There's more to teaching than instruction: seven strategies for dealing with the practical side of teaching[1]

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In this paper, we highlight the importance for teachers of having sound practical skills in interacting with students, parents, administrators and other teachers, and argue that the development of such skills is often insufficiently considered in professional training. We then present a new framework for conceptualizing practical skills in dealing with others that follows directly from Sternberg's theory of successful intelligence. Finally, we outline and discuss an approach to measuring teachers' preferred strategies for dealing with others that we believe has promise, both for future research into the nature and characteristics of effective teachers and schools, and for the development of teacher expertise.

Keywords: *Practical intelligence; Teaching strategies; Social intelligence; Teacher education and training; Interpersonal competence; Behaviour management*

The need for practical interpersonal skills

International comparisons of scholastic performance, such as the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (Beaton *et al.*, 1997; Mullis *et al.*, 1997; Martin *et al.*, 2001) and PISA (OECD, 2000) have led to considerable anxiety about the relative academic performance of students from English-speaking countries. As a result, reforms of teacher education in these countries have focused largely upon the twin goals of increasing teachers' specialist subject knowledge and developing more effective pedagogic practices. In this latter respect, much debate has centred upon the wisdom of importing teaching approaches from countries achieving high scores on international measures (Reynolds & Farrell, 1996; Prais, 1997; Stigler *et al.*, 1999).

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Critics have expressed concern that those wishing to transfer educational practices across cultural borders often fail to recognize that certain pedagogical techniques may be culturally embedded within broader socialization practices (Miller & Goodnow, 1995).

Although few would quibble with a concern for effective pedagogy (however such a concern is understood), for many teachers, the most demanding aspect of their work concerns their relationships with students (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). All educators, irrespective of their national context, require high-level social and interpersonal skills. Indeed, it would appear that student challenges to teacher authority, which require sensitive handling, have long been particularly prevalent in Anglo-American contexts (Devereux *et al.*, 1965; Bronfenbrenner, 1967; Alexander, 2000). In these cultures, where democratic values, student independence and autonomy are particularly prized, school and classroom practices and relationships will often be contested and subjected to negotiation and confrontation (Alexander, 2000). Unlike in many other cultures, teachers in the USA and the UK must actively establish their authority rather than having it conferred upon them automatically on the basis of their professional status (Elliott *et al.*, 2001). With increasing external scrutiny of educational practice and performance, challenges to teachers are as likely to come from parents, administrators and the media as from students.

Exacerbating teachers' concerns about the legitimacy and extent of their authority over students are the wider challenges to teachers' knowledge and professionalism. The imperatives of the standards movement, with high-stakes testing and increasingly prescribed curricula, sit uneasily with calls that teachers should implement constructivist approaches to learning that place greater emphasis upon student autonomy in learning. In highlighting some of the tensions that emerge from these seemingly opposing trends, Windschitl (2002) speaks of a variety of pedagogical, cultural and political dilemmas that confront teachers and render them confused about how best to relate to students, parents and colleagues. The loss of teachers' professional autonomy has resulted in many teachers' perceptions of themselves as deprofessionalized technicians who are little more than deliverers of an externally constructed curriculum (Smyth *et al.*, 2000; Delandshere & Arens, 2001).

Yet, teaching is also an inherently social activity. In addition to the constant interactions that teachers have with their students, they must also work closely with parents, administrators and other teachers. Although prior to the start of their actual teaching careers, teachers' concerns tend to focus upon the potential for conflict with students; as they move through their first years of teaching, tensions with colleagues and administrators gradually become more apparent (Beach & Pearson, 1998). Such tensions can reach into the classroom, where the notion of the teacher as the sole adult with a given instructional group (a 'class') no longer widely applies, largely because of increased staffing to accommodate the inclusion of students with special needs. In a changing educational environment, teachers must often share their classrooms with other adults, with all the tensions that can result from professional boundaries and status differentials (Carroll, 2001). Similar difficulties can extend in the opposite direction—outside of the school's physical boundaries. As teachers become

less confident of their authority and status, interactions with parents can be influenced by significant underlying concerns about power, identity and competence (Alexander, 2000; Maclure & Walker, 2000).

