

TEACHER EVALUATION

THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

A NEW MODEL FOR TEACHER GROWTH
AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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Measuring Teachers' Classroom Skills

As described in Chapter 1, more rigorous and comprehensive feedback to teachers is one of the hallmarks of current efforts to reform teacher evaluation. Teacher observation is a very direct way to provide feedback. However, as with VAMs, there are problems with current approaches to the practice, which tend to be imprecise and still do not differentiate well between effective and ineffective teachers. In this chapter, we highlight and offer solutions to the current problems surrounding teacher observation.

The Primary Purpose of Teacher Observation

There are at least two purposes of teacher observation mentioned in the literature: measurement and development. These two purposes are not mutually exclusive, but they do imply very different processes for teacher observation. When one is clear about the primary purpose of teacher evaluation, the nature and function of classroom observation become clear.

Marzano (2012b) reports the results of an informal survey of some 3,000 educators who were presented with a simple five-value scale. A score of 1 indicated a belief that measurement is the sole purpose of teacher evaluation, and that development should not be considered a purpose. A score of 5 indicated that development is the sole purpose of teacher evaluation, and

that measurement should not be considered a purpose of teacher evaluation. A score of 3 indicated a belief that the purpose of teacher evaluation is equally split between measurement and development. A score of 2 indicated that measurement and development are both important, but measurement should be dominant. Finally, a score of 4 indicated that measurement and development are both important, but development should be dominant. The results of that informal poll are depicted in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1		Results from Informal Survey of Educators
5		(2%)
4		(76%)
3		(20%)
2		(2%)
1		(0%)

As Figure 3.1 shows, the vast majority of respondents stated that teacher evaluation should be used for both measurement and development, but that development should be considered the more important purpose. Specifically, 76 percent of respondents selected a score of 4. Although the educators surveyed did not constitute a scientifically representative sample, the results do raise an interesting question: What are the characteristics of a teacher evaluation system (in general) and a teacher observation system (in particular) that have teacher development as their primary purpose? Marzano (2012b) identified three primary characteristics of such a system:

1. A comprehensive and specific model,
2. A developmental scale, and
3. Acknowledging and rewarding teacher growth.

A Comprehensive and Specific Model

A teacher evaluation system that has teacher development as its primary purpose is both comprehensive and specific. By comprehensive we mean that the model includes a wide variety of instructional strategies that are associated with student achievement, allowing for a variety of avenues for teacher growth; by specific we mean that the model identifies classroom strategies and behaviors at a very granular level, allowing for a high degree of focus when developing skills. Figure 3.2 shows 41 specific elements regarding classroom strategies and behaviors, all of which have been shown to support student achievement (see Marzano, 2007).

