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# Balanced Teaching: The Role of Caring in Effective Teaching

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BALANCED TEACHING

THE ROLE OF CARING IN EFFECTIVE TEACHING

by

Holly A. Nase

A Research Project Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

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ABSTRACT

Balanced Teaching:
The Role of Caring in Effective Teaching

Despite a rich history of research and reform, educational scholars have not yet

formulated a working definition of effective teaching that encompasses the complexities

of the learning process.  Today, as policy makers demand measurable outcomes, teachers

are increasingly aware of their need to be effective in motivating their students to

achieve.  In order to do so, teachers need to establish balanced practices that incorporate

all three of the domains of learning:  (a) affective, (b) behavioral, and (c) cognitive.

Currently, the emphasis is on the behavioral and cognitive aspects of learning, but,

frequently, the affective aspects are ignored.  However, affect plays an important role in

the learning process.  Teachers can capitalize on students' affect to achieve cognitive and

behavioral outcomes when they communicate care to their students.  This project was

designed to encourage teachers to explore the role of the teacher/student relationship and

demonstrations of care in order to maximize their effectiveness with their students.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Teachers constantly seek out ways in which they might improve their daily classroom practices. The hope is that they might find the key to effective teaching. The reality is that effective teaching is a complex construct which is not easily articulated or prescribed. In an educational climate where, sometimes, students feel alienated and disengaged, what is needed more than ever is a balanced conceptualization of teaching that incorporates content and pedagogy with care.

Statement of the Problem

In the current educational climate of achievement and accountability, there is a demand for highly qualified teachers. The assumption is that teachers who have demonstrated knowledge in both content and instructional strategies are more effective in the attainment of increased student achievement. While some researchers (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Okpala, Smith, Jones, & Ellis, 2000) substantiate this claim, others (Ding & Sherman, 2006; Frymier & Houser, 2000) contend that these qualifications are only one set of variables that characterize effective teachers. When asked, both students and teachers were more likely to identify still another set of variables altogether (Daniels & Arapostathis, 2005; Ivie, Roebuck, & Short, 2001). They defined effective teachers in terms of the care that they convey to their students. This definition emphasizes the relational nature of teaching. The discrepancy between the two perspectives encourages all stakeholders to continue to explore what it means to be effective in the classroom.

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Certainly, teacher knowledge of content and theory play an important role, but as Frymier and Houser (2000) found, teaching involves "two dimensions: content and relational" (p. 217). Unfortunately, the latter is largely overlooked in policy as well as pre and inservice training. Educational scholars, like Noddings (2005) and Nussbaum (1992), have insisted that it is a dimension of teaching that can no longer be ignored.

## Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to design an inservice training to examine the interpersonal nature of the teacher/student relationship as it relates to effective teaching. A PowerPoint presentation is used to delineate the process through which students learn. The role of affective variables, such as attention and motivation, is noted. The exploration of this process suggests the need for teachers to develop caring, responsive relationships with their students which can influence student affect and facilitate learning (Frymier & Houser, 2000; Noddings, 2005). In addition, the specific teacher behaviors which convey caring to students (Teven, 2001) are associated with specific instructional strategies in an effort to enhance daily classroom practices.

## Chapter Summary

The current approach of defining quality teaching through the demonstration of knowledge in content and instructional strategies provides an inadequate portrait of effective teaching. It is this researcher's position that a more accurate portrayal incorporates the relational aspect of teaching as well. In Chapter 2, the Review of Literature, this researcher analyzes cognitive learning theory and research which indicate that affective variables are essential to the learning process. In doing so, the researcher considers the need to integrate affective and relational components in order to develop a

working definition of effective teaching.  The researcher demonstrates that these

components can enhance existing instructional strategies to promote student interest and

motivation which facilitate learning.  In Chapter 3, Method, the procedures used to

develop this project are detailed.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this project was to design an inservice training to examine the interpersonal nature of the teacher/student relationship as it relates to effective teaching. While a working definition of effective teaching has yet to be articulated, educational scholars (Frymier & Houser, 2000; Noddings, 2005) contend that the current interpretation of teacher effectiveness overlooks the importance of affect in the classroom.

Defining Effective Teaching

In their demand for teacher accountability for student learning outcomes, policy makers and the public at large have acknowledged the impact of teacher effectiveness on student achievement (Ding & Sherman, 2006). There is no doubt that there is a relationship between the quality of teaching and the learning that occurs; however, what constitutes effective teaching continues to be debated (Ding & Sherman; Nussbaum, 1992). Educational scholars have yet to clearly articulate an operational definition of effective teaching. In the meantime, the definition of teacher effectiveness continues to be operationalized in terms of teacher effects, such as educational background and experience, which are more readily defined and quantified (Ding & Sherman). Researchers, such as Darling-Hammond (2000) and Okpala, Smith, Jones, and Ellis (2000), who have emphasized the role of these effects, may have missed the point. Ding and Sherman argued that "there is great danger in equating teacher effect with teacher

effectiveness" (p. 41), as the former may not always translate into instructional effect and may have little or no impact on student achievement.  In other words, it is just as likely that a teacher with little experience may prove to be very effective in the classroom as it is for a teacher with a graduate level degree to be ineffective.

*Implications of the Learning Process*

Currently, the definition of effective teaching continues to remain elusive.  The established definition of learning provides an understanding of the variables that need to be considered in the development of a working definition of teacher effectiveness. Learning occurs in the three domains of behavior, affect, and cognition as the learner acquires new skills, attitudes, and knowledge (Ormrod, 2004).  The demonstration of skills represents learning in the behavioral domain.  The recall and application of facts and concepts associated with knowledge indicates learning in the cognitive domain.

In the current atmosphere of accountability, the emphasis is on these two domains, but the importance of the affective domain cannot be overlooked.  Learning in this domain is represented by the learner's attitudes and emotions associated with the learning task.  A review of the cognitive learning theory demonstrates the importance of affective variables in the learning process.

*The Role of Attention*

Learning is an interactive process in which stimulus from the environment is sensed by the learner and stored in memory for later use (Ormrod, 2004).  Of course, not everything an individual senses is stored.  To understand what is and what is not stored, a brief explanation of memory as a dual storage system is necessary. Constantly, individuals receive stimuli from the environment.  The stimulus to which an individual

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attends is stored temporarily in the working memory.  Further processing of this

information then allows it to move into long term memory where it can be retrieved later

for future use.  Attention, then, is the precursor to all learning, as it is required for

working memory storage.  The importance of its role in the learning process continues as

further attention aids in the processing that transfers information from working memory

to long term memory.  Information, to which proper attention is not given, will be

difficult to retrieve or forgotten altogether.  The same can be said for information that is

poorly processed.

*The Role of Motivation*

Attention is strongly related to other affective variables, such as motivation and

interest (Ormrod, 2004).  The definition of motivation suggests that it directs an

individual in both thought and action in an attempt to fulfill certain needs.  Maslow

(1959, 1973a, 1973b, 1987, all cited in Ormrod) described basic human needs by

organizing them in a hierarchical model.  In Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, five levels of

human needs were identified through which people progress as they seek to satisfy each

need in a particular sequence.  This sequence begins with physiological needs such as the

need for food, water, and shelter.  Once these needs are satisfied, people attempt to fulfill

the next level of needs, safety and security.  As people progress through the hierarchy

toward the highest level of self-actualization, belongingness and esteem needs must first

be met.  While the idea that a student, who is hungry or tired, an indication of unmet

physiological needs, will not be motivated to engage in classroom activities holds a

certain intuitive and instinctive appeal, this model has been criticized for its lack of

empirical support.

Interestingly enough, the needs described in this model continue to be reflected in contemporary discussions of motivation and human needs (Ormrod, 2004). For example, the concept of competence and self-worth as motivating forces reflects Maslow's (1959, 1973a, 1973b, 1987, all as cited in Ormrod) notion of esteem needs, as do the need for approval and achievement. Likewise, the need for relatedness and affiliation echoes Maslow's discussion of the need for belongingness.

