Teachers' Factors Responsible for Ineffective Class-Room Communication

Happy Dumbi Omenogor, PhD
Associate Professor of English,
Department of Languages,
Faculty of Arts,
University of Delta, Agbor,
Delta State, Nigeria.
Email: happy.omenogor@unidel.edu.ng
Phone: 08119718359

Monday Ojevwe Akpojisheri (Ph.D)
English Language,
Department of English, Delta State
College of Education, Mosogar
Email: mondayojevweakpojisheri@gmail.com

https://doi.org/10.56201/ijee.v12.no.3.2026.pg238.248

Abstract
This study investigated the factors responsible for ineffective class-room communication in Staff Model Secondary School, University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State, Nigeria. It confirmed the assertion that ineffective class-room communication is responsible for students' poor performances. A comprehensive review of literature was carried out on the problems investigated. Five research hypotheses were used in the course of this research. Questionnaire was used to elicit data from some respondents. Simple percentage was used to analyse the responses from the questionnaire. This procedure was adequate because the study was a fact finding one. The findings revealed that teachers, students, government and school administrators cause ineffective class-room communication in the secondary school. Adequate recommendations were therefore made towards making class-room communication effective at this level of education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The Nigerian educational system now leaves much to be desired following the poor quality of many of its products and its failure to attain set objectives at the various levels of education. A good number of those who have passed through the secondary level of education fail to live up to societal expectations in other spheres of life. Some cannot write good official letters. Worse still, the quality of products from this level of education appears to be diminishing with each passing year. The researchers believe that ineffective communication between teachers and students also contributes immensely to the present undersirable situation in the education

system. A fact that supports the above opinion is that teachers have observed with disappointment some of their students who demonstrated commitment to their studies but were still unable to perform well. Njemanze (2007) substantiates the above assertion as she stipulates that "Communication is crucial to the social enterprise of teaching and learning." Furthermore, Ofulue (2007) and Macbrid (1981) observe that "Communication integrates knowledge, organization and power. Linking the earliest memory of man to his noblest aspiration and serving as an integral aspect of teaching.

Whenever communication fails to take place, ineffective communication occurs and it impedes the achievement of the set objectives of the teacher to a large extent. It is this background that has motivated the present researchers to investigate the teachers' factors that cause ineffective communication between teachers and students in order to identify them. Recommendations on how the said factors can be avoided were then made so that class-room communication can be effective.

Statement of the Problem

This study examined ineffective communication between teachers and students systematically, identified the causes and made recommendations to the appropriate quarters on how it can be avoided in the school system.

Scope of the Study

This study primarily investigated the teachers' factors responsible for ineffective class-room communication in Staff Model Secondary School, University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State, Nigeria. Randomly selected teachers from the school served as the respondents in the study.

Purpose of the Study

This study is carried out to conduct thorough research and identify the teachers' factors responsible for ineffective class-room communication in Staff Model Secondary School, University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State, Nigeria, and suggestions made on how to avoid ineffective class-room communication in the school.

Contributions to Knowledge

This study contributes to knowledge in that it points out the teachers' factors that make communication in the class-room ineffective. It explains the roles of teachers during communication and the things they (teachers) ought to know and put in place so that their communication with the students will be effective. This paper is of great importance to teachers of all subjects.

Hypotheses of the Study

i. Ineffective classroom communication is generally responsible for students' poor performances.
ii. Classroom communication is sometimes effective and at other times ineffective.
iii. Teachers contribute to ineffective classroom communication.
iv. Communication between teachers and some students is to some extent effective.
v. Communication between teachers and some students is very effective.
vi. Communication between teachers and some few students is not effective at all.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Meaning of Communication: It means exchanging and understanding information between two or more people. While people communicate, they create commonness between each other, or among one another, that is commonness with respect to sharing information, ideas, knowledge etc. with others.

Definitions and Nature of Communication

Peter Little (1980) provides an all-embracing definition when he stipulates that "Communication is the process by which information is passed between individuals and/or organizations by means of previously agreed symbols." Tubbs and Moss (1991) opine that "Communication is the sharing of experience." The major concern of this study is detecting the causes of ineffective class-room communication. Further review of literature is therefore focused on instructional communication.

As Ughamadu (1998) notes, "there is usually interaction amongst persons in teaching-learning encounters." "Interaction as observed by Ogunmilade (1984) "is communication in one form or the other."