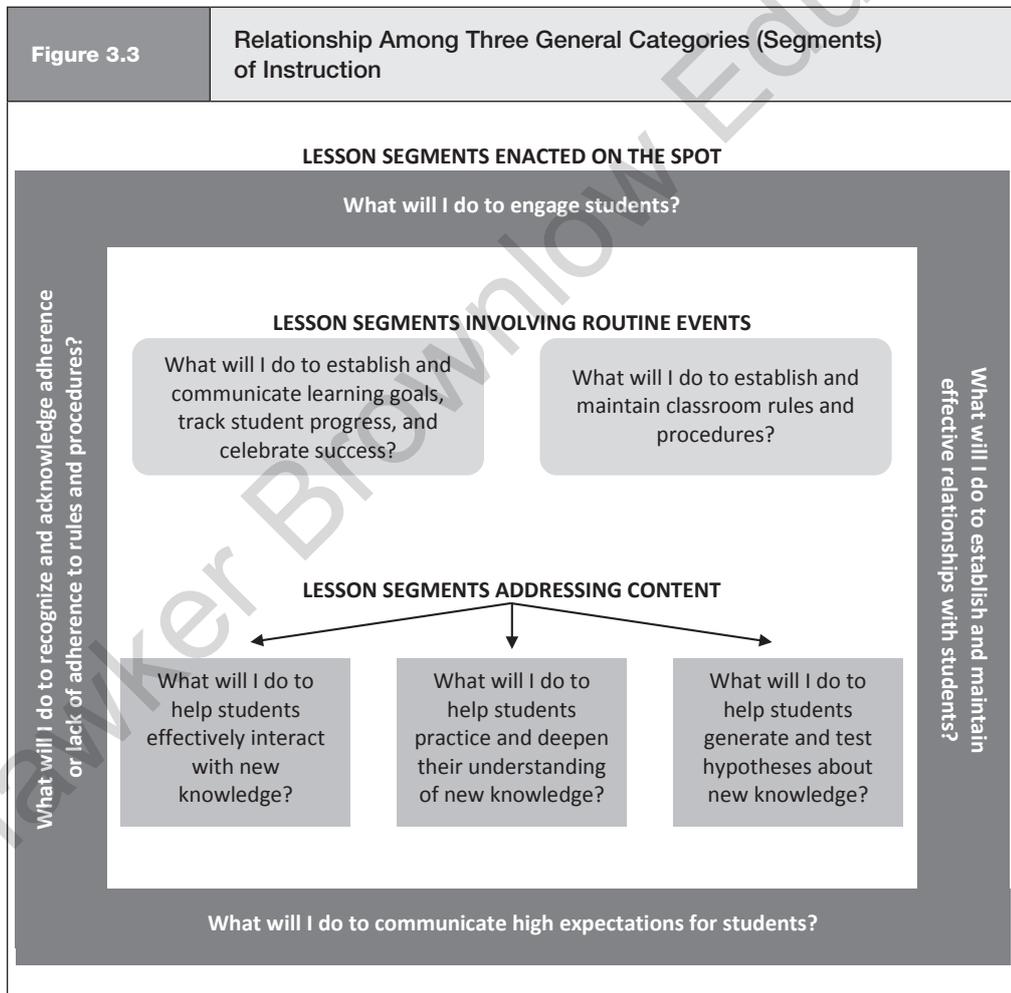
Figure 3.2	A Comprehensive and Specific Model of Classroom Strategies and Behaviors
I. Routine Strategies	
A. Communicating Learning Goals, Tracking Student Progress, and Celebrating Success	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing clear learning goals and scales (rubrics) 2. Tracking student progress 3. Celebrating success 	
B. Establishing and Maintaining Classroom Rules and Procedures	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Establishing classroom rules and procedures 5. Organizing the physical layout of the classroom 	
II. Content Strategies	
C. Helping Students Interact with New Knowledge	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Identifying critical information 7. Organizing students to interact with new knowledge 8. Previewing new content 9. Chunking content into "digestible bites" 10. Processing new information 11. Elaborating on new information 12. Recording and representing knowledge 13. Reflecting on learning 	
D. Helping Students Practice and Deepen Their Understanding of New Knowledge	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Reviewing content 15. Organizing students to practice and deepen knowledge 	

continued

Figure 3.2	A Comprehensive and Specific Model of Classroom Strategies and Behaviors <i>(continued)</i>
<p>D. Helping Students Practice and Deepen Their Understanding of New Knowledge <i>(continued)</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Using homework 17. Examining similarities and differences 18. Examining errors in reasoning 19. Practicing skills, strategies, and processes 20. Revising knowledge <p>E. Helping Students Apply Knowledge Through Generating and Testing Hypotheses</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Organizing students for cognitively complex tasks 22. Engaging students in cognitively complex tasks involving hypothesis generation and testing 23. Providing resources and guidance <p style="text-align: center;">III. Strategies Enacted on the Spot</p> <p>F. Engaging Students</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 24. Noticing when students are not engaged 25. Using academic games 26. Managing response rates 27. Using physical movement 28. Maintaining a lively pace 29. Demonstrating intensity and enthusiasm 30. Using friendly controversy 31. Providing opportunities for students to talk about themselves 32. Presenting unusual or intriguing information <p>G. Recognizing and Acknowledging Adherence or Lack of Adherence to Rules and Procedures</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 33. Demonstrating “withitness” 34. Applying consequences for lack of adherence to rules and procedures 35. Acknowledging adherence to rules and procedures <p>H. Establishing and Maintaining Effective Relationships with Students</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 36. Understanding students’ interests and background 37. Using verbal and nonverbal behaviors that indicate affection for students 38. Displaying objectivity and control <p>I. Communicating High Expectations for All Students</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 39. Demonstrating value and respect for low expectancy students 40. Asking questions of low expectancy students 41. Probing incorrect answers with low expectancy students 	