As individuals strive to fulfill these needs, they are motivated in both thought and action (Ormrod, 2004). As such, motivation influences to which stimulus an individual attends. At the same time, motivation influences the amount of time spent engaged and on task, which contributes to the successful processing of information from working memory to long term memory. Motivation can take a number of forms. It can be an external force referred to as extrinsic motivation, or it can be situational, but the most powerful forms are those which are enduring and internalized, such as trait motivation or intrinsic motivation. As a form of intrinsic motivation, interest serves to promote effective information processing, in that attention is directed and maintained while engagement is sustained.

*The Affective Component in Effective Teaching*

Attention and motivation are integral to the pathway of learning (Ormrod, 2004). Without these variables, no learning would occur. Information is either lost without being processed, or it is inaccessible due to inadequate or ineffective processing. Teachers can maximize student learning if they influence student attention and motivation with the instructional strategies they choose to employ. However, the use of specific instructional strategies to influence student attention and motivation has been

focused primarily on the cognitive and behavioral components of learning, but the affective component has been largely ignored.  As attention and motivation fall within the affective domain of attitudes and emotional responses to learning, this oversight is remiss.  In fact, there is evidence to suggest that effective teaching involves two primary dimensions:  (a) content or cognitive and (b) relational or affective (Frymier & Houser, 2000).  Smith (2001) articulated this concept succinctly when she noted that "how we teach is every bit as important as what we teach" (p. 327).  Like artists, teachers must balance technical skill (e.g., content knowledge and pedagogy) with imagination and care (e.g., insight and responsiveness) in order to be truly effective (Frymier & Houser; Ivie, Roebuck, & Short, 2001; Sorensen, 1989).

*The Role of Caring*

In an effort to identify the specific characteristics associated with teacher effectiveness, Daniels and Arapostathis (2005) and Ivie et al. (2001) sought input from teachers as well as students.  In both cases, the response was that caring is essential to effective teaching.  Obviously, caring can be related to the social needs that often motivate human behavior.  This, in part, explains some of the power of caring in the instructional environment.  After all, in its most basic form, caring is a connection between two people which satisfies this universal need (Noddings, 2005).

Students who experience caring relationships with their teachers are motivated, even in moments of frustration, to continue their efforts out of trust for the caring that has been demonstrated to them (Noddings, 2005).  This notion was further supported by Teven and McCroskey's (1996) findings which "clearly support the theory that perceived caring generates more positive teacher evaluations and influences levels of both affective

and cognitive learning in a positive way" (p. 8). They concluded that students are more likely to attend class regularly, listen attentively, and work more diligently, if they perceive that the teacher has their best interest at heart.

Frymier and Houser (2000) further clarified this position. Their findings led them to conclude that the teacher/student relationship is an interpersonal one that can facilitate and enhance learning. "When a trusting and caring relationship develops between teachers and students, a safe learning environment is created" (p. 217). In this environment, students are able to ask questions and take the risks associated with learning without the fear of being judged or appearing foolish. This contributes to the level of learning achieved. At the same time, the encouragement and confirmation associated with interpersonal relationships addresses a number of motivational needs. Students' esteem needs are met through encouragement which elicits feelings of confidence and competence which may motivate students to sustain their academic efforts over time. Likewise, confirmation, which addresses both esteem and social needs, can contribute to student motivation.

Several researchers (Daniels & Arapostathis, 2005; Hargreaves, 1998; Ivie et al., 2001; Noddings, 2005) who investigated the role of caring in effective teaching found that it facilitates learning in other ways as well. Hargreaves explained that the caring involved in the relationships which develop between teachers and their students requires an emotional understanding that aids in the effectiveness of their communications. Use of this tactic allows teachers to approach their students more responsively and, intuitively, they know when to challenge and when to let go (Hargreaves; Ivie et al.). Noddings echoed this sentiment and noted that it is this responsiveness that is at the heart

of caring.  Caring teachers attend and respond to the needs and interests of their students.

In doing so, they develop curriculum and learning activities that are interesting and

relevant to their students; thereby, eliciting intrinsic motivation in their students (Daniels

& Arapostathis).  In addition, caring teachers, who have had the opportunity and desire to

become well acquainted with their students, have the advantage of being able to relate

material to student experiences, interests, and backgrounds to enhance its meaningfulness

and increase the likelihood that it is attended to and processed (Daniel & Arapostathis;

Ormrod, 2004).

*The Role of Immediacy*

To fully understand caring in the classroom, it is important to know that caring is

not defined as a specific set of behaviors (Nodding, 2005).  Caring is actually a relational

perception that is communicated through verbal and nonverbal behavior; often, it is

conceptualized as immediacy (Teven, 2001).  Immediacy, then, is central to discussions

of perceived caring and interpersonal instructional relationships.  As such, it has received

much attention from researchers (Chesebro & McCroskey, 2001; Christophel, 1990;

Frymier, 1993; Gorham, 1988; Teven) over the past several decades.

Immediacy is defined as the behaviors which reduce the physical and

psychological distance between two people and open the pathways of communication

(Mehrabian, 1981).  Initially, immediacy was operationalized as nonverbal behaviors

which include:  (a) movement and gestures, (b) smiling, (c) eye contact, (d) vocal

expressiveness, and (e) relaxed body position.  Gorham (1988) expanded this definition

to include verbal behaviors as well.  These include, but are not limited to:  (a) disclosive

statements, (b) initiating conversations, (c) use of students' names, (d) feedback, (e)

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praise, (f) humor, and (g) eliciting students' perspectives through questions and discussion.

Where Teven (2001) found immediacy to be related to student perceptions of teacher care, other researchers have investigated the relationship between immediacy and the factors that contribute to the development of interpersonal relationships between teachers and their students. Chesebro and McCroskey (2001) examined the relationship between immediacy and the relational variable, clarity. They found them to be meaningfully related in their contribution to: (a) positive teacher evaluation, (b) student motivation, and ultimately, (c) effective teaching. Also, immediacy has been associated with perceptions of teacher credibility, another variable that contributes to the teacher/student relationship as well as the overall effectiveness of teaching (Teven & Hanson, 2004). This is consistent with Sorensen's (1989) findings that demonstrations of immediacy were positively related to teacher competence.

In addition, behaviors associated with immediacy are positively related to learning (Gorham & Christophel, 1990; Wanzer & Frymier, 1999) and affective variables, such as: (a) attention (Downs, Javidi, & Nussbaum, 1988; Kelley & Gorham, 1988); (b) motivation (Christophel, 1990; Frymier, 1993; Patrick, Hisley, Kempler, & College, 2000); and (c) interest (Weber, Martin, & Patterson, 2001). Specifically, nonverbal immediacy behaviors, such as smiling and eye contact, elicit the necessary arousal needed to attract and sustain the attention associated with information processing and storage (Kelley & Gorham). Similarly, the use of humor and disclosive statements can attract the attention of students to information that is relevant and meaningful to the instructional message (Downs et al.). Other researchers (Christophel; Frymier; Patrick et

al.; Weber et al.) have found that teacher behaviors can modify the situational motivation and interest of their students which, in turn, facilitates learning, especially in the affective domain.

## Balanced Teaching

Considering the critical role that attention and motivation maintain in the learning process, a teacher's ability to influence these factors is relevant to student learning and the definition of effective teaching (Daniels & Arapostathis, 2005; Ding & Sherman, 2006; Frymier & Houser, 2000). A balanced approach to teaching acknowledges the multidimensional nature of the teaching/learning process where affect, cognition, and behavior are intricately woven together. To ignore any dimension in this process is a disservice to the learner. This position is supported by a model of learning (Rodriguez, Plax, & Kearney, 1996) in which affective learning serves as the mediating variable between teacher behaviors and cognitive learning.