Communication may be verbal or non-verbal. It is verbal when the sender uses codes directly whereas it is non-verbal when the words are not used directly but signs, actions, objects etc. that represent words are used. For effective teaching-learning activities to be achieved, the class-room teacher ought to use verbal and non-verbal communications adequately.

Ogunranti et al. (1981) proclaim that "communication process is another type of learning process where an individual attempts to convince, persuade or change another individual's behaviour." Consequently, feedback, which according to Njemanze (2007) is "the only evidence which shows that communication took place is usually expected."

Erickson and Curl (1972) describe the teaching-learning process as "a process of communication between individuals." Teachers need to know much about the communication process as well as acquire effective communication skills because of the nature of their job.

Several educational experts have defined class-room communication, which most of them refer as 'instructional communication' or 'interaction in teaching-learning situations' in several ways. A critical analysis of such definitions shows that all of them believe that instructional communication occasions the passing of information and the understanding of such information which takes place between teachers and students.

Some of the scholars in question include: Heinich et al. (1982), Okwo (1995) and Dike (1988). Definitions of communication generally indicate that it (communication) involves at least two parties — an encoder and a decoder. In class-room communication, teachers are the encoders while students are the decoders.

Process of communication: The encoder determines his objective of communicating, considers his message, the decoder and his level of understanding, chooses a channel and transmits his message. The receiver receives the message, decodes and interprets and sends feedback, to the initial transmitter who eventually interprets the feedback to determine whether communication has been effective or not.

Purposes & Objectives of Class-Room Communication

Effective communication enhances the degree of achievement of instructional objectives as Ughamadu (1998) observes. Uwazurike (1990) postulates that 'Class-room teachers use

communication for the following purposes:'

i. to impart knowledge
ii. to achieve understanding, teamwork and group decision cohesion.
iii. to ascertain effectiveness or otherwise of teaching-learning experience and
iv. to direct or control the performance of class-members. Ogunmilade (1984) also opines that teachers' aims, while communicating are:

i. getting things done,
ii. stimulating participative decision-making and critical thinking *on the part of students*,
iii. Enhancing
iv. developing people and
v. effecting control

From the above facts, we can infer that the purpose of class-room communication is tailored towards changing the learners' behaviour positively. Communicators in learning environments engage in communication for the purpose of influencing or being influenced by the environment in one way or the other in the positive direction.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on a communication theory. Different Communication models have been devised over time by different experts. A Communication model is a mathematical or verbal representation of the key elements of the communication process as Heinich et al. (1985) would have us believe.

Communication models make it possible for us to understand the relationship between and among the different elements of communication. Different models of communication have been devised. Such models include the following:

Aristotle's Model: This is one of the earliest model devised. Its major concern is on persuasive or rhetorical communication.

The Lasswellian Model: This model contains 5 W-questions. Which are who communicates, what is communicated, to whom it communicates with what effect in class-room communication, who stands for the teacher, 'what' the subject taught, 'whom' the students, 'channel' is the medium of instruction such as the text-book or chalk board. 'Effect' indicates the knowledge or skill acquired by the students. This model seems to be ideal for class-room communication. However, Ofoefuna (1992) warns that it may not be ideal for class-room communication because it tends to portray the teacher as a repetoire of knowledge and portray students as mere receivers of instructions from teachers. Students have always been advised by experts to adopt a critical approach vis-a-vis what they are taught, they ought not to be mere receivers, retainers and reproducers of what they are taught.

Shannon-Weaver Model: This is a mathematical theory of communication which could be applied to all forms of communication. Originally proposed by Claude E. Shannon, a mathematician of the Bell Telephone Laboratories. He advanced a theory of measuring the informational content of messages and Warren Weaver popularized it. This model is information centred.

The Weaver-Ness Model: This model recognises the importance of code and feedback in the communication process.

David Berlo's Model: This model considers the psycho-sociological aspects of the receiver and the sender, hence it is often called the psychological model. It has the source, message, channel and the receiver as its main components hence the acronym: SMCR is ascribed to this model.

