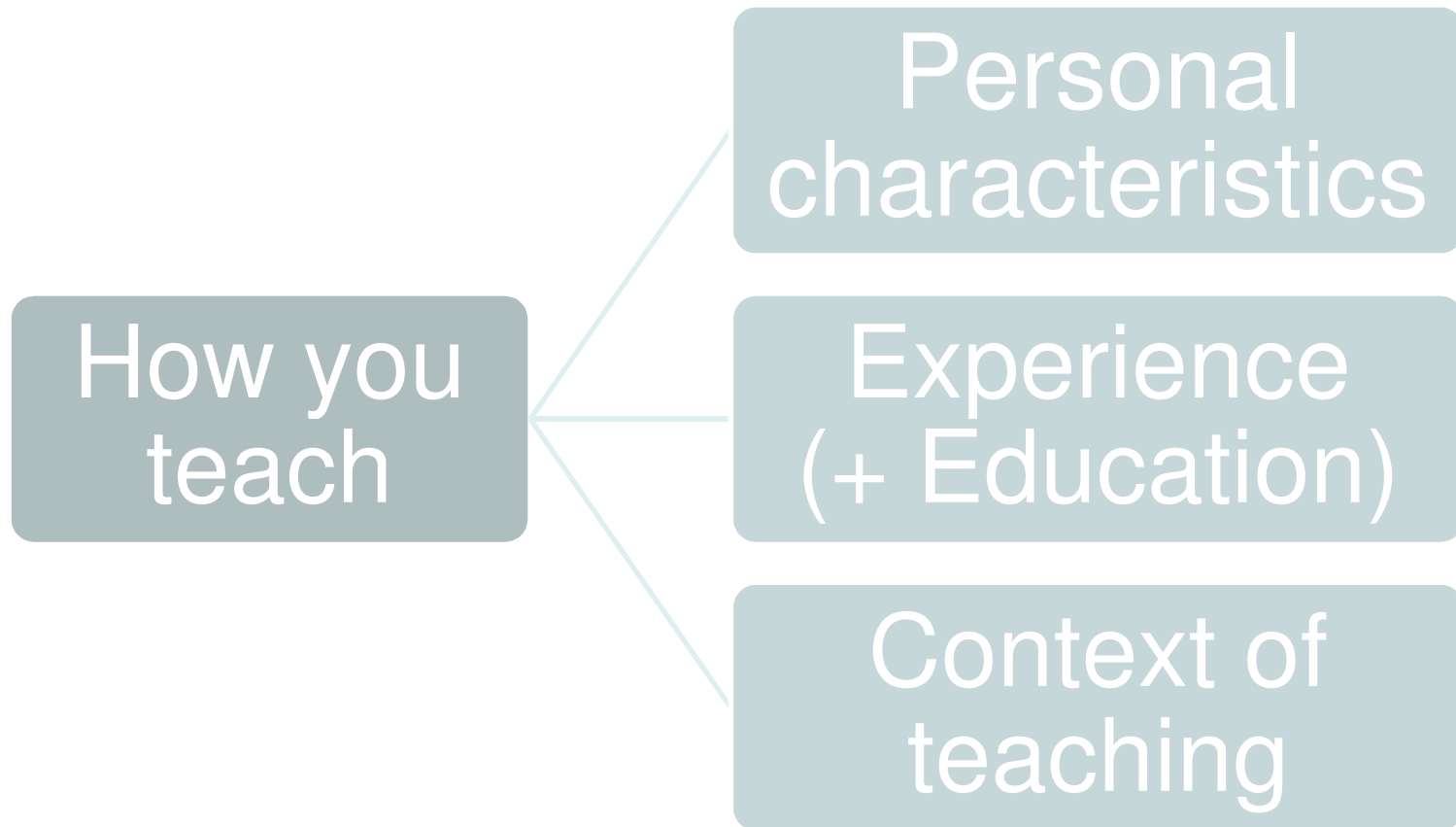
The Context of teaching

Lecture 2: Wed 20th Jun 2012

EDG11 Professional Standards
Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching
Tonga Institute of Education

Vilimaka Foliaki
Institute of Education, USP

Outline



Slide 2

f2

A brief outline of today's class.

Key factors that influence teaching:

They have influence your teachers and very likely will influence you practice as well

From research, three broad areas influence teaching (what, how, why teachers do what they do)

Vilimaka Foliaki, 6/20/2012

Personal characteristics: **GENDER**

Research shows that (on average):

Female teachers	Male teachers
More able to maintain warmer classroom atmosphere	More authoritarian and dominant
More tolerant of misbehaviours	More organised, teacher-controlled classrooms, task-oriented
Praise students more frequently	Send fewer students for disciplinary action
More likely to provide the correct answer when students can't/don't	
More students initiate a question or make statements	
Students give more correct answers	
More students take risks and guess	