### *Affective and Cognitive Learning*

The Affective Learning Model posited by Rodriguez et al. (1996) explains the role of affective learning in order to achieve cognitive learning outcomes. At the foundation of this model is the assumption that motivation is absorbed into the larger construct of affective learning which also includes "value preferences and commitment" (p. 303). This assumption is consistent with the original conceptualization of affective learning as well as current interpretations of motivation, in that, affective learning is best illustrated when students are motivated to engage in a task for the inherent value they come to see in it. It is this engagement in task/relevant behaviors that is so important to cognitive learning. According to Rodriguez et al., immediate teachers cause students to

acquire positive affect for the content and to appreciate the value of the learning task at hand which, in turn, causes students to learn cognitively through the amount of time they spend on task.

The learning pathway attributed to this model (Rodriguez et al., 1996) was further clarified by the work of Chesebro and McCroskey (2001) whose findings suggested that immediacy increases student receptiveness to the instructional message. They argued that even a clear teaching message can lose its effectiveness if students are not stimulated enough to pay attention to it. Teacher immediacy provides the stimulation necessary to attract students' attention while it influences the motivation necessary to maintain it. In this sense, the relationship between teacher immediacy and affective learning can be viewed as a means to an end in the achievement of cognitive outcomes (Rodriguez et al.).

*Affect and the Use of Instructional Strategies*

In light of these findings (Chesebro & McCroskey, 2001; Rodriguez et al., 1996), a balanced approach to teaching, which incorporates the use of instructional strategies with the teacher behaviors associated with immediacy, and ultimately, teacher caring, is presented. The goal of the presentation is not to prescribe a caring teaching methodology, but rather, to introduce the ways in which this essential element might be effectively integrated in the classroom. As such, the overlap between specific immediacy behaviors and instructional strategies will be explored in terms of shaping the affective variables that promote and facilitate learning.

In the classroom, teachers realize that, while students are always motivated on some level, they may not always be motivated to attend to what the teacher is teaching (Ormrod, 2004). Effective teachers employ a variety of instructional strategies that

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capture students' attention and improve information processing in order to facilitate

learning, many of which provide an opportunity to capitalize on the affective components

central to meaningful learning.

One such strategy is the use of organizational cues which aid students in

recognizing the information to which they should attend (Ormrod, 2004). By definition,

organizational cues provide students with an organized system for processing the

presented information (Ormrod; Titsworth, 2001). This aids in the retrieval process,

because information that is well organized is more readily accessible for future use. As a

result, Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock (2001) advocated the use of advanced organizers

in their text, *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-Based Strategies for Improving*

*Student Achievement*. While advance organizers can be expository or narrative,

classroom teachers may want to capitalize on nonlinguistic graphic organizers since

visual imagery facilitates the storage of information (Ormrod). According to Titsworth,

the benefit of organizational cues, such as advanced organizers, can be enhanced when

coupled with immediacy. Furthermore, teacher behaviors associated with immediacy

may serve as organizational cues in and of themselves (Downs, Javidi, & Nussbaum,

1988). Where nonverbal immediacy behaviors, such as movements and gestures, may

serve to cue student attention, the use of verbal immediacy behaviors, such as humor and

disclosure, may help to organize and clarify the information being presented.

Questioning is another strategy that can be particularly effective in instruction. At

the most basic level, the use of questioning provides an opportunity for repetition and

review while, simultaneously, it focuses student attention (Ormrod, 2004). Questioning

prior to the presentation of new information functions as an organizational cue and

informs students as to where their attention should be directed (Marzano et al., 2001). Questioning during the presentation assists students in maintaining focus (Ormrod). At the same time, questioning provides students with the opportunity to review and organize information for long term storage (Marzano et al.). Higher order questioning is particularly effective in the promotion of processing and storage, because it requires students to apply knowledge and information in such a way that it is necessary, first, for them to organize the information in relation to previous learning and then elaborate on it.

Similarly, the effectiveness of questioning is reflected in the behaviors identified as verbally immediate (Gorham, 1988). According to Gorham, questions which encouraged students to talk were positively related to student perceptions of teacher immediacy, as were those which solicited student perspectives and opinions. At the same time, the responsiveness associated with immediacy and caring (Noddings, 2005) encourages teachers to avoid behaviors which Gorham presumed to be nonimmediate, such as calling on students who have not indicated that they wish to respond. A similar connection might be made between responsiveness and wait time.

The effectiveness of questioning is maximized when teachers remain cognizant that the retrieval process takes time and allow adequate time for it (Marzano et al., 2001; Ormrod, 2004). When students are allowed time to think, the quality of their responses tends to improve (Ormrod; Tobin, 1986, as cited in Nussbaum, 1992). Often, this improvement in quality is related to student elaboration which contributes to effective information processing (Ormrod). In response to the improved quality and complexity of student responses, frequently, teachers demonstrate flexibility when they modify the discussion to accommodate and explore student responses and expressed interests. Also,

flexibility, such as this, has been identified in behaviors that increase student perceptions of teacher immediacy (Gorham, 1988).

In addition, the use of effective instructional strategies can address many of the needs which are associated with motivation within the context of the educational setting. Motivated to satisfy social needs, students tend to be interested in interaction with their peers (Ormrod, 2004). This tendency can be accommodated appropriately through cooperative learning activities. Elements, such as positive interdependence and face-to-face interaction which lend to the successfulness of cooperative learning (Marzano et al., 2001), can be associated with relatedness and affiliation. Teachers who choose to utilize this approach may need to model appropriate prosocial behaviors. Not only does this provide a context in which students can develop and practice these skills, it contributes to a relational atmosphere conducive to learning.

Corrective feedback has been identified as both an effective strategy (Marzano et al., 2001) and a verbal immediacy behavior (Gorham, 1988). Feedback promotes learning through the satisfaction of needs related to esteem, such as competence and self-worth (Ormrod, 2004). When a student is provided with specific information as to how to improve performance, his or her feelings of competence or self-determination are enhanced; that student is motivated to sustain his or her efforts in the successful completion of the task at hand (Marzano et al.; Ormrod). The same idea was presented by Frymier and Houser (2000), who emphasized the importance of ego support, which was presented as encouragement within the relational context of learning.

Similarly, recognition, also referred to as praise, is considered to be both a verbal immediacy behavior (Gorham, 1988) as well as an effective instructional strategy

(Marzano et al., 2001). Marzano et al. distinguished this strategy from the others they identified as specifically addressing the students' attitudes and beliefs associated with affective learning. According to the Affective Learning Model (Rodriguez et al., 1996), it is the use of this sort of strategy which causes students to learn cognitively. This is consistent with Gorham's (1988) finding that praise, as an immediacy behavior, is highly positively correlated with all three learning domains.

Chapter Summary

As attempts to define effective teaching continue to be made, it is important to remain cognizant of the central role of affective variables, such as attention and motivation, in the learning process. The importance of affect in learning is further exemplified in the relational nature of instructional interactions (Frymier & Houser, 2000; Noddings, 2005). In fact, often, teachers who exhibit care for their students are perceived as being: (a) more effective (Daniels & Arapostathis, 2005); (b) more competent (Sorensen, 1989); and (c) more credible (Teven & Hanson, 2004). A model of learning which posits affective learning as the mediating variable between teacher behaviors and cognitive learning (Rodriquez et al., 1996) supports the idea that affective and relational variables contribute to cognitive outcomes. The use of a balanced approach to teaching, which acknowledges the affective pathway to cognitive outcomes, integrates the immediacy behaviors that convey care with effective instructional strategies to enhance the learning process.

Accordingly, teachers should strive to employ practices that embody this balance in order to maximize their effectiveness with their students. In Chapter 3, the method used to develop an inservice training that explores such an approach is presented.

