

**Name of the Scholar:** Shashi Shukla

**Name of the Supervisor:** Prof. Farah Farooqi

**Department:** Department of Teacher Training and Non-Formal Education (IASE)

**Title of the study:** Understanding children's talk in the classrooms of a Government school in Delhi

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## **Abstract**

**Keywords:** *Children, Classroom, Talk, Government School*

This thesis makes an attempt to understand children's talk in the classrooms of a Government school in Delhi. In India, the understanding of children's talk and seeing it in relation with the development of children has not been explored. In Indian educational context; talk is still seen as a negative thing thus to look at it with a different lens is a unique contribution of this study. This study addresses a major research lacuna by bringing the child at the fore-front of the classroom talk based research.

This thesis is based on an ethnographic study conducted in the classrooms of a Government school from August 2018 to Feb 2019. The chief participants were the students of class 8 and class 3 along with the teachers teaching these two classes. The socio-economic profile of the students was mostly from the low middle income group. During the field work I conducted extensive classroom observations, focus group discussions, sociometry and write-ups with students and interviewed the teachers; all with focus to understand children's talk.

My thesis makes significant contributions to knowledge of children's world which goes beyond the surface of imagination to reveal the actual lived experiences of

young children within the classroom of a Government school. As the focus of the study was to understand children's talk within the classroom, thus to see it in relation to pedagogic practice was an obvious attempt. The data collected from observation clearly shows the dominance of teachers and their talk in the classroom. In many classrooms, teachers do most of the talking, though the opposite has been demonstrated to be more effective (Crowe & Stanford, 2010). Contrary to this, the data collected through teachers' interview presents a more theoretical picture. All teachers admit that children will talk and they talk all the time. Teachers say that they don't see any relation between the students who talk more and their academic performance. Rather all of them felt that children who talk more achieve good marks. Still teachers were observed discouraging the participation of the students in class as they consider students' voice as noise. And silence in the class was one of the prime ways of restoring order and controlling children.

This research is first of its kind to have focused on children's perception of talk in the classroom. The children of both the classes perceived talk as rejuvenating. They claimed that talk enhances their social, emotional and cognitive skills. The Students distinguished between the interactive classroom discussions and book based monologue teaching which was unanimously termed as boring. The focus of children's talk was always about self and it could be inclusive of anything related to learning, pace of working, assessment, friendships, family, sports or social media. In class 8 students especially boys wanted to appear "cool" through personal fables whether it was about academics or sports or something else. The girls in class 8 usually were polite in their talk and never used slangs or abuses. In class 3 students who were lagging behind in academics always talked about getting extra help from tuitions and were eager to catch up with their high achieving classmates. I have raised my concerns

about casual bullying within the classrooms that require immediate attention of teachers and school administration. Adults can provide timely intervention, support and guidance if they listen to what concerns children express through their talk.

To conclude the thesis, discussions on the barriers that limit use of classroom talk as a resource for holistic development of children is done. There is descriptive presentation of way forward in utilizing talk as an effective medium for children's development and along with that I have proposed some curricular themes which can be included to enhance and strengthen certain concepts for children and teachers both.

“Talk is still the poor relation because it is time consuming, fiddly and difficult to assess. It is still neglected; we should continue to argue the case for talk and that the curriculum and assessment should value talk more.”

Stuart (2008, as cited in Coultas, 2012)

### Education

- P.hD from Department of Teacher Training and Non-Formal Education (IASE), Jamia Millia Islamia (2022)
- M. Ed, University of Lucknow (2006-07)
- B. Ed. , Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi ( 2005-06)
- M. Sc in Child Development, Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi. (2003-05)
- B. Sc (Hons.) Home science (Child Development), Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi (2000-03)
- Schooling under 10+2 scheme from Navyug Radiance School, Lucknow (2000)
- Qualified the UGC-NET held on December, 2004 (Child Development – Home Science)
- Qualified the UGC-NET held on June,2006 (Child Development – Home Science)
- Qualified the UGC-NET held on December,2007 ( Education)
- Certificate course in MS Office

## Experience

- Worked as Assistant Professor ( Adhoc), Department of Elementary Education, Miranda House since July 2011 till Nov 2019
- Worked as Assistant Professor (Adhoc), Department of Education, Lady Irwin College since July'2010 till June'2011
- Worked as Senior Project Fellow at Lady Irwin College, on a UGC funded project from 15 March'10 till July'2010
- Worked as Programme Coordinator at Education Quality Foundation of India from Oct'08 till Sep'30 2009
- Worked as Academic Counselor at IGNOU, from July'05 till November'2010
- Worked as Research Associate At Lady Irwin College on a Project on “Parenting: Mirror Self Recognition” , University of Delhi in collaboration with University of Osnabrueck, Germany from June ‘ 07 till date
- Completed dissertation titled “Profiles of Single Parent Families: A Documentation” under the supervision of Dr. Geeta Katarya, Reader, University of Delhi
- Dissertation in M.Ed. ”A study of Teaching Competency, Professional Commitment and Job Satisfaction among Primary

