

## Quality in Teaching: A review of literature

Sahat Maruli

Center for Development and Empowerment of Teachers and Education Personnel

E-mail: [sahatmaruli1979@gmail.com](mailto:sahatmaruli1979@gmail.com)

Phone: +62 61 8455 417

Mobile Phone: +62 812 734 92 399

Postal Address: Setia Budi Street Number 75 KaptenSumarsono – Helvetia, Medan 20124

*Abstract: Drawing on literature since 2000, this review explores the definition of quality teaching, the two components of quality teaching, and the characteristics of the elements of these components. There were no consensus on the definition of quality teaching. However, leading scholars have similar views on the quality teaching components, ie good teaching and successful teaching. Good teaching related to the effectiveness of teaching behaviors thus it becomes foundation for development of expert teacher, while successful teaching was marked by the achievement of students. The third explores the interface between two components of quality teaching – student engagement in academic. There appears, however, different of quality teaching standards in every context. Thus, this literature review suggests directions for future research.*

*Keywords: quality teaching, good teaching, successful teaching, effective teaching, academic engagement.*

Teacher quality is the single most important feature of the schools that boost student achievement and the second most important determinant of student learning after family background. Students who have good teachers learn more than students who have underperforming teachers. Teacher quality is reflected in their performance in the classroom, i.e. teaching quality, and beyond the classroom.

Quality in teaching has become rousing international discussion (Kennedy, 2008: p.59; Haskins and Loeb, 2007: p.1; Ingvarson, 2007: p.2). Apparently everyone needs quality teaching. The reasons underlie this interest are that we need to know why some teachers are better than others and what capabilities should be built on the teacher to be able to raise student achievement. Without clarity of meaning it is very difficult to measure, reward or improve teacher quality (Kennedy, 2008: p.59) to closing the gap in achievement of students for social justice.

Understanding of quality in teaching are at a relatively early stage of development in many countries. Quality teaching has become such a ubiquitous term that is lacks a clear meaning because it has many complexities to be encountered and resolved (Fenstermacher and Richardson, 2000: p.1). However, "it is important to consider teaching quality so that the most effective practices are encouraged and the most supportive condition are provided" (Darling-Hammond, 2010: p.2). In addition, teachers need even more sophisticated abilities to teach

students who have a broad range of learning needs (Darling-Hammond: 2010: p.1). Therefore, researcher needs to reflect on international experience to get a clear and comprehensive understanding about quality in teaching.

This literature study focuses on the definition of quality teaching and its components. Researcher also discusses what are the characteristics of quality teaching. In this review, researcher investigates whether those characteristics are supported by the literatures, and researcher suggests implications for research, policy and practice.

## **1. Literature Selection and Review Process**

Literature was selected in three steps. First, search used internet using keywords quality teaching since 2000. Second, researcher selected relevant articles, books, and book chapters referenced in the studies from initial internet searches. Third, researcher included articles, book chapters, and conference presentation from researcher personal collections.

Literatures were divided into empirical and case studies, program and personal description, and literature reviews and position papers. Researcher selected the literature for further review on the basis of (a) whether it addressed issues on quality teaching, good teaching, successful teaching, and characteristics of quality teaching.

The literatures fell into three category based on how elements of quality teaching and its components were discussed and interrelated. The first group of studies discussed quality in teaching and its definition. This study provide an overview of the components to be studied further. The second group described about effective teaching. It becomes the foundation of teacher expertise. The third group explored detailed about successful teaching. In addition, researcher also described what is bridging good teaching and successful teaching – student engagement.

Researcher used three categories to organize the body of this review because they represent of quality teaching. Researcher used all of the literatures as a basis to develop conceptions, identify assumptions, make comments, offer implications, and point to future directions of research.

## **2. Definition of Quality in Teaching**

Defining the quality of teaching is quite difficult (Fenstermacher and Richardson, 2000: p.1; Berliner, 2005: p.206; Blanton, Sindelar and Correa, 2006). Despite many complexities to be encountered and resolved, such as subjects and contexts, even has proven elusive so that there is no consensus on the definition. For example, there are differences in the definition of qualified teacher and quality teaching. Quality in teaching is also difficult to observe because most of the evidence is not present directly (Hanushek and Rivkin, 2006: p.1053). Generally, the definition of quality teaching is focused on teacher performance, teacher knowledge, and teacher creativity (Blanton, Sindelar and Correa, 2006).