Chapter 3

METHOD

A growing body of evidence suggests that effective teaching requires skills in interpersonal communication as well as content and pedagogical expertise (Frymier & Houser, 2000). The purpose of this project was to encourage teachers to establish a balance between both components. Nussbaum (1992), in his analysis of effective teacher behaviors, noted that teachers want to be effective, and as such will modify their classroom behaviors, especially if they are convinced that the modifications will increase their effectiveness. Researchers, such as Christophel (1990), Teven (2001), and Teven and McCroskey (1996), who have examined the relationships of specific teacher caring and immediacy behaviors with affective learning, have noted that these behaviors characterize effective teaching. The isolation of specific behaviors that could substantially improve classroom instruction has led these researchers to advocate for teacher training and professional development programs that promote the benefit and adoption of interpersonal communication skills in teacher/student interactions.

Despite this appeal, the present demand for teacher quality places emphasis on content and pedagogical expertise. Currently, neither the encouragement nor the opportunity are provided for most teachers to reflect on their relationships with their students (Frymier & Houser, 2000). However, in order to motivate students to achieve cognitive and performance outcomes, teachers need to communicate care to their students and cultivate trusting relationships with them (Daniel & Arapostathis, 2005). As such,

teachers' reflection on their classroom behavior and relational skills should be prominent in professional training and development.  In this project, the author draws attention to the importance of caring teacher/student relationships as well as the specific behaviors that teachers may exhibit to communicate caring to their students in order to facilitate learning.

## Target Audience

Although a focus on caring relationships is important in all educational settings, it particularly applies to the alternative education setting where many of the students have acquired feelings of alienation and have disengaged from learning.  Teachers in this setting are especially challenged to motivate and inspire their students to become active participants in the learning process.  Until students are motivated to do so, there is little value in the knowledge or skill the teacher possesses.  As such, the development of trusting teacher/student relationships, which influence student motivation and affect, is critical to student success in this setting.  While the discussion and practices developed in this project may benefit teachers in all settings, the focus of this project is on those teachers who are faced with the challenge of motivating students in an alternative education setting.

## Project Goals

Certification and licensing guidelines that ensure teacher expertise in content and pedagogy do not necessarily equate with effective teaching in the classroom.  Relational communication skills need to enter into the equation as well.  The purpose of this project was to promote caring teacher/student relationships in order to enhance the effectiveness

of instructional strategies. The relevance of caring in the classroom is presented with specific behaviors that increase student perceptions of teacher care.

In Chapter 4, a PowerPoint presentation will be used to highlight the importance of affective and relational components in the learning process. Specific practices that combine effective instructional strategies and relational behaviors are offered in order to demonstrate that affective elements can be readily incorporated with existing practices to enhance their overall effectiveness. The goal is to encourage practicing teachers to reflect on the impact of their relationships with their students on the learning process; and thereby, identify and implement behaviors that maximize their effectiveness in the classroom.

## Procedures

In order to achieve the goal and purpose of this project, a thorough review of the literature pertaining to effective teacher behaviors was completed. The literature reviewed was selected according to the following criteria: (a) literature that is supported by credible quantitative and qualitative research should be given prominence; (b) literature that contains the opinions of experts in the field should be given consideration; and (c) literature should isolate and identify specific teacher behaviors which enhance instructional effectiveness through the affective learning pathway. The selected literature was synthesized to demonstrate the relevance of affect in learning and to identify the teacher behaviors most likely to influence student affect in the achievement of cognitive outcomes.

The teacher behaviors were further considered in comparison to existing instructional strategies which promote student achievement. The commonalities between

the two suggest the appropriateness of a balanced approach to teaching that brings relational skills and instructional expertise together. The final product embodies such an approach as a proposal for enhancing teacher effectiveness in the classroom. In an inservice training, a PowerPoint presentation is used to delineate the role of affect in learning to encourage the implementation of specific behaviors, as presented, in order maximize the impact of instructional strategies.

## Peer Assessment

After creating the PowerPoint presentation, this author conducted an inservice training for alternative education staff (e.g., instructors, administrators, and others). During this training, this author solicited informal peer feedback, which was used to modify the presentation in order to maximize its effectiveness. In Chapter 5, this author discusses the nature of the feedback received as well as its implications.

## Chapter Summary

This project is dedicated to the promotion of a balanced approach to teaching that encompasses both the relational and instructional components associated with effective teaching. The literature on effective teaching indicates that a caring teacher/student relationship is essential to the learning process in so far as it influences student affect towards the content which the teacher presents and the activities which facilitate learning. Through the review of literature, this author identified specific teacher behaviors that communicate caring to students in order to promote the development of these vital relationships. Likewise, this synthesis revealed commonalities between these behaviors and popular instructional strategies. The final product, which is introduced in Chapter 4, illustrates the importance of affective influences on learning in order to encourage

teachers to make use of the affective strategies to enhance the effectiveness of their daily

classroom practices.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this project was to encourage teachers to balance the use of

traditional instructional strategies with immediacy behaviors in order to cultivate positive

relationships with their students and, ultimately, enhance their effectiveness in the

classroom.  Teachers who demonstrate immediacy behaviors communicate caring to their

students; and thereby, shape the affective elements associated with meaningful learning.

As such, teachers can substantially improve their instructional effectiveness with the

inclusion of immediacy behaviors in their daily practices.

The predominant role of affect in the learning process should be reflected in the

teacher training and professional development programs designed to promote quality

teaching.  The purpose of this project was to develop an inservice training which

acknowledges the importance of the affective domain in the teaching/learning process.

To fulfill the purpose, the author created a PowerPoint presentation which emphasizes the

relational aspect of effective teaching.  An overview of the affective variables associated

with cognitive outcomes is presented; as is the connection between student affect and

teacher caring.  Specific immediacy behaviors which communicate teacher caring are

introduced and discussed in context with traditional instructional strategies.  The goal of

the presentation is to encourage teachers to adopt an approach to teaching which balances

content and instruction with caring.
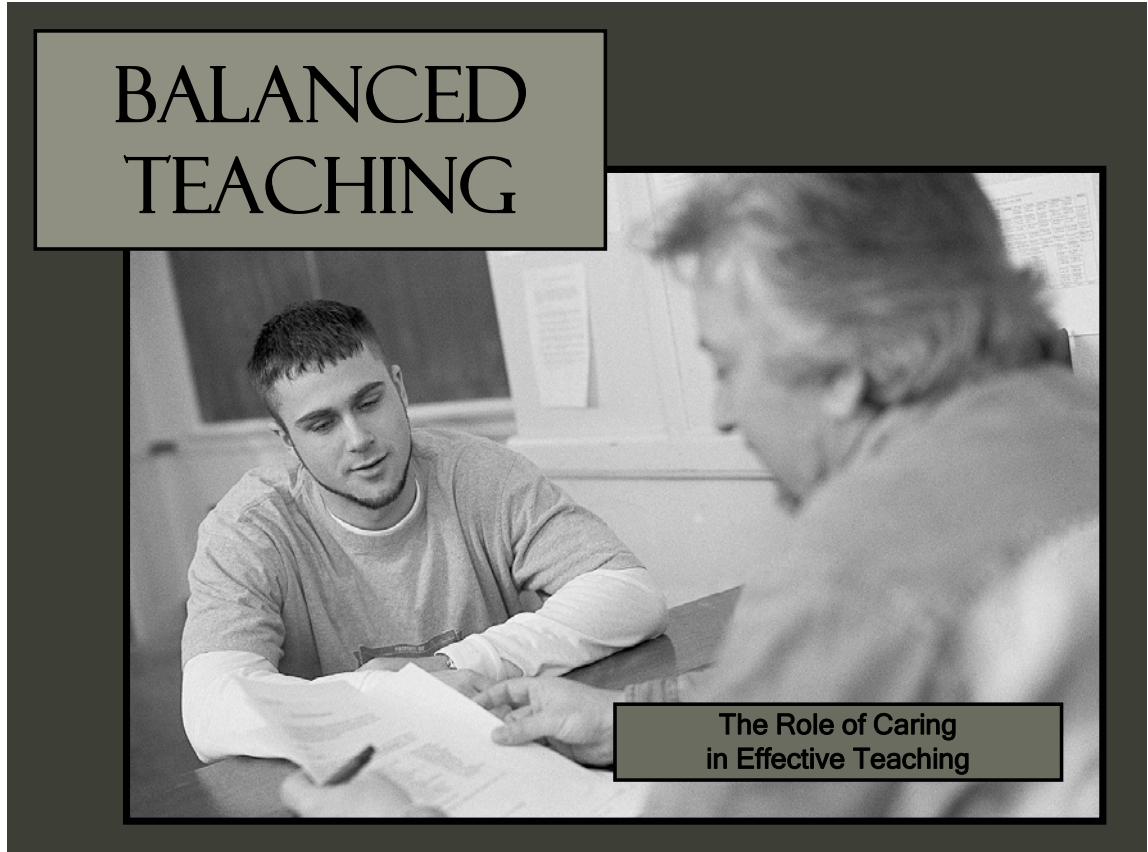
Slide 1:  Balanced Teaching: The Role of Caring in Effective Teaching