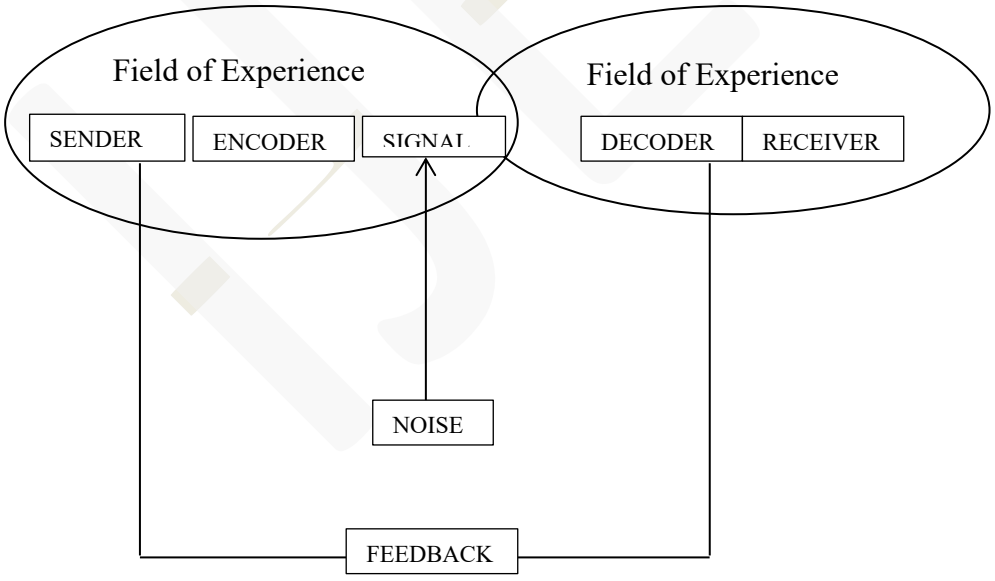
This model could be applied to class-room communication but it not very ideal as it did not incorporate 'feedback' which is the element through which the teacher can feel the pulse of the students in a class-room situation.

The Westley-MacLean Model: This model differentiates between interpersonal communication and mass communication. It recognizes the importance of 'feed-back' and the noise element. To a large extent it is relevant to class-room communication.

The HUB Model: This model is ideal for mass communication. It was put forward by R.E. Hubert, D.F Ungurait and T.W. Bohn as Ughamadu (1998) noted. The acronym 'HUB' is coined from the first names of the scholars that proposed this model. This model comprises communicators, codes, contents, gatekeepers, mass media, regulators, filters, audience, effect, media amplifications, noise and feed-back. This model can only be applied to class-room communication after some modifications.

The Schramm's Model: The model is also called: Osgood-Schramm's model; this model was proposed in 1954 (See: www.marketing91.com). Initially it was propose by Charles Osgood. Osgood initially proposed that communication is not a linear model but a circular one. This model was later amended by W. Schramm, who made it popular. Schramm explains that communication is a two way path, the message continually passing between the sender and the receiver. Schramm adapted every technical aspect of communication as st Shannon presented it. Schramm however added to this model the need to interpret the message and understand it in the exact way the sender wants it to be understood. Schramm stressed that communication takes place when the sender's and the receiver's fields of experience overlap. The model is presented in a diagram as follows:

Diagram 1



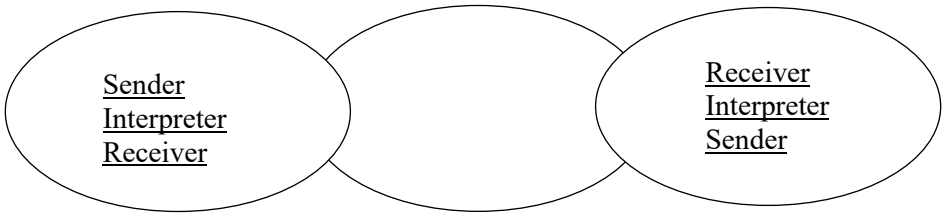
Schramm's Adaptation of the Shannon's Model

Source: Ughamadu (1998)

In this model, the sender (the teacher) encodes his message according to his field of experience while the receiver, (the student) decodes and sends a feed-back to the original sender (the teacher). The sender and the receiver perform their roles according to their fields of experience.

This can be diagramatized as stated below:

Diagram 2



Schramm's Transactional Model of Communication

Source: Ughamadu (1998)

This model indicates that communication is an interpretative transaction between or among individuals. Diagram 2 illustrates the cyclic nature of communication thereby substantiating the assertion that communication is often endless.