Set out from Gilbert Ryle's concept of task and achievement senses of a term, leading researchers Fenstermacher and Richardson (2000) constructed the concept of quality teaching. Associated with the concept of quality in teaching, task refers to good teaching and achievement refers to successful teaching.

Good teaching means teaching that comports the moral and rational principles of teaching practice. Thus, the content being taught meets the standards of discipline in terms of both

adequacy and completeness. The method used also in accordance with the age, carried out morally, and performed with the aim to increase the capabilities of student associated with the content being taught. Effective teaching behavior become foundation of good teaching and described as the idea of teacher expertise. Thus, good teaching could be observable when direct instructional model of teaching is ongoing.

Successful teaching is teaching that produces the desired outcomes. Students actually acquire skill, knowledge and understanding at acceptable and reasonable level when they are engaged in the classroom. Students' scores on standardized test used as initial identification of effective or less effective teaching behaviors. Then those teachers observed using an instrument with primarily low-inference behavioral measure and the data obtained compared statistically to get more detail about effective teaching behaviors. Successful teaching emphasizes more on certain types of settings and contexts of learning and teaching.

Fenstermacher and Richardson (2000) defines the quality of teaching as follows:

Quality teaching is what you are most likely to obtain when there is willingness and effort on the part of the learner, a supportive social surround, ample opportunity to learn, and good practices employed by the teacher (p.9).

They argue that the quality teaching encompasses good teaching and successful teaching, the absence of the other falls short of fully defining quality in teaching. This definition clearly differentiates between what is done by the teacher with what is learned by student.

Furthermore, Berliner (2005) concurs that the quality of teaching consists of two different concepts, i.e. good teaching and effective teaching. Berliner (2005) define quality in teaching as "A high-quality teacher shows evidence of both good and effective teaching" (p.207). Good teaching occurs when subject standards are met, so it is normative. Instead, effective teaching is about achieving goals, about student learning, what they should have mastered in classroom or a particular subject.

Wechsler dan Shields (2008: p.5) states what is proposed by Fenstermacher and Richardson on the teaching practice cannot be discussed outside the real context in which it occurs. This is because, in the opinion Fenstermacher and Richardson that good teaching practices is necessary for students learning to occur, as well as there also must be (1) learner willingness and effort, (2) supportive social surround, (3) an opportunity to teach and learn. They argue that educational community need to move from a pencil and paper definition of teaching quality to one that is operational in all schools and classrooms. Wechsler and Shields propose more comprehensive definition as the basis for developing a quality-based teacher development system,

"High-quality teaching occurs when teachers come to the classroom with a rich toolkit of craft knowledge and skills that they utilize following a set of effective practices, and which lead, over time, to student learning. High quality teaching occurs in a supportive environment where teachers work as part of a professional community within a workplace that fosters continuous learning on the part of children and adults (pp 5)".

Pursuant to Loughran (2010), teaching for understanding is built on cognitive, affective, and social to transform learning into meaningful actions that are designed and managed carefully. He emphasized the pedagogical objectives that are closely related to professional knowledge about the practice and how it can be used to reinforce students' learning. Loughran defines quality in teaching as:

"Quality in teaching is when activities, procedures, and strategies are developed and used by teachers to encourage selection, attending and processing. .... Quality in teaching is not

about using a teaching procedure just to break up the normal classroom routine; it is about using a particular teaching approach for a particular reason (p.82)".

Similar view expressed by Darling-Hammond (2010) that teaching quality is in part a function of quality teacher and also strongly influenced by the context of instruction. "Teaching quality refers to strong instruction that enables a wide range of students to learn" (pp 3). Strong instruction should meet the needs of discipline, learning objectives, and the needs of learners in a given context. It implies that a quality teacher may be unsuccessful in a context where there is a mismatch between the demands of the situation and teacher knowledge and skills (Darling-Hammond 2010: p.4; Berliner, 2005; Fenstermacher and Richardson, 2000; Ingvarson, 2007). High quality teachers in a country may not be a high-quality teachers in other countries. Indeed, "Defining quality always requires value judgments about which disagreements abound" (Berliner, 2005: p.206).

### **3. Characteristics of Quality Teaching**

Description above implies that leading scholars have the same opinion on the component of quality teaching, which is a combination of good teaching and successful teaching. Both of these components will be discussed here.