- Defining effective teaching

- Teaching as an interpersonal relationship

- Benefits of a caring teacher/student relationship

- The role of caring and affect in the learning process

- Caring in the classroom

## What Makes YOU an Effective Teacher?

Slide 2:  Current Definitions of Effective Teaching

- Experience

- Educational background

    - Content knowledge

    - Instructional strategies

    - Learning theory

- Certification and licensure

What would
YOUR STUDENTS

say about what it takes to be
an effective teacher?

Slide 3: Current Definitions of Effective Teaching

- Fun

- Interesting

- Relevant

Did You Know?

In recent studies,
students & teachers identified
*CARING*
as the most important teacher
characteristic related to effectiveness.

Daniels & Arapostathis, 2005
Ivie, Roebuck & Short, 2001

Slide 4: Caring: An Important Teacher Characteristic Related to Teacher Effectiveness.

- Compare and contrast to current definitions

- Re-examine the definition of effective teaching

**In fact . . .**

Researchers have found that effective teaching consists of two primary dimensions:

**Content & Relational**

In other words, effective teaching is a balance of instruction and care.

Frymier & Houser, 2000

Slide 5:  Two Dimensions of Effective Teaching

- Two dimensions of effective teaching

    - Content

        - Instructional message

        - Instructional strategies

        - Related tasks

    - Relational

        - Teacher caring (positive relationships)

        - Affective elements

- Instruction as an interpersonal relationship

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**Students who perceive their teachers as caring are more likely to:**

a) Attend class regularly

b) Listen attentively

c) Work more diligently

d) Persevere despite frustration

Noddings, 2005; Teven & McCroskey, 1996

Slide 6:  Students' Response to Teacher Caring

- Interpersonal relationships are reciprocal

- Teachers who are invested have students who are invested

- Student investment results in meaningful learning

**Caring teachers create an environment that is conducive to learning.**

Daniels & Arapostathis; Frymier & Houser; Hargreaves, 1998; Ivie, Roebuck, & Short, 2001; Noddings, 2005

Establish relevance

Encourage & confirm

Exhibit responsiveness

Provide a safe learning environment

Slide 7: A Caring Environment

- Relevance increases student interest

- Encouragement and confirmation increases student motivation

- Responsiveness results in:

    - Increased relevance and student interest

    - Demonstrations of respect

- Safe Environment promotes student risk-taking in:

    - Challenging existing beliefs

    - Confronting cognitive challenges
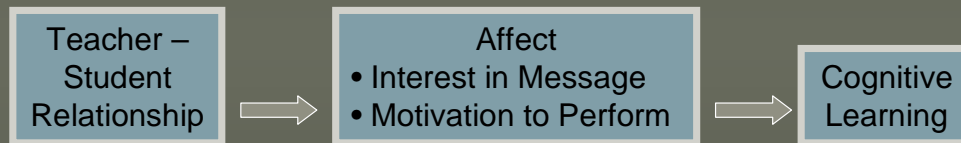
    - Asking for clarification and assistance
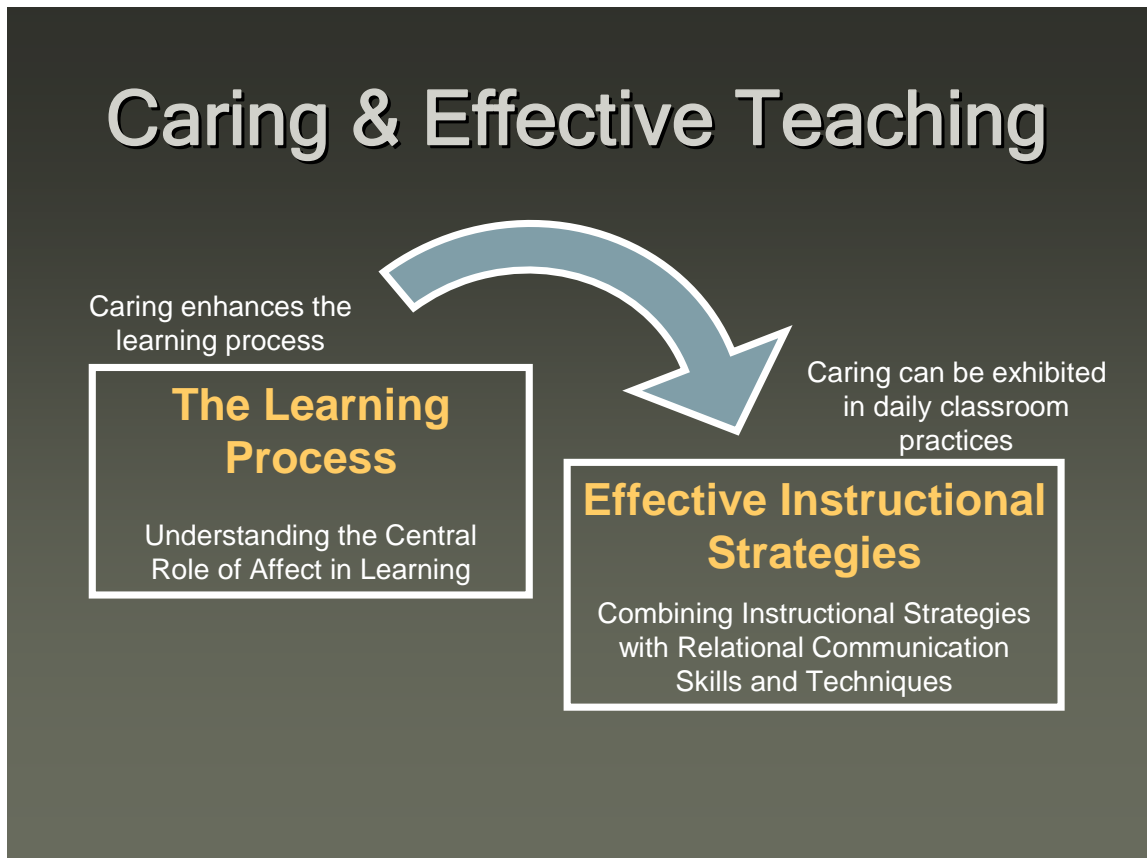
Slide 8: Translating Caring into Effective Teaching is a Two-Step Process

- Cue presentation objectives

    - Understanding how caring impacts the learning process

        - Affect plays a central role in learning

        - Teacher caring shapes students' affect

    - Demonstrating caring in the classroom

        - Combining specific caring behaviors with instructional strategies

The Affective Learning Model

Rodriguez, Plax, & Kearney, 1996

A clear instructional message is not always enough to produce the desired cognitive outcomes. Students need to be invested in the message as well as the communicator presenting it.

