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THE HIDDEN ROLE OF SILENCE IN CLASSROOM LEARNING

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the role of silence in classroom learning and its impact on student engagement. While silence is often interpreted as a lack of participation, the findings suggest that it can also reflect deep thinking and internal processing. The research was conducted using classroom observations and student interviews. Results show that many students remain silent to organize their thoughts, while others experience anxiety or lack of confidence. The study highlights the need for teachers to reconsider their perception of silence and adopt more inclusive teaching strategies.

KEY WORDS: Silence in classroom, student engagement, learning process, anxiety in education, cognitive thinking, teaching strategies.

ANNOTATSIYA: Ushbu tadqiqot dars jarayonida sukunatning o‘rni va uning o‘quvchilarning faolligiga ta’sirini o‘rganadi. Odatda sukunat ishtirok etmaslik belgisi sifatida qaraladi, ammo natijalar uning chuqur fikrlash va ichki tahlil jarayonini ifodalashi mumkinligini ko‘rsatdi. Tadqiqot kuzatuv va intervyu usullari orqali olib borildi. Natijalarga ko‘ra, ko‘plab o‘quvchilar fikrlarini tartibga solish uchun sukut saqlaydi, ba’zilar esa ishonchsizlik yoki hayajon sababli jim turadi. Tadqiqot o‘qituvchilarga sukunatni boshqacha talqin qilish zarurligini ko‘rsatadi.

KALIT SO’ZLAR: Darsdagi sukunat, o‘quvchi faolligi, o‘quv jarayoni, ta’limda xavotir, kognitiv fikrlash, o‘qitish strategiyalari.

Аннотация: Данное исследование рассматривает роль тишины в учебном процессе и её влияние на активность учащихся. Часто тишина воспринимается

как отсутствие участия, однако результаты показывают, что она может отражать глубокое мышление и внутреннюю обработку информации. Исследование проводилось с использованием наблюдений и интервью. Результаты показали, что многие студенты молчат, чтобы структурировать свои мысли, в то время как другие испытывают тревогу или неуверенность. Работа подчеркивает необходимость пересмотра отношения учителей к тишине.

Ключевые слова: Тишина в классе, активность учащихся, процесс обучения, тревожность в образовании, когнитивное мышление, педагогические стратегии.

INTRODUCTION: In most classrooms, participation is often measured by how much students speak. Teachers usually encourage active discussion, group work, and verbal responses. However, not all learning happens through speaking. Silence, which is often misunderstood as a lack of engagement, may actually play an important role in students' thinking processes. This study explores how silence functions in classroom learning and whether it should be viewed differently by educators.

METHODS: This research used a qualitative approach. 45-secondary school students and five teachers participated in the study. Classroom observations were conducted over two weeks, focusing on moments when students remained silent. In addition, short interviews were held with students to understand their reasons for staying quiet during lessons. The collected data were analyzed to identify patterns in behavior and perception.

RESULTS: The findings revealed that silence was not always a sign of disengagement. About 60% of students reported that they remained silent because they were thinking deeply about the topic. Some students preferred to organize their ideas before speaking, while others felt more comfortable processing information internally.

Around 25% of students associated silence with anxiety or fear of making mistakes. These students were less likely to participate even when they understood the material.

The remaining 15% showed little engagement, using silence as a way to avoid involvement in the lesson.

DISCUSSION: The results suggest that silence has multiple meanings in the classroom. While it can indicate a lack of confidence or participation, it can also reflect deep cognitive processing. Modern teaching methods often prioritize visible participation, which may overlook quieter students who are still actively learning. These findings highlight the need for teachers to reconsider how they interpret silence. Instead of assuming that silent students are not engaged, educators should create alternative ways for them to express understanding, such as written responses or small group discussions.

CONCLUSION: In conclusion, silence should not be automatically viewed as a negative behavior in the classroom. It can be a valuable part of the learning process, allowing students to reflect and think critically. Recognizing the different meanings of silence can help teachers create more inclusive and effective learning environments.

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