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The model depicted in Figure 3.2 has been described in depth in a number of works (see, for example, Marzano, 2007; Marzano, Boogren, Heflebower, Kanold-McIntyre, & Pickering, 2012; Marzano, Simms, Roy, Heflebower, & Warrick, 2013; Marzano et al., 2011). We address it only briefly here. It includes three general categories of classroom strategies and behaviors: routines, content strategies, and strategies enacted on the spot. The relationship among these three categories is shown in Figure 3.3.



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Routines involve five types of strategies and behaviors organized into two subcategories: those that involve communicating learning goals, tracking student progress, and celebrating success, and those that involve establishing and maintaining rules and procedures. As their name indicates, routines are executed on a regular basis, if not daily, in the classroom.

Content strategies are organized into three subcategories of content lessons: those that are used when content is new, those that are used when students are practicing and deepening their knowledge of content to which they have previously been introduced, and those that are used when students are asked to apply knowledge by generating and testing hypotheses. Each of these subcategories represents a lesson with a different purpose and, consequently, different types of strategies. Eighteen separate types of content strategies are utilized in the three types of content lessons.

Strategies that are enacted on the spot are those that a teacher might not have planned to use in a given lesson or on a given day but is prepared to use if needed. Subcategories of on-the-spot strategies represent the context in which effective instruction occurs. (This is why they are represented as the outer perimeter in Figure 3.3.) There are four subcategories of on-the-spot strategies: strategies that are used to engage students, strategies that acknowledge adherence to and lack of adherence to rules and procedures, strategies that build relationships with students, and strategies that communicate high expectations for all students. There are 18 separate types of on-the-spot strategies.

Some might think that the model in Figure 3.2 contains too many strategies and behaviors. This would be true for a system focused solely on measurement, such as the Rapid Assessment of Teacher Effectiveness (RATE). This framework was designed explicitly with measurement as its purpose—to effectively and efficiently determine teacher competence in the classroom (Strong, 2011) and includes only 10 categories of classroom strategies and behaviors that appear sufficient to differentiate levels of pedagogical skill. Studies on the RATE system indicate that it discriminates between effective and ineffective teachers much better than some very popular teacher evaluation models that have been and are still being used (Strong, 2011). The elements in the RATE system are as follows:

1. Clear lesson objectives
2. Understanding student background and comfort with material

3. Using more than one delivery mechanism
4. Providing multiple examples
5. Providing appropriate nonexamples
6. Maintaining an effective pace
7. Providing students with feedback about their learning
8. Timely use of guided practice
9. Explaining important concepts clearly
10. Keeping students actively engaged throughout a lesson

As the RATE framework shows, a system focused solely on measurement can be quite parsimonious; it will most probably leave out many important teacher behaviors and strategies. Conspicuously missing from RATE's list are specific references to such commonly cited elements as teacher/student relationships and classroom management. These elements are recognized in virtually every major review of the literature on classroom correlates of effective teaching. For example, in their review of the research on 228 variables identified as having measurable relationships with student achievement, Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1993) listed classroom management at the top. Over the years, it has continued to be considered an important aspect of effective teaching (Good & Brophy, 2003). Teacher/student relationships are also prominently positioned in the theory and research regarding student behavior (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006; Sheets & Gay, 1996).