To underestimate teachers' interpersonal skills as contributory factors to their instructional abilities would be a gross error. The school effectiveness literature has consistently demonstrated that positive social relationships between teachers and students and teachers and teachers are important contributory factors (Teddlie, 1994). Interestingly, multilevel modelling techniques now suggest that subject-matter departments and individual classrooms exert greater influence than whole-school factors (Hill & Rowe, 1996; Ayres *et al.*, 2004). As a result, there now appears to be a shift from school effectiveness to teacher effectiveness as the main focus of study. Effective teachers not only possess skill-based pedagogic repertoires; they also have the capacity to foster positive, respectful relationships with students and colleagues (Brown & McIntyre, 1993). However, the teacher effectiveness literature has tended to focus narrowly on cognitive outcomes, with insufficient attention placed upon broader domains associated with student moral and social well-being, and the establishment of positive relationships with colleagues and parents (Campbell *et al.*, 2003).

Although significant emphasis has been placed on the regulation of student behaviour for maximizing academic output, the subtle social nuances of classroom life are often seemingly relegated to a status of little emphasis or importance. Accordingly, there currently appear to be few systematic efforts to teach teachers explicitly how to develop effective strategies for social interaction. Instead, how teachers react to different social situations arising in the context of teaching is largely attributed to individual differences between teachers in terms of personality, background, style or other personal characteristics (Stronge, 2002; Wentzel, 2002; Mills, 2003).

Interest in the development of interpersonal skills and social knowledge has mushroomed in the past 15 years (Mize & Cox, 1989; Pettit *et al.*, 1989; Elias *et al.*, 2002). Such momentum may be partly attributable to the fact that this domain has been shown to be distinct from more analytical types of intelligence (Sternberg & Smith, 1985; Marlowe, 1986; Barnes & Sternberg, 1989; Chen & Michael, 1993; Wong *et al.*, 1995). However, a by-product of burgeoning interest is a profusion of overlapping constructs and meanings. Thus, terms such as social skills, interpersonal skills, social intelligence, emotional intelligence, social competence and social cognition have often significant conceptual overlap and, in some cases, are employed almost interchangeably. Two key discriminating factors are (a) the extent to which the focus is upon cognitions (e.g. recognizing emotions in others and in oneself, and understanding the meaning of particular social cues and signals) as opposed to behaviours (e.g. raising one's voice as a means to gain compliance), and (b) the distinction between determining the most appropriate action in a given social situation (declarative knowledge) and knowing how to do this effectively and skilfully (procedural knowledge).

Ultimately, teaching is about interpersonal interactions as much as instructional delivery. Furthermore, as we will discuss in the next section, teachers often receive ample training on how to deliver instruction, but receive far too little training on how to negotiate interpersonal interactions.

Teacher training: pre-service and in-service

In many countries, a common three-pronged model of initial training (Wilson *et al.*, 2001) involves: (1) the acquisition of subject-matter knowledge; (2) understanding of pedagogical theory; and (3) student teaching in classroom settings. In the latter component, student teachers observe expert practitioners, and practice what they have learned in college. This opportunity to put theory into practice, and thus to turn declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge, is often regarded as a powerful element of teacher preparation (Wilson *et al.*, 2001). Without some base of declarative knowledge from which to draw, student teachers would either be forced to react instinctively, often drawing upon their own past experiences as school students, or merely to attempt to mimic the behaviours of teachers they observe in school, while not fully grasping the complexities involved.

This traditional model has been challenged on the grounds that teacher education programmes are ineffective in changing the trainees' beliefs about the nature of knowledge, learning and teaching (Ball & McDiarmid, 1989; National Center for Research on Teacher Learning, 1993). Accordingly, many argue that a greater proportion of pre-service teacher education should be school-based and guided by professional teacher mentors (Wang & Odell, 2002). Within such a scheme, universities would teach specialist subject-matter knowledge and reduce coverage of pedagogical theory; student teachers could then obtain pedagogical and 'craft' knowledge primarily by observing good practice firsthand, under the direction, support and tutelage of a teacher mentor. This 'learning on the job' model presupposes, of course, that practitioners are able to make their knowledge and skills accessible to the novice. This is not overly difficult when one is dealing with simple sets of procedures and rules; it becomes more problematic when more subtle behaviours are involved.