School Teachers” under the guidance of Dr. Subodh Kumar,  
Reader, University of Lucknow

**Papers Taught:**

- Educational Psychology
- Education of children with special needs (optional)
- Child Development
- Human Relations and communications
- Self-Development Workshops
- Observing Children

## Paper Presented

- Presented paper titled, “ Understanding Classroom Conversations: Making Meaning of What Children Talk in Classroom” at 4<sup>th</sup> National Teachers’ Congress, Pune, India-17 Dec 2020
- Presented paper titled, “Children’s talk in the classroom” at Annual Convention of National Academy of Psychology (NAOP), New Delhi- 19 Dec 2018.
- Presented paper titled, “ Influence of socialization goals on young children’s pro-social behaviour” at NAOP conference at IIFM & NITTTR Bhopal- 13 Dec 2014
- Presented paper titled, “Understanding and discovering self through self-development workshop ” at NAOP conference at IIFM & NITTTR Bhopal- 14 Dec 2014
- Presented paper on “**Participatory Approach in Teacher Education**” at the Global TIE - Global Trends and Innovations in Education, organized by Innovations Department of City Montessori School, Lucknow
- Presented paper on “ **Ethnotheories-A study on parenting**” at Epigenesis organized by Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi, New Delhi
- Gupta,D. and Shukla,S. “Intra- cultural variations in Mirror Self Recognition among young Indian children” presented as a part of

symposium “The development of early self- and other- awareness in different socio-cultural contexts”. International Association for Cross- Cultural Psychology (**IACCP**), Bremen, Germany, July 29, 2008.

- Gupta,D. and Shukla,S. “Intra- cultural variations in Mirror Self Recognition among young Indian children” Paper to be presented at IIT- Delhi at the conference AASP (Asian Association of Social Psychology) in the month of December 2009
- Shukla S., Gupta, D., Chaudhary N. “Young children’s recognition of others- The marked mother task”. Paper presented at IIT- Delhi at the conference AASP (Asian Association of Social Psychology), December 2009.
- Shukla S. and Chaudhary,N. “ Recognition of others by young children”. Paper presented at JNU, New Delhi at the conference NAOP ( National Association of Psychology) December’2010

### **Special training**

- Got fellowship to Attend ARTS (Advance Research training workshop) at Bremen, Germany from 1 Aug'08 to 3 Aug'08 on Mixed Methods of Research in Cross cultural studies.
- Attended workshop on use of ATLAS ti software for qualitative data analysis (September'2010)
- Attended workshop on Technical writing at Faculty enrichment programme at Lady Irwin College, University of Delhi
- Trained to use SPSS for quantitative research analysis

### **List of Publications:**

- Shukla, S. (2019). Children's Talk in the Classroom: A Conceptualisation. *Jamia Journal of Education*. Vol. 6(1). 26-35.
- Shukla, S. (2017). Evolution. Relevance and Rationale of Nai Talim in Contemporary India. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research*. Vol. 4(1). Pp. 167-172.
- Chaudhary, N., & Shukla, S.(2016). The third gender & their identity in Indian society. In *Resistance in everyday life: Constructing Cultural Experiences*. Singapore: Springer.
- Chaudhary, N., & Shukla, S.(In press). Family, identity and the individual in India. In G. Misra (Ed.). *ICSSR Sixth survey of research in Psychology*. Indian Council for Social Science Research, New Delhi, India.

- Stages of Child Development 0-6 years for Module of Early Childhood Education Diploma(2016) offered by NIOS,Noida
- Chaudhary, N. & Shukla, S. (2015). “Children’s work is to play”: Beliefs and practices related to childhood among Indians. In, J. L. Roopnarine, M. Patte, J. E. Johnson, & D. Kuschner (Eds.) *International Perspectives on Children’s Play*. Open University Press/McGraw Hill Education.
- Shukla, S. (2014). Construction of knowledge among young children before their entry to school. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and social science*. Vol 19 (3). Pp.88-92.
- Shukla, S. (2014). Teaching Competency, professional commitment and job satisfaction- A study of primary school teachers. *Journal of research & method in Education*. Vol 4(3). Pp .44-64.
- Shukla,S.(2014). Divorce: Its impact on families and children. *Researchjournalis journal of sociology*. Vol 2(5)
- Shukla, S. (2012). Posting blues and your child. *The Alpha Stories*. Vol 1(4) Pp. 16-19.