It is reasonable to ask why variables like classroom management and teacher/student relationships that have research supporting their connections to important student outcomes are not good discriminators of teacher quality. The answer is that these elements predict student achievement *up to a certain point*. If a teacher is not competent in these areas, student achievement will surely suffer; however, once a teacher reaches an acceptable level of competence, further skill development will not have a commensurate positive influence on student achievement. One might think of strategies like those that address classroom management or teacher/student relationships as necessary but insufficient. They are necessary for effective instruction, but not sufficient to ensure high levels of student learning. Stated differently, all highly effective teachers have established a certain level of order in their classrooms through their management strategies and a certain level of positive affective

tone through their relationship strategies. But the strategies that allow their students to learn advanced content go well beyond a focus on management and relationships. This is why an evaluation system focused on measurement can leave out foundational elements like classroom management and relationships and concentrate on those that relate more directly to content. Although management and relationship strategies are important, to operate at the highest levels of instructional effectiveness, classroom teachers must go well beyond them.

There are a number of strategy areas listed in Figure 3.2 that are similar to management and teacher/student relationships in that they correlate with student achievement but are not necessarily good discriminators of teacher competence across a wide range of teacher quality. Indeed, some of the strategies listed in Figure 3.2 might not be used at all without negative consequences. For example, consider the use of academic games: It is certainly the case that academic games are a useful tool in enhancing student achievement (see, for example, Hattie, 2009; Walberg, 1999), but most probably only up to a certain point. Indeed, it is also true that a teacher can produce dramatic gains in student learning without using games at all.

In short, teacher classroom competence can be measured quite effectively by analyzing a few elements only. Following the guidance provided by Strong (2011), if one wished to use the model presented in Figure 3.2 to rapidly rate teachers, only the following 15 elements need be considered: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 24, and 26. However, if development is the primary focus of the evaluation system, then ratings should be obtained on all elements so that teachers can identify areas of strength and weakness and then systematically begin improving their areas of weakness.

A Developmental Scale

A second characteristic of an evaluation model focused on development is that it employs a scale or rubric that articulates stages of skill development. The scale for our model is shown in Figure 3.4.

The scale in Figure 3.4 has five levels, ranging from 0 (Not Using) to 4 (Innovating). This scale is based on research regarding skill development (see Marzano et al., 2011). Skill development typically progresses through at least three stages (see Anderson, 1983, 1993; LaBerge & Samuels, 1974):

Figure 3.4	Generic Form of Scale			
Innovating (4)	Applying (3)	Developing (2)	Beginning (1)	Not Using (0)
Adapts and creates new strategies for unique student needs and situations	Engages students in the strategy and monitors the extent to which it produces the desired outcomes	Engages students in the strategy with no significant errors or omissions	Uses strategy incorrectly or with parts missing	Strategy was called for but not exhibited

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1. *The cognitive stage.* At this stage, an individual is simply learning about a particular strategy but cannot actually perform the strategy and might not even attempt it in any systematic way.

2. *The associative stage.* At this stage, an individual is trying out and experimenting with a strategy. During this stage, changes and adaptations are made to the strategy to address specific tendencies and preferences of the learner. This stage has also been referred to as the “shaping” stage (Marzano, 1992).

3. *The autonomous stage.* At this stage, individuals can perform the strategy fluently, without error, and paying little conscious attention to it. Typically, a great deal of practice is required to complete this stage.

The five levels in Figure 3.4 roughly adhere to the three stages of skill development. At the Not Using level, a teacher is not even aware of a particular strategy, or is aware of it but has not tried it in his or her classroom. If a teacher were not aware of strategies that engage students in friendly controversy (element 30 in Figure 3.2), he or she would be at the Not Using level. This level is consistent with the cognitive stage of skill development.

At the Beginning level in Figure 3.4, a teacher uses a strategy, but with errors and omissions. A teacher who simply asks students to state their opinions about a topic with the goal of generating disagreement between students would be at the Beginning level for element 30 in Figure 3.2 because errors and omissions are in play. Although it is true that the strategy involves students stating their opinions about a topic, opinions must be supported by evidence and rules for