One of the difficulties of gaining understanding about teachers' practices is that often the knowledge of these is tacit and automatized (Anderson, 1990) and thus difficult to formalize and articulate (Schon, 1983; Sternberg & Horvath, 1995). Tacit knowledge is often situated within particular activities and situations and thus is difficult to express as a set of general precepts. However, we propose that some of this tacit, practical knowledge can be made accessible to teachers, whether training programmes are situated in schools or colleges. Furthermore, by providing a conceptual framework for organizing this knowledge, the articulation of the nature and operation of a number of key interpersonal skills and strategies can prove invaluable for the development of professional practice.

In order to help teachers navigate the challenging social world of school, it would appear to be useful to structure programmes that will help teachers develop both declarative and procedural knowledge regarding potential strategies appropriate to different social contexts. Student teachers could then practice implementing various strategies for handling complex situations during the course of their student teaching, thereby turning declarative knowledge into procedural knowledge, and helping them to be better prepared for the multiple social demands of teaching. Similarly, discussion of the various strategies by school staff groups should help to make their tacit

knowledge more explicit and ensure greater consistency and consensus at the whole-school level.

Although some research on teachers' interpersonal effectiveness exists (e.g. Rowland & Birkett, 1992; Gordon, 2002), the focus of most teacher education programmes is largely on issues concerning behaviour management. Influential writers (Kounin, 1970; Canter & Canter, 1992; Rogers, 1998) have sensitized teachers to ways in which they can prevent and manage conflict, primarily in classroom contexts. Often, however, the time afforded for such work is insufficient; an overarching conceptual or theoretical framework is lacking, and a narrow preoccupation with preventing and responding to behavioural difficulties results in neglect of wider teacher relationships.

The teacher's ability to relate to students goes far beyond issues of management and control. The ability to establish and maintain positive relationships with students, marked by caring, understanding and trust, has consistently been shown to foster student motivation and engagement (Midgley *et al.*, 1989; Ryan & Patrick, 2001). In identifying schools that 'beat the odds' by attaining higher than anticipated student achievement, quality interactions, marked by a deeply caring atmosphere and a unified sense of community, appear as significant factors that differ even from those schools characterized by respectful interactions (Langer, 2000).

Skilled interpersonal interaction should be seen as more than a means to ensure an orderly classroom environment, or even to maximize students' academic performance. In their dealings with adults and children, teachers act as important role models that help students learn appropriate ways to relate to one another (Ryan & Patrick, 2001). While increasing calls are made by Western governments for teachers to concentrate more upon the development of values in young people, for example, through citizenship or civics education, there remains little practical recognition that values are expressed through teacher relationships with students and other colleagues (Veugelers & Vedder, 2003). Thus, to disregard the ethical and moral dimensions of the 'interactive chemistry' (Day, 2000, p. 108) between student and teacher is to neglect a crucial influence upon student socialization. It is unsurprising therefore that people and communication skills tend to be important criteria when hiring teachers (Trimble, 2001). Consequently, we believe that it may be appropriate for both teacher preparation and in-service programmes to offer more structured and systematic training in potential strategies for dealing with the variety of social situations that teachers encounter on a daily basis.

Developing practical skills in teachers

In the second part of this paper, we present a set of strategies for dealing with social situations that were empirically derived from our research with teachers (Stemler *et al.* 2001, 2002). We begin by discussing how the strategies are situated within the larger theory of successful intelligence (Sternberg, 1997, 1999). Next, we situate these strategies within the relevant literature related to interpersonal skills. Finally, we describe the key characteristics of each of the seven strategies for social interaction we

have developed, and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each strategy across various situational contexts.

Theoretical framework

Some evidence of the desire for formal guidance with regard to the social side of teaching may be found in the perennial popularity of the numerous 'survival guides' for teachers (e.g. Kane, 1991; Warner & Bryan, 1995; Glasgow & Hicks, 2003). Although such texts often provide helpful tips on how to deal with certain situations, perhaps their major limitation is that they do not tend to be based on any underlying theory that can help teachers conceptualize how to deal systematically with such interactions. Consequently, the advice that is dispensed is often piecemeal and difficult for teachers to draw upon at critical times. We propose that what teachers need is a systematic set of strategies for dealing with social interactions that fit within a larger theoretical framework, such as Sternberg's theory of successful intelligence (1997, 1999).

According to the theory, intelligence comprises analytical, creative and practical skills. Analytical skills are typically involved when knowledge is applied to relatively familiar kinds of problems where the judgements to be made are fairly abstract in nature. Creative skills are particularly well suited to problems in which the individual must cope with relative novelty. Practical skills involve applying intelligence to the kinds of problems that are confronted in everyday life.