#### *3.1. Good Teaching*

Good teaching is the basis for the idea of expertise because it related to effectiveness of teaching behavior. Scholars have identifies several characteristics that could explain good teaching. These characteristics can be grouped into 3 elements (Wechsler and Shields, 2008: p.3).

First, good teaching is defined based on what teachers bring to the classroom – teacher characteristics. Some of strong influential teacher's characteristics are content pedagogy particularly how to develop higher-order thinking skills that could be proven by training and certificate; content knowledge in the areas they teach; teacher's experience, and general intelligence and verbal ability. In addition, adaptive expertise is used to solve pedagogy problems that allows teacher to make judgments about what is likely to work in a given context in response to students' needs (Darling-Hammond, 2010: p.2; Berliner, 2004: p.16ff). Verbal and intelligence aptitude help teacher to organize and explain ideas, as well as observe and think diagnostically (Wechsler and Shields, 2008: p.3; Darling Hammond, 2010: p.2).

Kennedy (2008: 60) expresses teacher characteristics as personal resources. Personal resources include (1) beliefs, attitudes, and values, and (2) personality traits. The first is rooted in culture that believes all students can learn, holding a positive attitude towards the diversity of learners. Some personality traits are extroversion or introversion, calm or anxious, decisive or indecisive.

Second, good teaching is defined by what teachers do in the classroom – the teaching practice. Good teaching is using rational and moral method. Fenstermacher and Richardson (2000: p.16ff) classify these methods into three elements of good teaching. Each of element has standard that judge for performing and underperforming teacher, so it reveals the nature of quality in teaching. Sometimes, a teaching activity can includes defining all of the elements. The first element, the logical acts of teaching include such activities as defining, demonstrating, explaining, creating, correcting, and interpreting. Generally, this category is appraised by standards internal of them, especially on the criteria for good explanation. Logic acts are the most important element of the two other elements to develop good conceptions in teaching.

Psychological acts of teaching, the second category, encompass such things as motivating, encouraging, rewarding, punishing, planning, and evaluating. Quality teacher understand students and learning process and how to develop it, such as how to assess and scaffold learning, how to support students who have learning differences or difficulties, and how to support the learning of language and content for those who are not already proficient in the language of instruction (Darling Hammond, 2010: p.2). This element is appraised relative to the persons comprising the relationship and more important than the next element.

The third element, moral acts of teaching include exhibits and fosters such moral traits as honesty, courage, tolerance, compassion, trust, respect, and fairness. This element standard is more similar to logical acts of teaching that their standards of appraisal tend to be internal and generated more by analysis and argument rather than by the perceptions. Fenstermacher and Richardson (2000) argue:

A quite robust conception of teaching can be constructed with these three elements: logical, psychological, and moral. Indeed, a substantive and powerful conception of good teaching can be formulated using these categories. Good teaching occurs when each of these activities meets or exceeds the standards of adequacy that attach to each category of activity (p.18).

Kennedy (2008: p.60) declares quality teacher perform as being efficient, being a good role model, being organized, providing clear goals and standards, and keeping students on task. Teacher provides learning activities such as providing students with surface memorization tasks or tasks that require complex problem solving and reasoning or tasks that draw on surface understanding of the content versus tasks that require deeper knowledge. It was also supported by Loughran (2010, p.61) that "Good teaching is about creating real opportunities for students to begin to determine for themselves how their knowledge needs to be structured and reconstructed in order to enhance the quality of their learning".

Third, good teaching is defined as what student obtained from learning, i.e. desired outcomes. Indicator of good teaching is a practice that has been found to be associated with student test scores. The test can be used to accurately determine how many students learn each year so that it becomes a key measurement of teacher effectiveness using value-added model (Haskins dan Loeb, 2007: p.4; Darling-Hammond, 2010: p.8ff; Kennedy, 2008: p60). Teacher effectiveness, however, is not a unitary concept and can mean many things: encourage student to learn, motivating students, and fostering personal responsibility and social concern (Kennedy, 2008: p.60).

### *3.2. Successful Teaching*

As has been proposed by Fenstermacher and Richardson (2000: p.15) that how students respond to teaching is the biggest part of quality teaching, but whether students actually learn the material that is taught to be a part of successful teaching. Successful teaching is understood exclusively in the realm of achievement entirely depend on the learner. Components of successful teaching is the desire of students to learn and expand their effort to learn; social environment support both from family, community, culture; support and help from peers; and adequate of facilities, time and resources (p.8).