Teacher – Student Relationship → Affect • Interest in Message • Motivation to Perform → Cognitive Learning

Teachers who communicate caring to their students increase student affect; and thereby, positively effect student cognitive outcomes.

Slide 9: The Affective Learning Model

- Review two dimensions of effective teaching

  - Content

  - Relational

- Relational aspect capitalizes on affective variables

  - Value of content and task

  - Interest and attention

  - Motivation

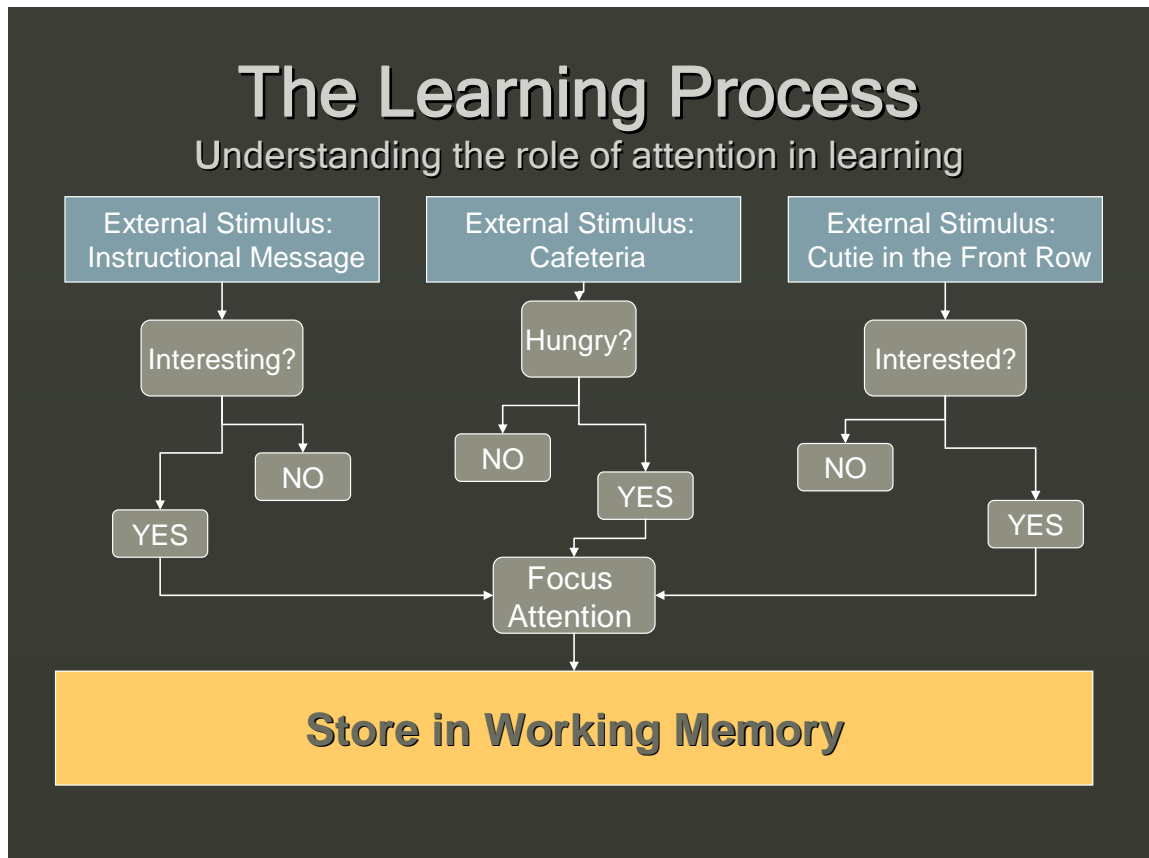- Affect is central to the learning process

Slide 10: Affect and the Learning Process

- Learning occurs in three domains:

    - Behavioral

    - Cognitive

    - Affective

- The affective variables, attention and motivation specifically, are invaluable to the

    learning process

Slide 11: The Role of Attention

- Memory as a dual-storage process

    - Working memory temporarily stores incoming information

    - Long-term memory stores information for future use

- Working memory storage

    - Working memory is limited and cannot possibly store all incoming stimuli

        - Only information that is attended to will be stored, temporarily, in

            the working memory

- Attention is the precursor to all learning

# The Learning Process
## Understanding the role of motivation in learning

sustained effort

motivation

Successful Processing

Long Term Memory
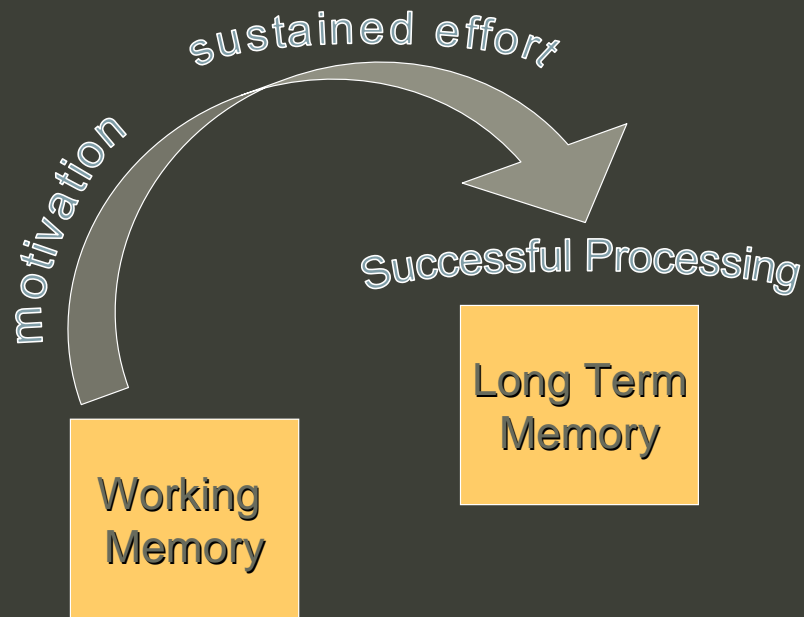
Working Memory

Slide 12:  The Role of Motivation

- Long-term memory storage

    - Only information that is processed will be stored for later use

    - Poorly processed information is difficult to retrieve

- Motivation helps to move information from working memory to long term

    - Motivation increases the likelihood of sustained task efforts required to process information from working memory to long term memory