Within the context of teaching, practical skills are especially important. For example, teachers need to communicate their ideas effectively during instruction. In addition, teachers must be able to adapt to a wide variety of situations that call upon a range of social skills. According to Sternberg and his colleagues, practical skills can be further divided into three subcomponents: (1) dealing with self; (2) dealing with others; and (3) dealing with tasks. Dealing with self involves self-management skills. For example, suppose a teacher had a rewarding day in class and wants to think of the best way to communicate her appreciation to the students. Deciding how to handle this situation requires practical skills in dealing with self. By contrast, dealing with tasks involves situations in which the pressure to take action centres on a particular task. For example, suppose a teacher comes to school 10 minutes before the day is scheduled to begin to find that his classroom window has been broken and there is glass all over the floor. Deciding how to handle this situation requires practical skills in dealing with tasks. Finally, dealing with others requires strong social and interpersonal skills. The examples given in the introduction to this paper all require practical skills in dealing with others. For the remainder of the paper, we will turn our attention to discussing the development of practical skills that relate to dealing with others.

Related literature

Much of the research on strategies for dealing with others has been carried out in the field of conflict resolution. Researchers in this area have attempted to describe

conflict resolution strategies in a variety of ways. For example, Sternberg and Soriano (1984) proposed a taxonomy of seven different modes of conflict resolution: *physical action, economic action, wait and see, accept the situation, step-down, third-party intervention* and *undermine esteem*. Note that these strategies vary by whether they describe the intention of the actor (e.g., undermine esteem), the behavioural action taken (e.g., physical action) or the outcome of the action (e.g., step-down). Later, Sternberg and Dobson (1987) used factor-analytic techniques to reduce the number of dimensions of the aforementioned modes, as well as some new modes they discussed. They found four factors underlying the strategies, which they labelled *active/mitigate, active/intensify, passive/mitigate* and *passive/intensify*. This labelling broadly classifies strategies for interpersonal interaction, both by the behaviour of the actor (active/passive) and by his or her intention (mitigate/ intensify).

Following this tradition, other researchers have attempted to classify conflict resolution strategies in ways that focus on intentions (Pruitt & Rubin, 1986; Carnevale & Pruitt, 1992). One potential problem with this kind of framework is that it requires the observer to make attributions about the decision-maker's intentions, thus leaving the observer vulnerable to common attributional errors (Aronson *et al.*, 2001). More recently, Weitzman and Weitzman (2000), drawing upon the work of Selman (1980), have articulated a developmental framework for conflict resolution. An important feature of this framework is its hierarchical nature. The implication is that individuals pass through four stages of development with regard to their conflict resolution strategies, similar to stages of moral development, with the best strategy being the *mutual* approach. The major limitation of this framework is that it does not leave open the possibility that certain strategies may be more effective than others across different situational contexts.

The study of conflict resolution provides a useful basis for thinking about strategies for dealing with interpersonal interactions; however, work in this area exhibits three limitations within the context of a larger framework of strategies for dealing with others. First, not all interpersonal interactions involve an element of conflict. Some social encounters are benign, yet they still require strategies for interaction. Second, most work on conflict resolution strategies has been framed in terms of the actor's intentions rather than in terms of the actor's behaviours. For example, one may intend to escalate the situation, but the specific action one takes to advance this goal may not achieve the desired effect. Third, research on conflict resolution has focused mainly on styles as opposed to strategies. Styles are preferred strategies that an individual will endorse across situations. Strategies are options for handling a particular social interaction that occurs within a particular context (e.g., wait-and-see). Thus, a fair amount of research in the field of conflict resolution has taken the position that the strategy an individual uses to resolve conflict represents a consistent characteristic of the individual rather than an interaction between the particular strategy and the situational context.

In the next section of this paper, we will outline an alternative approach to thinking about practical strategies for dealing with others.

Seven practical strategies for dealing with others

Our current work focuses upon the strategic decisions that teachers make about how best to respond to others, given potentially challenging social situations. Dealing with others is seen as one important component of practical intelligence, which, with analytical and creative abilities, comprise successful intelligence (Sternberg, 1997, 1999). Our approach examines teacher cognitions about preferred actions that are elicited by hypothetical scenarios. We recognize, of course, that this is only one element of interpersonal skill and, at the present time, do not examine other important and related aspects such as teachers' abilities to perceive and recognize subtle social cues, or the extent to which they are able to activate their selected behaviours with skill and sensitivity.