Personal characteristics: **GENDER (cont)**

- The differences more prominent in secondary than in primary
- Female teachers consider boys:
 - as more active, loud, aggressive
 - Less teachable and hard to work with
- Female teachers describe girls as:
 - Talkative and sensitive
- Both female and male teachers:
 - pay more attention to boys
 - perceive boys demonstrate more initiative, more independent
 - Believe boys are less likely to criticise them

Personal characteristics: **GENDER (cont)**

- Both female and male teachers:
 - rate boys and girls the same – in terms of ability
- *White* male teachers perceive *white* female students as less able
- Both spoke of equitable treatment of boys and girls
 - Actions are contrary
- Student learning:
 - No effect of teacher's gender on how much is learned

Personal characteristics: **AGE**

Research shows that (on average) that age and years of teaching experience:

- < 3 years experience are less effective;
- Effectiveness improve steadily and peak at \approx 5yrs, dwindles thereafter
- Younger, less experienced teachers more satisfied with teaching
- Younger, less experienced teachers more receptive to change, innovate more
- Younger (and beginning) teachers more authoritarian
- Younger (and beginning) teachers given more demanding tasks

Personal characteristics:

PERSONALITY

- Personality – totality of character and behavioural traits unique to a person. For example:

Your personality traits	How each of these impact your teaching?	How might the absence of these impact your teaching?
Warm		
Sensitive		
Emotionally stable		
Enthusiastic		
Take risks		
Tolerant of ambiguity		

Personal characteristics: **BELIEFS**

- Beliefs guide actions. Research shows that teachers act on their beliefs
- Some important teacher beliefs from research

Teacher beliefs	Possible impact on teaching?
More-able students pose fewer behaviour problems	
Students should be organised homogeneously (e.g. streamed)	
Good learners can learn more complex ideas	
Attractive students are brighter and more sociable	

Experience (+ Education): Educational experience

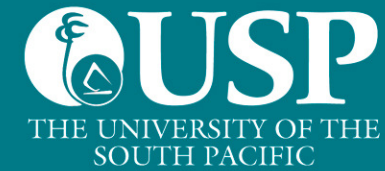


Educational experience	Possible impact on teaching?
How you were taught	
Learning style	
Teaching style	
Proficiency in your teaching subject(s)	
Teacher-education preparation	

- Still remember your favourite teacher(s)? Why are they memorable?
 - You **preferred** their teaching; their teaching consistent with your learning style
- Your teaching now reflects both your learning style/preference and the learning styles of your past teachers

Experience (+ Education):

Content knowledge



- Knowledge of subject matter (content):
 - Very important
 - This ALONE does not ensure good teaching.
 - We need also to know how to help students learn (pedagogy)
- Teachers' content knowledge affects BOTH *what* and *how* he/she teaches. For example:
 - “what to teach” - more emphasis on content we are more knowledgeable in (teach less/skip areas we don't know much)
 - “how to teach” – We are more likely to ask thought-provoking (higher order) questions if we are knowledgeable of content
- .

Experience (+ Education): Teacher education



- The better your knowledge/skill in planning, delivery, assessment etc, etc, the better your students will learn
- With no pedagogy, teacher is forced to use instinct, trial-and-error approaches
- Teachers with little teaching experience:
 - more authoritarian, more likely to plan lessons to control misbehaviour than to promote participation and learning.

Context of teaching

Contextual factors	Impact on teaching
Student diversity – learning style, culture, socio-economic background, developmental	
Size of class or classroom	
Resources – type, quality	
Available time	
Nature of learning objectives/outcomes	
Society priorities (e.g. TVET, ICT, Tongan language and Culture, ESD, Climate change, etc)	

Context of teaching: **Student diversity**

- Teacher has (or little) control over
 - Therefore, learn to know who they are
- New teachers tend to see class as homogeneous;
 - Ability to provide for diverse learners improves with experience

Context of teaching: Resources & Time

- A well-resourced classroom has a lot of potentials for instruction and meaningful learning
- Teachers are limited by unavailability of resources.
- Teachers in poorly resourced schools tend to:
 - lecture more!
 - do ‘blackboard’ experiments more!
- Time is a limited resource to teachers
 - Indirect teaching/exploratory teaching strategies used when time is available.
 - Higher-order skills are learned (better) when time is available

Context of teaching: Learning objectives/ outcomes

- Objectives/outcomes statement guide choice of teaching strategies and assessment

Context of teaching: **Society priorities**

- Pressure from outside about exam marks:
 - Teach to the test (exam-oriented curriculum)
- Desire to make good use of new technology
 - Use ICT in teaching/learning
 - Computers labs
- Climate change:
 - Reduce printing
 - Use of e-copies more

Some final thoughts!

1. Should teachers-to-be be screened by relevant authorities to find out if their personal characteristics, experience, and preparation make them suitable for the classroom in Tonga?
2. Which personal characteristics (gender, age-experience, personality, beliefs) of the teacher are most important in the classroom in Tonga?
3. What kind of teacher experience and preparation are most important for the Tonga classroom?
4. How can the contexts of teaching in the classroom in Tonga be used to best advantage