

**TOWARD A CLASSROOM STRUCTURE APPROACH TO LEARNING:  
A PRAGMATIC NEW PEDAGOGICAL PARADIGM**

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**ABSTRACT**

The quest for enhanced learning techniques has been a perennial pursuit with some educators. Since the days of Socrates, the venerable teacher of all times, the quest has been to find new techniques to enhance learning. Against the backdrop of increasing emphasis on excellence in education, there is a growing trend in high education to take teaching effectiveness more seriously (Edgerton et al. 1991; Babin et al. 2002). Over the years, this important pedagogical challenge has been mainly tackled from three perspectives: the psychological approach has been researched and reported extensively in the literature (Duren and Cherrington 1992; Whicker et al. 1997); Likewise, the sociological approach has been employed on the issue of improving student's learning quite often (Stanton-Salazar and Dornbusch 1995; Rumberger and Larson 1998) and lately efforts have been waged to improve education from the use of technological advances in communications (Benburnan-Fich et al. 2001). To follow the tenor of the times and to improve teaching quality further, Light (2001) has recently also considered the instructor's activities outside the classroom.

The perspective advanced on the problem in this paper is on improving students learning by manipulating the classroom structure (in terms of policy matters), which has not been explored in a systematic way until now. Therefore, in this study, a formal structure (policy statements) was proposed and a survey was conducted to determine how the students would rate the policy statements in terms of humor, clarity, and what impression they would have of the teacher who would implement these policy matters. Collectively, these policy statements would form the classroom structure intended to guide students' behavior and interaction. ANOVA was applied to the data. The results of the study indicate that, while the statements did not differ statistically in terms of humor and clarity, the students held different impressions (positive or negative) of the teacher for the use of certain

policy statements. Thus, a formal structure was tested.

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