Using Sternberg's (1997) theory as a guide, we conducted structured interviews with teachers and asked them to describe situations they had encountered during their teaching careers that they were never formally taught how to handle. During the course of the project, we further refined the theory by breaking the category of dealing with others into three component parts: (1) *dealing with supervisors* (e.g., principals); (2) *dealing with peers* (e.g., other teachers); (3) *dealing with subordinates* (e.g., students). Figure 1 provides a graphical representation of how the seven strategies fit within the broader theoretical framework of successful intelligence.

We asked each of the teachers we interviewed ($n = 20$) to give us specific situational examples of times when they had to deal with problems involving people from one of the three categories, and to describe how they handled the situation. The teachers we spoke to were employed at schools that had been designated by the US Department of Education as National Blue Ribbon Schools for the 2000/01 school year. At the end of 2001, we contacted the principals of all 243 Blue Ribbon schools via email and invited them to participate in the project. Of those principals who responded to our request, we asked them to nominate three teachers in their school that they felt were particularly excellent. We then contacted those teachers for our interviews.

Because one of the main goals of this portion of the project was to develop a systematic and theoretical approach to the development of response options for our inventories, we then asked them to think about as many other possible ways of handling the situation as they could. After compiling the information provided by teachers, as well as those potential responses generated by our research group, we conducted a content analysis of the responses (Stemler, 2001; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003) to look for trends across the different situations. We arrived at seven practical strategies for dealing with others that seemed to apply across a wide variety of social situations: *avoid, comply, confer, consult, delegate, legislate* or *retaliate.*

It is important to note that each of the seven strategies has advantages and disadvantages within any given interpersonal interaction. Thus, no single strategy is uniformly the best in all situations. The strategies are defined in terms of the observable behaviours associated with each strategy. It is important to recognize that exactly the same behaviour may be driven by very different intentions. We chose to focus on the behavioural aspect of the strategy because, in real life, it is people's actions that
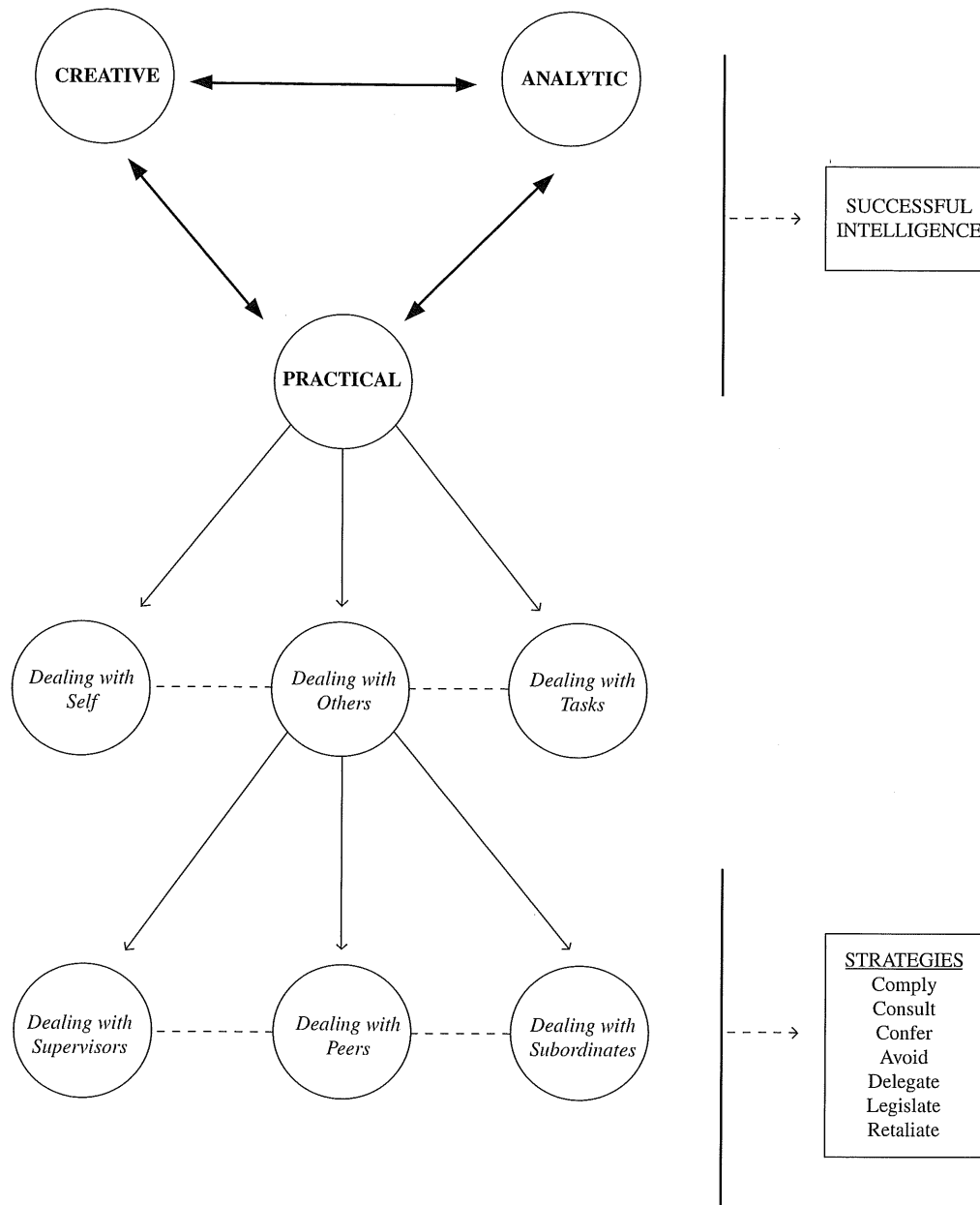
Figure 1.   Illustration of how the strategies fit within the broader framework of the theory of successful intelligence

