

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the kind of verbal interaction patterns, which are prevalent in the classrooms of primary school teachers, who compose the sample. The Sample was composed of two categories of teachers, trained and untrained. A comparison of verbal behaviour patterns shown by the two groups was also to be done. Answers to the following questions were sought: a. Do the selected sample of teachers (as a whole) exhibit indirect or direct verbal behaviour? b. What differences exist in the verbal interaction patterns of the trained and the untrained teachers within the sample? The main aim of this research was to find out whether primary school teachers (although the sample might be too small to make a generalization) are democratic (indirect) in their classroom teaching or autocratic (direct). This is because according to research findings the teacher's verbal interaction behaviour influences pupils learning. The findings were to contribute to the general understanding of teacher influence in the classroom. It was also to give an idea of how effective primary school teachers are, be able to give some suggestions to about improving their effectiveness. The study was carried out from a randomly selected sample of twenty teachers, ten males and ten females nine untrained and eleven trained. All the observed teachers had attained the same academic level, Form Four. They were all observed teaching upper primary classes. The lessons they were observed in were English, History, Nature Study and Mathematics. Flanders interaction analysis categories (FIAC) were used as the research tool. Before going out to carry out the research, observer training in the use of classroom interaction categories for observation was done. The inter-observer reliability was calculated. After analysing the data the results were discussed. Interesting results were got out of which some recommendations were given which can be used by teachers, inspectors and researchers. However the piece of advise is, caution should be used when using the results of this study for generalizations, because, the sample was extremely small as compared to the whole population of teachers either in Machakos District or in Kenya as a whole.