- Student Motivation

    - Basic human needs

    - Interest

    - Value
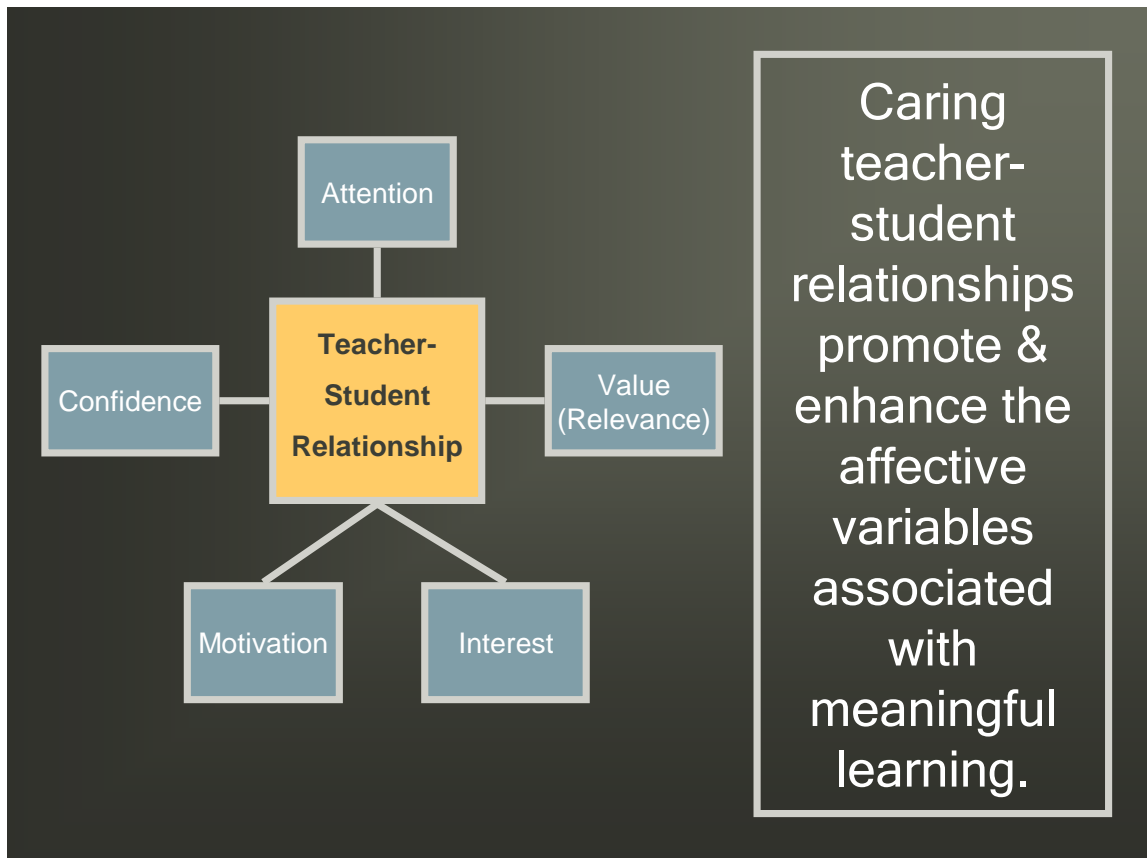
Slide 13: Summary:  The teacher/student relationship and affective learning

- Positive teacher/student relationships increase student affect

- Positive student affect increases cognitive outcomes

It is important to understand that caring is a perception.

CARING

needs to be communicated to students.

Teven, 2001

Slide 14: Caring is a Perception

- Cue caring communication strategies

- Caring as a perception

    - Caring needs to be communicated to students

    - Caring is communicated through teacher behaviors

Slide 15: Communicating Caring

- Immediacy is the set of behaviors which communicate caring

    - Closes physical and psychology distance (relatedness)

    - Opens pathway for communication (teaching)

Slide 16: Verbal Immediacy Behaviors

- Small vs. Large Classroom

    - In small group settings, all are appropriate and feasible

    - In large group settings, certain verbal immediacy behaviors are more
      appropriate than others

        - Humor

        - Authenticity

        - Positivism

Slide 17: Nonverbal Immediacy Behaviors

- All are appropriate and/or feasible in any setting

- Avoid 'hiding' behind a desk or podium and become part of the class (proximity)
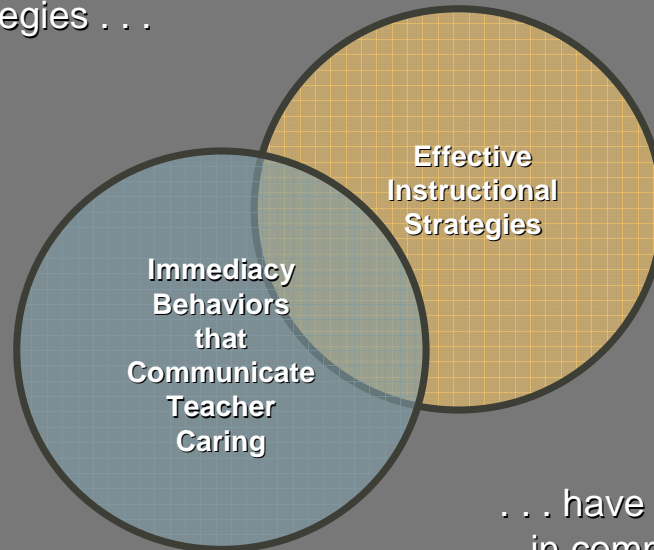
Slide 18: Immediacy and Instructional Strategies

- Cue commonalities

Balanced Teaching
capitalizes on these
commonalities to maximize
the effectiveness of daily
classroom practices.

Slide 19: Balanced Teaching

- Cue commonalities (relevance)

**Effective Instructional Strategies**

According to Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001

- Organizational Cues
- Questioning
- Cooperative Learning
- Feedback
- Recognition/Praise

**Many teachers are familiar with and already implement these effective instructional strategies in their classrooms.**

Slide 20:  Effective Instructional Strategies

- Review strategies

- Provide examples

    - Organizational cues: advanced organizers, outlines, etc.

    - Questioning: wait time, high order questioning

    - Cooperative learning:  group projects, homework buddies

    - Feedback:  specific corrections

    - Recognition/praise: encouragement

# Organizational Cues

**Organizational Cues assist students:**
- Recognize important information (focuses attention)
- Organize information for processing (better retrieval)

**Organizational Cues can include:**
- Outlines & other advanced organizers
- Visual Representations
- Verbal Statements

Slide 21: Organizational Cues

- Purpose of organizational cues

    ▪ Review importance of attention (short term memory)

    ▪ Review importance of proper processing (long term memory)

- Examples of organizational cues

**Balanced Teaching:
Caring & Organizational Cues**

Specific immediacy behaviors can actually serve as cues, in and of themselves.

Movement & Gestures
Vocal Expressiveness
Disclosive Narrative
Appropriate Humor

Slide 22:  Caring and Organizational Cues

- Immediacy behaviors enhance the effectiveness of organizational cues

- Immediacy behaviors can serve as cues

    - Direct student attention

        - Movement and gestures

        - Vocal expressiveness

    - Clarify and organize information

        - Disclosive narratives

        - Appropriate humor

Slide 23: Questioning

- Purposes of questioning

    - Review importance of attention

    - Review importance of proper processing

Slide 24: Effective Questioning

- Wait Time

  - Allows time for retrieval

  - Improves student responses

- Higher Order Questioning

  - Requires additional student processing

  - Improves student responses

# Balanced Teaching:
# Caring & Questioning

**Effective questioning is demonstrative of teacher caring when immediacy & responsiveness are incorporated.**

- Soliciting student perspectives and opinions by encouraging them to participate in class discussions
- Being responsive to those who do not wish to be called on
- Responsiveness has also been positively associated with Wait Time
  - Teachers respond to improved quality of student responses with flexibility to explore students' perspectives and interests

Slide 25: Caring and Questioning

- Immediacy behaviors associated with questioning

- Responsiveness

# Cooperative Learning

**No other educational strategy has demonstrated such consistent positive effects (Kagan, 1998) .**

- Cooperative Learning offers flexibility of design to accommodate different situations, content objectives, and student abilities.
- Cooperative Learning promotes higher level cognitive skills such as problem-solving, prediction, and compromise.

Slide 26:  Cooperative Learning

- Highly effective instructional strategy

    - Flexible

    - Promotes higher order thinking skills

Slide 27: Caring and Cooperative Learning

- Promotes caring learning environment

    - Elements of cooperative learning

        - Positive interdependence: success through team effort

        - Promotive interaction:  helping, supportive behavior

        - Pro-social skills: effective and respectful communication

- Capitalizes on students' social needs

    - Motivated to interact with others

# Corrective Feedback:
# A Balanced Strategy

**Feedback has been identified as both an effective instructional strategy and a verbal immediacy behavior.**

- Provide specific information
  - Explains what students are doing correctly
  - Explains what students can do to improve
- Timing is critical
- Promotes student competence & self-determination

"The single most powerful modification that enhances achievement is *feedback*."

