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Lesson

Study

Explanation of
choice of case
pupils

Rationale behind
observation
schedule

Interviews

Reflection

In accordance with Dudley's (2015) research lesson planning, observation and discussion sheet, three learners were identified as case pupils. The three students were chosen to approximately represent higher, middle and lower skills across the curriculum. Observations of case study learners were to be made every five minutes for 30 minutes. Questioning technique was to be noted by the observing researcher (Appendix 4) and each case child given a score of 1 to 5 based on the Leuven Scale of Active Engagement in Learning (SCILT, 2019) and recommended by Estyn (2019). This scale 5-minute intervals were selected to allow for note taking and observation of all 3 case pupils in response to a questioning strategy. The National Union of Teachers (2010) suggests that observations at the start of any lesson will be the most disturbing to the learning environment and, therefore, cautions that observations should be conducted for a significant proportion of the lesson. At the earliest possible opportunity, the three case pupils were interviewed using the predesigned questions (Appendix 5). Interviews were to be conducted as close as possible to the observed lesson to preserve the fidelity of pupil thoughts and opinions (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). Interviews may raise anxiety (Bell, 2011) so were to be conducted in a quiet, neutral space, familiar to the children. Following the completion of the lesson study process, the researchers would proceed to a discussion of the data and agreement on overall findings (Dudley, 2015). To ensure continuity when reflecting, the researchers used a bespoke reflection model. Reflections were to be completed using Brookfield's Lenses (Brookfield, 1998), designed to encourage the practitioner to reflect from different perspective, thus acting to remove potential unrecognised bias. Each lens would then be reflected upon using Gibbs' reflective strategy (Gibbs, 1988) to provide more structure to each of Brookfield's lenses.

Analysis of interview data

Specific reference to appendices (where can the reader find the relevant information?)

Child 1 expressed a little enthusiasm for the content of the lesson and was able to articulate learning within the lesson which was drawn from the questioning process. He recognised the contributions of their learning partner and classmates, stating that: “***”. Child 1 expressed no discomfort at any questioning strategy and stated that he was more than happy to answer questions; a statement supported by the observation notes (Appendix 3, Section B). He expressed mild discomfort at critiquing another’s opinions, despite being comfortable to be asked to comment on their own opinions. Despite being the more active of the learning pair, as shown in the observations (Appendix 3, Section C) Child 1 enjoyed working collaboratively. Child 1 was emboldened to volunteer when the teacher counted the number of volunteers (Appendix 4), stating a reduction in anxiety about being in the minority.

Making comparisons between responses

Specific reference to appendices

Child 2 expressed the most enthusiasm in interview suggesting that they had enjoyed and engaged with the lesson. She also expressed good understanding of the lessons purpose and learning and demonstrated good recall in interview, stating: “***”. This again suggests that Child 2 was able to draw deeper learning from the lesson. She expressed no discomfort at any questioning strategy (Appendix 3, Section B). Like Child 1, Child 2 expressed mild discomfort at the prospect of critiquing another’s answer. Child 2 expressed some mild concerns about working with a learning partner due to risk of competition for answering the questions, commenting that “***”. This statement is supported by the child’s enthusiasm to answer questions and observed disinterest when Child 2’s partner was answering on their behalf (Appendix 3, Section 4). Child 2 expressed little to no fear at volunteering answers (Appendix 5, line 5), and other than slight apprehension at speaking in front of the class, saw no detrimental factors in answering. Child 2 expressed discomfort at the teacher’s approach of highlighting volunteers, stating that it made her less inclined to volunteer as she felt increased pressure.

Summary

The evidence of the case children suggests that the higher and middle ability students possessed both the understanding of the questions and their own knowledge, in order to begin answering from the beginning of the lesson. All children felt that the teacher accepted their decisions not to answer or their inability to answer and understood that questions were integral to any lesson.

**Discussion
of
research
findings**

Links to
literature

Collecting
together
evidence from
both lesson
studies to form
conclusions

Across all six case students, it was evident that they enjoyed answering questions and felt rewarded either by praise from the teacher or a feeling of accomplishment. The majority of the questions asked in Lesson 1 and Lesson 2 were whole class questions. Research by Haydon and Hunter (2011) suggests questioning strategies that involve a whole class response result in fewer disruptions.

There was some evidence to suggest that following multiple questions and engagements some children who had answered questions displayed a drop off in engagement. This was particularly evident in the observations of Child 1, Child 2 and Child Y. However, in the case of Child Y and Class 2, the introduction of a task appeared to replenish engagement with questioning. This 'question fatigue' may be explained in a similar way to muscle fatigue (Enoka & Duchateau, 2008), in that repeated use depletes energy or it may suggest that the rewards of answering questions diminish when compounded.

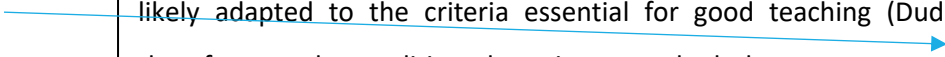
The importance of wait time (Cremin and Arthur, 2014) was evidenced by Child Z who required additional time to formulate an answer. However, Child X and Child Y expressed that the wait time may have been an aggravating factor in their apprehension about being randomly selected. These statements were not supported by interviews with Class 1 and if accurate contradict research that increased wait time increases confidence in responding (Black et al., 2003). Grigg (2015) advises teachers to allow 'wait' time in responding to children's answers to enable both the teacher and the class to reflect upon the answer.