High-quality learning needs students to consent and engaged (Loughran, 2010: p.51; Elmore, 2004: p.2). Each student should bring up the background knowledge and belief, questioning, adding new knowledge and restructure their understanding based on the

phenomenon being studied. They also have to engage actively to construct meaning, working together with his friend to construct meaning. Teacher is responsible for forming the learning environment that can provide incentives to motivate students to learn. The importance of opportunity to learn is intended as a time for performing tasks that can deliver learning outcomes that leading to increase student achievement.

### 3.3. *Student Engagement: bridging good teaching and successful teaching*

A construct did emerge to bridge successful teaching and good teaching, it was called student engagement in academic. Academic engagement is learner-sensitive focused on the student and was designed as a measure that was strongly affected by good teaching and leading to student achievement (Fenstermacher and Richardson, 2000: p.24). Students should be involve, motivated, follow, eager, connected, and other ways to be able to learn and it requires teacher to engage them in an activity that causes learning (Elmore, 2004: p.2).

## 4. Discussion and Conclusion

As researchers, policy analysts, policy makers, and practitioners enter into debates about quality teaching, they often use the phrase to refer to very different things. For example, some have claimed that teaching should be effectively and high quality, whereas the teaching quality includes successful teaching. A critical policy research related to quality in teaching, particularly in Indonesia, also has not provided a clear definition of it. That is why description of teacher career ladder that do not clear about what teachers should know and be able to do at every level.

This has impact on measurement and reward of quality teacher, whereas, it is crucial as stated by Darling-Hammond (2010: p.5) "The goal of measuring teacher effectiveness should be to improve teachers' capacities and their opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of the educational enterprise". Measurement of quality teaching is important to identify the needs of the recruitment of teachers; identifying strengths and weaknesses of teachers; recognizing the effectiveness of teachers; determine appropriate professional development and support needed; certification; identify expert teachers who can be mentors, coaches, and leader; and allocation of quality teachers in every school (Haskins and Loeb, 2007: p.4; Kennedy, 2008: p.62; Darling-Hammond, 2010: p.1).

Measurement of teacher effectiveness using value-added model needs to be developed in many countries, in particular Indonesia. This model could be performed each year in each class so that it can provide an accurate, easy, inexpensive and timely assessment; and also meaningful feedback. This model has been tested and successfully improve the capacity of teacher throughout their careers to be expert teacher (Daling-Hammond, 2010: p.4). Novice teachers seem to learn more of knowledge and skills that is needed to improve their student learning for the first seven years. Then, as they become expert teachers small increase happens and stayed at that level for more than 17 years. In this time, expert teacher is more needed as mentors to do induction to novice teacher. At the last few years of their career, there are small decline of student achievement (Berliner, 2004: p.14). Value-added model is able to separate the effects of teachers and schools from the effects of other important factors such as family background (Ingvarson and Rowe, 2007: p.8).

Rewarding teacher or bonuses for teacher should be base on accurate data. This will provide motivation for teachers to continue to improve, work and become more and more effective in their

career (Darling-Hammond, 2010: p.5). Ingvarson dan Rowe (2007: p.4) reported that teachers in Australia need only 9 years to become an expert teacher. With hard work, a teacher is expected to be an expert teacher in 5-7 years (Berliner, 2004: p.14).

Therefore, a deeper understanding of quality in teaching should be provide a basis for the development of policies and practices. Quality teaching is influenced by context – culture and policy – where the practice is done. Every country needs to establish a well-defined meaning of quality teaching and its characteristics generatively (Senge, 2006: p.14). It should be genuine especially on the aspects that have internal standard.

The education system requires a high standard of quality teaching to attract, prepare, support and develop expert teachers who can teach in a more transformative way. The purpose of this standard is to explicitly define what is meant by good teaching and successful teaching for every stage of teacher ladder. Initiatives to develop quality teaching must consider not only how to identify, reward, and use the skills and abilities of teachers, but also how to develop teaching context that evokes good practice for teachers. Teacher must teach according to their ability, with high-quality curriculum and material, and collaborating with peers. Therefore, policies that establish the context of teaching should be in line with the quality and the role of the individual teacher (Daling-Hammond, 2010: p.4).

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