

AN INVESTIGATION OF CLASSROOM BEHAVIOUR
OF TEACHERS AND ITS EFFECT UPON PUPIL
PARTICIPATION IN THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS

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ABSTRACT

Teacher behaviour in the classroom has been a major area of research during the last few decades. A steadily growing number of studies have been devoted to the question of how teachers function within the complex teaching-learning situation. In these studies the focus is on concrete teaching behaviours within the teaching-learning situation, not in stable traits of the teacher as a person. Observation systems have been produced to gain insight into different aspects of behaviour in the classroom instructional process. These studies have revealed the importance of studying teaching behaviour and its relation to student's opportunity to learn.

The present investigation was designed to identify and describe patterns of teacher behaviour in the teaching-learning process, the nature of student participation, and the dominant patterns of teacher-pupil interaction in the instructional process.

Thus the main focus of the study was on the nature of teacher behaviour, nature of pupil participation and the nature of teacher-pupil interaction. Since the study was exploratory in nature it was not possible to

go into deeper analysis of any of the specified behaviours. Only the broad patterns that emerged in the course of classroom transactions were studied.

The sample constituted of sixteen teachers and their (year eight) classes. The study was conducted in ten urban schools, selected to represent four types of classroom settings. A male teacher teaching a mixed class of students, A female teacher teaching a mixed class of students, A male teacher teaching a class of male students and a female teacher teaching a class of female students. It was assumed that these classroom settings do not vary in a simple unitary dimension, but have complex socio-cultural differences.

The data of the study were classroom records obtained by observation and recording of events. Most of the records were of thirty five minute duration. The selected class of events were the teacher's verbal behaviour and the response of the group of pupils to whom the behaviour was addressed.

The records have been analysed using Bayer's multidimensional coding system, which was adopted for the specific needs of the study. The records were analysed from three points of view; in terms of teachers instructional functions, in terms of pupil's participation and in terms of teacher-pupil interaction.

The investigation revealed, that teachers in general exhibit very much the same pattern of behaviour. They use only a very narrow range of teaching behaviours.

The most frequent teacher behaviours were transmission of information, asking questions, and providing feedback which was mostly of an evaluative nature. The teachers were more positive in their affective behaviours.

The study revealed that responding to teacher solicitations, was the most frequent of all student behaviours. Student initiative was very low.

The most frequent teacher-pupil interaction pattern was teacher structuring, teacher soliciting, pupil responding and teacher reacting. The other most frequent patterns were solicit-respond; and solicit - respond - react patterns. A teacher-centred subject oriented style of teaching was evident.

The study indicates the importance of conducting more and more indepth studies of classroom processes using techniques of interaction-analysis to reveal the realities of teaching and learning in the instructional process.