Having examined the above models of communication, we adopt the Schramm's model because we believe that it is ideal f for the teaching-learning exercise. Schramm's model is focused on the meaning of the message and how it is presented which is very relevant to the class-room situation. Furthermore, Schramm incorporated the technical aspect of the communication model of Shannon. This cares for a class-room that is done with the aid of educational media. Schramm also takes care of noise, a very important element in class-room communication process.

IGNORANCE OF THE CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION

Ignorance of some teachers or not being able to abide by the principles in question also cause ineffective class-room communication. H.P. Grice (1975) proposed these co-operative principles of communication which are also called maxims of communication. They are: maxim of quality, maxim of quantity, maxim of relevance, maxim of manner

For any effective teaching-learning exercise to occur, teachers' and students' contributions must be facts only, required information, be relevant to the subject, and speak when it is their turn to do so.

LACK OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE BY SOME TEACHERS

Failure to match their language with the situation, and failure to analyse correctly the overall personalities of their audience and use the quality of language that suits them.

Communication is also hindered by some teachers' inability to:

Create listening activities, provide decent class-rooms, use correct pronunciations and provide facilities for non-verbal communication

Indecent class-rooms also make communication ineffective.

Poor pronunciation of words also makes communication ineffective. As Amayo noted,

> Pronunciation is the most
> crucial feature in intelligible
> oral communication in any
> language…1986

Ofulue (2007) also observed that

> Oral communication
> is an integral

part of teaching.

We have discussed the different communication models and other factors that hinder effective communication in this sector of the paper.

METHODOLOGY

This is a fact finding research. The researchers investigated to find out the causes of the teachers' factors responsible for ineffective communication between teachers and students. The teachers in the above school make up the population of study.

Sampling Technique: The researcher went to the schools and some of the teachers in the schools responded to the question. Random sampling technique was used in choosing the respondents. Inferential statistics method was used, so inferences were drawn from a sample of the entire population of the study.

Research Instrument: The instrument used in the study is a questionnaire which the teachers completed.

Validity of Instrument: Our instrument is valid because the teachers who responded to the questionnaire are academically and professionally qualified. They are experienced teachers. The school is the famous ones in the area.

Method of Analysis: This study adopts a statistical analysis of the responses gathered. It shows in percentage form, the negative and positive responses of the respondents.

DATA ANALYSIS

Hypothesis 1

This stipulates that ineffective communication between teachers and students occasions students' poor performances in internal and external examinations. Items 1 and 2 in the questionnaire were used to test this hypothesis. The following table shows the respondents' response.

Items	**RESPONSES**					
	No. of Agreed	**% of Agreed**	**No. of Disagreed**	**% of Disagreed**	**Total**	**%**
I	138	92	12	8	150	100
Ii	120	80	30	20	150	100
Totals	258	172	42	28	300	200
Average%		86		14		

The response from the above analysis shows that 86% agree with the hypothesis. The implication of the above result is that the hypothesis is correct and it is therefore accepted.

Hypothesis 2

This says that class-room communication is sometimes effective and at other times ineffective. Items three and four in the questionnaire were used to test the validity of this hypothesis. The following table shows the details of analysis:

Table 2:

Items	RESPONSES					
	No. of Agreed	% of Agreed	No. of Disagreed	% of Disagreed	Total	%
	140	93	10	7	150	100
	130	86.7	20	13.3	150	100
Totals	270	179.7	30	20.3	300	200
Average%		89.5		10.5		

The result from the above analysis points out that 89.5% of the respondents agreed with the hypothesis in question. Only 10.15% of the respondents disagreed. The meaning of the above result is that the hypothesis is valid and accepted.

Hypothesis 3

This hypothesizes that teachers also contribute to ineffective class-room communication. Item 5 was used to test the validity of this hypothesis. The following table shows the analysis of this hypothesis.

Table 3:

Items	RESPONSES					
	No. of Agreed	% of Agreed	No. of Disagreed	% of Disagreed	Total	%
i	90	60	50	40	150	100
Total	90					
Average%		60		40	150	100

From the above table, 60% of the respondents agreed that teachers also contribute to ineffective classroom communication, while 40% of the respondents disagreed. It is now clear that the hypothesis is to a large extent valid and it is therefore accepted.

