

**STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN  
TEACHERS AND SCHOOL STUDENTS**

**Adilova Dilorom Kadyrovna**

Karshi Institute of Engineering and Economics,  
Department of Uzbek Language and Literature, teacher  
Teacher of the Russian language at the Department of Foreign Languages,  
Karshi University of Economics and Pedagogy (NTM)

**ABSTRACT:** The research reported here is the result of a collaborative project between a group of teachers in a secondary school and two university lecturers. The group has been meeting for several years and the issue of trying to improve communication arose as a result of findings from a previous study in the school. After reviewing the literature, we were able to identify actions for teachers to trial in the school and, following data collection and analysis, we were able to refine those actions for widespread adoption in the school. We were also able to identify issues that required further exploration. The research exemplifies a way in which university and school staff can engage in collaborative, high quality research. It also identifies some of the complexities involved for schools and teachers as they try to improve practice.

**Key words:** Collection, communication, research, student, school.

The Effective Learning Group (ELG) is a collaborative action research group of secondary school teachers, all from the same school in Oxfordshire, and two university lecturers. The group had been meeting regularly for 6 years when the current research was undertaken and had the long-term, shared commitment of trying to improve the learning of all students in the school.

By the time of this project, ELG had looked at student differentiation, transfer of learning, student motivation, and the characteristics of students in the school who did either better or worse than expected at GCSE (see, for example, Haggarty & Postlethwaite, 1995; Postlethwaite & Haggarty, 1998). Linda Haggarty & Keith Postlethwaite Our first order research questions were shared by all members of ELG and related to the improvement of learning in the school in each cycle of our work:

- How can ELG as a whole most usefully address teachers' concerns about pupils' learning?
- What actions, taken in what circumstances, lead to an improvement in pupils' learning? Our second order research question related to the ways in which we, as lecturers from HEI, worked with the group of teachers:
- How can we, two lecturers from higher education, support and help teachers to take actions that might improve learning. The principles that guided our actions and formed part of our plan for this second order question were to:
  - allow teachers to define the specific problems and issues within the framework of the shared aim of addressing the needs of individual learners;
  - help the teachers to clarify their specific problems and issues for investigation by focussing attention on their practice;

- match theoretical inputs to the problems and issues as they emerged from the teachers' reflections about their problems;
- provide opportunities for the teachers to deepen their own understanding of issues through discussion with each other. ELG had met approximately once each month during the 6 years and between meetings, both lecturers and teachers engaged in agreed elements of the work they were each best placed to carry out.

The aim of the project reported here was to improve the communication between students and teachers about learning. Concern about this issue had been revealed during an earlier study of pupil motivation. This article describes our reconnaissance around this problem (Elliott, 1991), a search for appropriate possible actions by teachers and lecturers, and the views of teachers on these actions being trialled by them in their own practice.

Our initial interest in communication was stirred by students' comments in the earlier study, which was concerned, in part, with pupils who did better or worse at GCSE than would have been expected from their CAT scores on entry to the school (Postlethwaite & Haggarty, 2002). We were particularly struck by two issues relating to student-teacher communication that emerged from this study. The student clearly felt that she had initiated a conversation about work and that this had failed in the sense that the teacher had not been effective in responding to her request for help. Interestingly, some of her teachers wrote of her that: 'work [was] not a priority'; '[she] just gave up, no staying power'; '[she was] concerned with present, not [the] future'; '[she had a] poor attitude'.

If it had been a common feature of this girl's behaviour, her 'walking off' could well have led her teachers to these conclusions about her attitude to work. However, we noted that a different interpretation of this event was possible: the girl was faced with an unhelpful explanation given by the teacher. Perhaps she lacked the communication skills to say so. To avoid an impasse, she walked away. This removed the immediate problem, but left her with a negative feeling about the encounter and led the teacher to negative judgement about her attitude to work. It was interesting that the questionnaire on which the student made her remark was administered 6 months after the students took their GCSE examinations, and yet this student clearly still saw this event as highly significant and important.

2. There were very different perceptions on the part of students and teachers about the frequency of communication (students thought they communicated with teachers frequently, whereas teachers reported much lower frequency of communication) and about the purposes of, or motivation for, those communications. In addition, the communication seemed, more often, to be about problematic aspects of work, rather than positive aspects of that work. Indeed, some students were in danger of communicating with their teachers only about problems. Thus, whilst girls who did worse than expected at GCSE typically ticked the response that they 'often' asked what was bad about their bad work, they 'never' asked what was good about their good work.

Students whom teachers labelled as 'quiet', seemed to think that they communicated with teachers more than the teachers thought. For example, one boy who did better than expected wrote of himself that he 'always' or 'often' communicated with his teachers on all aspects of his learning. On the other hand, one of his teachers wrote that he was 'very reserved, a private struggler'.

## References

# INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

**SJIF 2019: 5.222 2020: 5.552 2021: 5.637 2022:5.479 2023:6.563**

**eISSN 2394-6334 <https://www.ijmrd.in/index.php/imjrd> Volume 11, issue 01 (2024)**

- 1.Argyle, M. (1978) *The Psychology of Interpersonal Behaviour*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- 2.Astington, J. & Olson, D. (1990) Metacognitive and Metalinguistic Language: learning to talk about thought, *Applied Psychology: an international review*, 39, pp. 77-87.
- 3.Barnes, D. (1979) *From Communication to Curriculum*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- 4.Bassett, R.E. & Smythe, M-J. (1979) *Communication and Instruction*. New York: Harper & Row.
- 5.Black, P. & Harrison, C. (2001) Self and Peer Assessment and Taking Responsibility: the science student's role in formative assessment, *School Science Review*, 83, pp. 43-49.
- 6.Brophy, J. (1981) Teacher Praise – a Functional Analysis, *Review of Educational Research*, 51, pp. 5-32.
- 7.Brophy, J. & Good, T.L. (1974) *Teacher-student Relationships: causes and consequences*. New York: Holt, Reinhart & Winston.
- 8.Carr, W. & Kemmis, S. (1991) *Becoming Critical: education knowledge and action research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.