Hattie, 1992 as cited in Marzano et al., 2001

Slide 28:  Corrective Feedback

- As an effective instructional strategy

  - Provides information

  - Is most effective when timely

- As a strategy to communicate caring (immediacy behavior)

  - Promotes competence and confidence

**Recognition/Praise:
A Balanced Strategy**

Praise, as an instructional strategy & a verbal immediacy behavior, is directly associated with positive affect.

- Motivates students' to sustain task-related efforts
- Increases students' feelings of competence & confidence

Praise that is authentic, personalized & specific, can have a powerful effect on students' perceptions of their abilities and efforts.

Slide 29: Recognition

- As an effective instructional strategy

    - Emphasizes students' efforts

    - Goal-oriented

- As a strategy to communicate caring

    - Fulfills students' esteem needs (motivation)

    - Increases feelings of competence and confidence

Slide 30: Presentation Summary

- Review two equally important dimensions of effective teaching

    - Content: what we teach

    - Caring: how we teach

- Balanced teaching

    - Communicates caring to students

    - Enhances effective instructional strategies

    - Increases cognitive outcomes

Chapter Summary

Caring is an essential element in the instructional relationship (Frymier & Houser, 2000; Noddings, 2005) which influences student affect and, ultimately, student learning outcomes (Rodriguez et al., 1996). The purpose of this project was to design a professional development training which conveys this message. A PowerPoint presentation was used to provide educators with an opportunity to reflect on the importance of caring in the instructional relationship as well as the ways in which they can communicate caring to their students. The author presented examples of balanced teaching strategies which combine the specific behaviors that communicate caring with effective instructional strategies in order to enhance the learning process and outcomes. The goal of this project is to encourage teachers to practice these communication behaviors and incorporate them into their daily classroom practices to maximize the effectiveness of their approach and delivery.

In Chapter 5, the project is evaluated in terms of its effectiveness in achieving its goal. The author discusses the informal feedback received from the inservice participants, which includes participants' responses to the presentation as well as their suggestions for improvements. In addition, the author identifies and discusses the project's contributions to the field of education as well as its limitations. While the presentation does promote the use of caring teacher communication strategies in the classroom, it does not measure the regular use of these strategies in practice. As a result, the author cannot determine any changes in teacher behavior as a result of participation in this inservice training. Finally, recommendations for future professional development, such as the addition of a quantitative component, are provided.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

In today's educational climate, policy makers and the public at large are placing greater accountability on teachers for their effectiveness in producing student achievement.  With this accountability comes the need for reflection on the definition of effective teaching.  So far, despite an abundance of research, educational scholars have yet to formulate a working definition of effective teaching.  Such a definition should encompass both the technical skill teachers should possess in delivering their content as well as the caring they should communicate to their students.  The purpose of this project was to present a balanced approach to teaching which emphasizes the importance of caring in the context of the instructional relationship.  Specifically, an inservice training was designed to demonstrate the importance of affect in the learning process and provide strategies through which teachers can communicate caring to enhance their effectiveness in the classroom.

Contributions

This project was designed as an inservice training to encourage teachers to employ the specific communication skills that demonstrate caring to students in order to cultivate positive teacher/student relationships and enhance the effectiveness of their delivery approach.  In order to accomplish this, a thorough investigation of related research was conducted.  This review of literature resulted in a compilation of the research findings which indicate the importance of relational and affective elements in

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the learning process.  As such, it is evident that a working definition of effective teaching includes both technical and communication skills.  According to this definition, effective teaching strives to address all three of the learning domains:  a) cognitive, b) behavioral, and c) affective.  This presentation advanced the adoption of this definition with a demonstration of practices which teachers can employ to enhance the effectiveness of their content delivery by balancing instructional strategies with the immediacy behaviors that communicate caring.

## Limitations

While this project did fulfill its goal to promote the adoption of a balanced approach to teaching, it is limited in its scope.  The presentation was designed with secondary educators in mind.  It does not specifically address the needs of teachers working with younger or adult students.  Although many of the issues addressed in this presentation apply to all learners, the educational and relational needs may vary for learners of different age groups.  At the same time, this presentation did not take into account cultural differences which may factor into student perceptions of teacher caring as well as the importance of the teacher/student relationship in the learning process.  Furthermore, the inservice was presented to a limited population of alternative education instructors as opposed to instructors from a variety of settings.  It is likely that instructors from different settings would receive the information differently and contribute unique perceptions and feedback.  The project is further limited by its lack of measurable outcomes.  Although informal feedback was solicited, formal feedback would be valuable in measuring changes in teachers' classroom behavior.

Peer Assessment

The purpose of this project was to create an inservice training to encourage

practicing educators to reflect on the importance of a caring teacher/student relationship

in the instructional context.  The final product, a PowerPoint presentation, was presented

in an alternative education setting where teachers are often faced with the challenge of

motivating students who have become disengaged from the learning process.  The

feedback concerning the presentation was positive as participants responded that,

throughout the presentation, they found themselves reflecting on their daily practices,

their interactions with students, and the messages they convey.  Participants also

commented that, while they had previous knowledge of many of the concepts covered in

this presentation, this arrangement provided them with unique interpretations of these

concepts that deepened their understanding of communication skills and instructional

strategies.  Positive feedback was also given concerning:  a) the relevance of the topic, b)

the clarity of the message, and c) the modeling of immediacy behaviors and other

techniques.  Additional feedback was related to formatting.  Specific suggestions that

were made to improve text visibility were considered and implemented.  Overall, the

feedback received indicated that the goals of the project were met.

Recommendations for Further Development

The limitations of this project suggest that future presentations might be

developed to address both multicultural and age related issues pertaining to the

importance of caring and affect in the instructional environment.  Likewise, a quantitative

component could be added to determine the effectiveness of the presentation in

influencing teacher behavior.  Surveys could be used before and after the presentation to

measure participants' knowledge and understanding of the content.  Similarly, surveys or

observations could be used to document teaching practices before and after the

presentation to measure any changes in teacher behavior.  Furthermore, since

professional development is an ongoing process, continual coaching and discussion of

effective communication skills and demonstrations of teacher caring could be offered to

inservice teachers in order to support their efforts to improve their practice.

Teacher training programs might also consider incorporating this content into

their curriculum.  Students who are preparing for a career in education can benefit from

learning how to effectively communicate caring to their students.  The immediacy

behaviors which are presented in this training facilitate communication and, ultimately,

student learning.  In teacher preparation programs, these behaviors can be taught and

practiced in conjunction with instructional strategies in the development of an effective

delivery style.

<div align="center">Project Summary</div>

Despite the lack of a working definition for effective teaching, educators continue

to strive to improve their effectiveness with students.  Now, more than ever, they are

expected to demonstrate their effectiveness with even the most challenging of students.

Many of these students have become disengaged from the learning process.  As a result,

they demonstrate a lack of motivation to sustain the task related efforts necessary for

meaningful learning.  In order for teachers to be effective in the attainment of cognitive

and behavioral learning outcomes from these or any students, they must first address the

affective domain of learning.  Teachers must recognize the interpersonal nature of the

instructional relationship.  The cultivation of positive teacher/student relationships

<div align="center">58</div>

influences students' affect in such a way that students are more likely to perform tasks and obtain outcomes. With this in mind, the author created this presentation to promote the effectiveness of an instructional approach that balances instruction with caring.

The presentation was designed to encourage practicing educators to reflect on the benefits of a caring teacher/student relationship as well as their current practices in the classroom and their interactions with students. At the same time, the presentation promoted the use of specific teacher communication behaviors that convey teacher caring to students and suggested ways in which these behaviors might be implemented in the classroom. The PowerPoint presentation that was created and presented to educators in an alternative setting received positive feedback which indicated that it had fulfilled the intended purpose. In the future, it may be beneficial to present this information to other educators in a variety of settings; perhaps, even to those in preparation programs.

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