Limitations of study

The first and most obvious limitation of any small study such as this is the sample size. The Lesson Study Handbook (Dudley, 2015) suggests using three lessons for a typical lesson study and Grigg (2015) outlines an action research cycle as detailed by Kermis and McTaggart (1982) which suggests multiple research lessons. It may have been helpful if further lessons were included in the research study in order for more detailed observation notes to be taken.

Whilst lesson study is a valid tool for teachers of all experience (Dudley, 2013), the researchers' relative lack of classroom experience and teaching experience may have inevitably caused them to overlook or misinterpret children behaviour. The counter argument could also be proposed that the researchers' lack of experience would not blinker their observations. It could be argued that experienced teachers have most likely adapted to the criteria essential for good teaching (Dudley, 2013), and therefore may be conditioned to miss or overlook classroom events. Hancock (2001) argues that the view of teaching as a "craft" may deter teachers from engaging with research.

Links to literature to
support personal
opinion



Grigg (2015) notes that the skills of the observer are very important in lesson observation and highlights the recommendations of Ho and Kane (2013) that two observers are more reliable than one as they may check and corroborate each other's data and provide a more complete picture. However, it follows that more observers may provide more of a distraction to the learners. In the researcher's experience of being observers, it was noted that the disruption caused by more than one observer was greatly increased, particularly amongst high-demand pupils and some with additional learning needs.

Conclusion

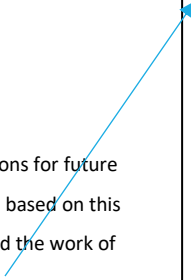
Linking personal
research to the work
of others

The finding of this lesson study supports the assertion by Hattie (2012) that questioning is an important component of engagement and conversely student boredom has an extremely negative effect on learning ($D=0.49$). The observations and interviews with students also strongly support Gray's (2015) assertion that for effective engagement with questioning students need to be in position of secure knowledge. Questioning was shown to impact positively upon engagement. However, the study also suggested that questions needed to be appropriate, accessible and relevant. The study also shows the six case children responded differently to each questioning strategy, and therefore indicates that a mix of questioning strategies used throughout the lesson would enable more students to access and engage with the questioning.

Analysis of the data demonstrated to the researchers the amount of classroom activity that they overlooked when teaching their respective lessons. Additionally, the students' opinions highlighted the importance of considering the effect of any questioning strategy not only on engagement but on the students' wellbeing and emotions. These findings supported Dudley (2013)'s assertions that the act of teaching limits a practitioner's ability to observe the class completely. The author was surprised upon data analysis, whilst reviewing the case student engagement against his own conceptions of the lesson.

Recommendations

Suggestions for future research based on this study and the work of others



In future practice, the researcher plans to provide a range of questions to allow each student the opportunity to have their voice heard in the classroom, the intended consequence being increased engagement with learning and greater individual development. Gibbs and Bryant (2008) hypothesised that the individuals attempt to relate their answers to the questioner. It would be prudent for any further studies to consider the structure of their questions and that effect on the answers given. Krael and Harshbarger (2017) extol the virtues of higher order questioning; therefore, future research may investigate the difference in student engagement between higher and lower order questioning.

Cremin and Arthur (2014) suggest that after several years in the profession, many teachers will perform instinctively without the inclination to analyse. This study demonstrates how much analysis can be drawn from the observation of just two lessons and, therefore, supports the assertions of Grigg (2015), namely that teachers must become researchers for the benefit of themselves and their students. Hancock (2001) surmises that both the workload and the cultural view of the teacher act as impediments to teacher-led research. If we are to see a change in the culture of teacher research, we must surely address both the culture of teaching and provide our teachers with the resources, time and motivation to complete research.

The piece of work below is unrelated to the essay above, but gives an example of a review of literature concerning the group interview as a research method.

Again, this has already been submitted through Turnitin.

Accurate referencing
of a direct quotation

Semi-structured focus group interviews will be carried out for the participants for each cohort, the organisation of which can be found in appendix 4. Thomas (2017) advocates the discussion aspect of focus group interviews and highlights the importance of reflecting upon the reasons why a particular method has been selected. The researcher aims to “understand, evaluate or assess a...situation” and “to sample respondents’ opinions” (Cohen et al., 2018:508). Donaldson (2015) promotes that importance of children’s voices being heard within all aspects of education. Therefore, to mirror the ideals and ethos within the new curriculum in the data methods in the research project are vital. Hartas (2010) highlights the variety of different advantages of a group interview, particularly concerning the relationship between participants. Although Johnson and Christenson (2017) highlight the rapport created through interviews, the Hawthorne effect can be present; with the participants changing their viewpoints due to the relationship or expectation with the interviewer or with the other participants within the group. This may affect the validity of the data collected, however the role of the interviewer, as guide, is the seek reasoning for answers to encourage a truthful, detailed answer. The conversational nature of the focus group lends itself to a qualitative data collection which develops a greater depth of understanding on the issue (Johnson and Christenson, 2017). To encourage discussion within the group, a semi-structured interview allows the researcher to ask for depth in reasoning but can ensure all areas of interest are covered (Briggs et al., 2012). An example of this structure is modelled by Thomas (2017) below (Figure 5). This method would ensure that there is a consistency and, therefore, affords the reliability of results from each cohort. The cohort organisation, from Thomas’ (2017) recommendations of semi-structured interviews, can be found in Appendix 5.

Criticality shown
here

Correct use of in-text
figures (the figure [a
diagram] appears at
the end of this
paragraph)