are most often interpreted, because they are observable. People may later try to infer intentions, but misinterpretations may arise due to a variety of attributional errors (Aronson *et al.*, 2001). From a theoretical standpoint, the socially skilled person is keenly aware of what behavioural actions interact with which situational contexts to yield the desired outcomes.

It is reasonable to argue that practical skills involve at least two components. The first component involves understanding the kinds of actions teachers take in order to prevent problems from arising, and the second component involves understanding appropriate action to take once a challenging situation is presented. The seven strategies presented here are primarily concerned with the latter component, and therefore may be considered more reactive than preventive. This is not to underestimate the importance of prevention, however. The seminal work of Kounin (1970) has led to recognition that a crucial element of behaviour management resides in the teacher's ability to prevent difficulties by means of a variety of subtle verbal and non-verbal cues. By exercising these cues in a skilful fashion, problems are less likely to occur in the first place (Elliot, 2004). Nevertheless, all teachers are likely to find themselves in situations where they are confronted by complex social challenges and the ways in which they deal with these will have an important bearing upon their professional effectiveness.

Table 1 presents an outline of the key characteristics of the seven strategies, a description of circumstances where each may be appropriate or inappropriate, and some of their potential advantages and disadvantages.

Measuring practical skills

In the final section of this paper, we focus upon the development of instruments designed to measure the extent to which teachers endorse each strategy across a variety of situations. We present practical examples illustrating how the seven strategies can be used to measure various ways of handling social situations. Preliminary evidence for the inter-rater reliability of this framework is also presented and discussed.

Practical examples of tacit knowledge items

In this section, we present an account of how the seven strategies were used to develop potential response alternatives to situational judgement tests. We developed three separate surveys for elementary, middle and high school phases, because we found that the types of issues faced by each group of teachers were sufficiently different to warrant separate tacit knowledge instruments.

The social situations presented as the stem of each item were elicited from interviews conducted with teachers. We asked for examples of situations they had encountered throughout the course of their teaching careers that they had not been formally taught how to handle. Accompanying each stem was a list of the potential response options. In generating these options we tried to retain as many as possible of the actual responses given by teachers during the interviews. We also drew up some further response options ourselves in order to ensure that we could provide options corresponding to all seven strategies described earlier.