Hypothesis 4

This hypothesizes that communication between teachers and some students is to an extent effective, while it is very effective with a few students. This hypothesis was tested with items 6 and 7. The following table shows the summary of the respondents' responses on the hypothesis:

Table 4:

Items	RESPONSES					
	No. of Agreed	% of Agreed	No. of Disagreed	% of Disagreed	Total	%
i	120	80	30	20	150	100
ii	135	90	15	10	150	100
Totals	255	170	45	30	300	200
Average%		85	15			

The result from the above analysis shows that 85% of the respondents agreed that communication between teachers and some students is to an extent effective, while it is very effective with a few students. Only 15% disagreed. It therefore suggests that the above

hypothesis is valid and should be accepted.

DISCUSSION

According to the respondents of this study, the four hypotheses tested above were valid and accepted.

FINDINGS

a. Communication between teachers are sometimes effective, and at other times ineffective.
b. Ineffective communication between teachers and students cause poor performance
c. Teachers contribute to ineffective class-room communication.
d. Students contribute to ineffective class-room communication.
e. Communication to a good extent is effective teachers and some students, while it is not effective between teachers and some other students.
f. Teachers' failure to create listening activities during lessons, obey communication maxims and display communication competence bring about poor performances of students.
g. Communication is very effective between teachers and a few students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

a. Student teachers irrespective of discipline at all levels of education should be made to take courses in communication in English as it is done in polytechnics and other similar institutions.
b. Students teachers irrespective of discipline should also be made to take courses in phonetics and phonology of English. This will enable them to pronounce words correctly and eventually communicate effectively with their students.
c. Teachers who are already on the job should be made to go for seminars from time to time on class-room communication.
d. University curriculum on GST. Use of English studies in Nigeria should be re-designed to include ALL the nitty gritty of communication.

Conclusion: The teachers' factors responsible for ineffective class-room communication have been investigated and discovered. Recommendations have been made towards achieving effective class-room communication. It is the investigator's strong belief that if the above suggestions are put into practice, ineffective class-room communication will be highly reduced if not eradicated in no distant time.

REFERENCES

Amayo, A.M. (1986). "Teaching English Pronunciation in Nigeria for International Intelligibility: The Supra Segments". Uno S.O. (Ed.). Use of Education in Communication: Spectrum Books. Ltd. 314 – 336.

Heinich et al. (1985). *Instructional Media and the New Technologies of Instruction* (2nd ed.) New-York: Macmillan Pub.co.

Njemanze, Q.U. (2007). "Efficient Listening Behaviour as a Tool for Effective Class-room Communication: A Discourse" Aborisade, P et al. (Eds.), *English Language Teaching Today Journal*, Vol.3, 1-15.

Ofoefuna, M.O. (1992). Functional Approach to Educational Technology, Onitsha: Ofona Publishers.

Ofulue, C.I. (2007). "The Oral Communication Component of EAP: Theory or Practice?" Aborisade P. et al. (Eds.), *English Language Teaching Today Journal* Vol.6, 11-25.

Ogunranti, A. et al. (1982). Educational Technology, A.C.E. Series, Ibadan: Institute of Education, University of Ibadan, Heinemann.

Dike, H.I. (1988). *A Textbook of Educational Technology,* Owerri; Totan Publishers Ltd.

MacBride S. (1981). Many Voices, One Word. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.

Okwo, F.A (1995). "Instructional Communication" Okwo, F.A. and Ike G.A. (Eds.), *Educational Technology: Basic Concepts and Issues*, Nsukka: University Publishers.

Peter, L. (1980). *Communication in Business.* London: Longman Group Ltd.

Ughamadu, K.A. (1998). *Educational Technology Concepts, Principles and Applications.* Onitsha: Kmensuo Educational Publishers.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Ineffective class-room communication makes secondary school students perform poorly in internal examinations. Agreed ( ) Disagreed ( )

Ineffective class-room communication makes secondary school students perform poorly in WAEC, NECO and other external examinations. Agreed ( ) Disagreed ( )

Communication between teachers and students is sometimes effective. Agreed ( ) Disagreed ( )

Communication between teachers and students is sometimes ineffective. Agreed ( ) Disagreed ( )

Class-room teachers to some extent cause ineffective communication between them and their students. Agreed ( ) Disagreed ( )

Government is partly responsible for ineffective class-room communication. Agreed ( ) Disagreed ( )

Students' parents contribute to ineffective class-room communication. Agreed ( ) Disagreed ( )

Students also contribute to ineffective class-room communication. Agreed ( ) Disagreed ( )

Communication between teachers and some students is to good extent effective. Agreed ( ) Disagreed ( )

Communication between teachers and a few students is very effective. Agreed ( ) Disagreed ( )