Figure 2 presents an example item from the tacit knowledge inventory for elementary school teachers. The scenario chosen corresponds to the situation presented in

Table 1.　Key characteristics of the seven strategies

Strategy	Defining characteristics and behaviours	Appropriate use/potential advantages	Inappropriate use/potential disadvantages
Comply	• Actor does whatever is asked of him or her, regardless of who is asking • Actor takes action that can be interpreted as actively condoning behaviours of others in the situation	• Actor agrees with what he or she is being asked to do • Short-term compliance has long-term benefits (e.g. choose your battles)	• Actor fears emotional consequences of non-compliance • Short-term compliance leads to negative long-term consequences
Consult	• Actor appeals to an external source for advice • Actor asks people to work together to solve the problem	• Actor wishes to capitalize on other people's expertise	• Actor will be perceived as incapable of solving his or her own problems
Confer	• Actor engages in verbal discussion with source of interaction. Conversation takes place in a private, one-on-one setting and is characterized by rational explanation of the actor's point of view	• Actor wishes to increase awareness and communication • People are more apt to change when reasons for requests are revealed	• Revealing too much leaves actor vulnerable to being used as a pawn by others • Rational discussion of each decision takes too much time to be practical
Avoid	• Actor avoids, delays or puts off dealing with a situation or problem • No action is taken at all, or actions that are taken do not deal directly with the situation	• Actor believes that the situation or problem could resolve itself	• Actor avoids action in order to put off emotionally difficult decisions
Delegate	• Actor either implicitly or explicitly delegates responsibility for taking action to someone else • Actor absolves him/herself of responsibility for action	• Actor recognizes his or her own lack of expertise for dealing with situation	• Actor is capable of dealing with situation him/herself
Legislate	• Actor explicates rules governing future actions of self and others	• Actor is interested in procedural justice • A certain class of situations comes up frequently	• Actor creates too many policies • Policies are too situation specific • Impossible to remember all policies
Retaliate	• Actor reacts physically or verbally in direct response to a situation. Direct response is often like-for-like in nature or involves punishment	• Other strategies have failed • Antagonist does not respond to rational discussion	• Actor retaliates as an instinctive reaction • Actor retaliates as an act of revenge without a strategy for changing antagonist's behaviour

Table 2.   Inter-rater reliability estimates (percentage agreement with development team)

Strategy	Overall	Survey		
		Elementary	Middle	High
Comply	R1: 67	R1: 67	R1: 75	R1: 58
	R2: 61	R2: 78	R2: 67	R2: 42
Consult	R1: 97	R1: 100	R1: 92	R1: 100
	R2: 67	R2: 56	R2: 75	R2: 67
Confer	R1: 79	R1: 56	R1: 83	R1: 92
	R2: 67	R2: 67	R2: 58	R2: 75
Avoid	R1: 94	R1: 89	R1: 100	R1: 92
	R2: 81	R2: 88	R2: 82	R2: 75
Delegate	R1: 81	R1: 63	R1: 82	R1: 92
	R1: 71	R2: 63	R2: 55	R2: 92
Legislate	R1: 78	R1: 88	R1: 83	R1: 67
	R2: 78	R2: 88	R2: 83	R2: 67
Retaliate	R1: 73	R1: 89	R1: 83	R1: 50
	R2: 64	R2: 56	R2: 67	R2: 67

and 71% for the high school instrument. Overall, the results provide preliminary evidence supporting the idea that the seven categories are empirically distinguishable from one another. Our next step is to continue to examine and refine the item response options in light of our findings.

Conclusion

Reflections on the work of teachers often give the misleading impression that their duties solely concern the provision of instruction (Stigler *et al.*, 1999) and neglect the fact that teaching routinely involves social interactions with students, parents, administrators and other teachers.

We believe that how a person chooses to deal with interpersonal interactions is not simply a matter of personality differences, but also involves the extent to which the person has in his or her mind a systematic framework for choosing among different response alternatives. Although each social interaction in real life is unique, we believe that the seven strategies presented here provide a framework for evaluating potential responses to various situations that will encompass a broad array of the most common courses of action that a teacher could pursue. The seven strategies will provide a broad palette of actions from which to choose in thinking about how to react to the myriad social interactions that teachers face.

The seven strategies for dealing with others described in this paper offer a new framework that may prove valuable both for research and for professional development. Research studies based on our developing model may help to delineate in finer detail characteristics of successful teachers and of effective organizations. In a follow-up

study, for example, we are currently examining the development of students in initial training and comparing their responses with those of experienced teachers.

Professional development may involve presentation of the various strategies, both to pre-service and experienced teachers and, through dialogue, the explication of tacit knowledge and the sharing of expertise. Given the growing emphasis upon consistent, whole-school approaches (Elliott, 2004), such forums may help school personnel to develop shared understandings and orientations.

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