



International Journal of
Interdisciplinary Research

International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ISSN(Online): 3090-2959

Vol 2 no 2 (2026): July 2026

<https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijir/index>

Email: ijireditor7@gmail.com

Principal Leadership Communication in Enhancing Teachers' Work Motivation

¹Yudha Pradhana, ²Audrey Danellea Rahmadhani, ³Muqoyla Fajrin, ⁴Niquita Chairunisa,
⁵Deasy Ayu Nandini

^{1,2,3,4,5}Universitas Nasional, Indonesia.

¹yudha.pradhana@civitas.unas.ac.id, ²danellearahmadhani@gmail.com,

³muqoylafajrin30@gmail.com, ⁴niquitachairunisa@gmail.com, ⁵deasyayunandini123@gmail.com

*Correspondence Email: yudha.pradhana@civitas.unas.ac.id

Abstract: In the field of education, principals play an important role in creating a conducive working environment for teachers. This study aims to analyze the leadership communication strategies employed by the principal in improving teachers' work motivation at SMK Budi Asih Jakarta. This research used a qualitative descriptive approach with data collected through in-depth interviews with the principal as the main informant. The findings reveal that the principal applies interpersonal, situational, formal, and informal communication strategies to foster teachers' work motivation. Family-oriented communication, coaching, emotional support, and task delegation adjusted to teachers' conditions emerged as the primary approaches in creating a positive working environment. Guided by Situational Leadership Theory, the study identifies the implementation of directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating leadership dimensions in the principal's communication practices. The novelty of this study lies in its exploration of leadership communication strategies within the context of a vocational school through the lens of situational leadership. The findings provide practical insights for educational leaders in developing adaptive communication strategies to enhance teachers' motivation and strengthen a positive organizational climate in schools.

Keywords: Leadership Communication, Principal, Teacher Work Motivation, Situational Leadership, Educational Communication.

INTRODUCTION

In the field of education, communication plays a very important role in building harmonious working relationships within the school environment (At-tamimy & Eloy, 2025; Briganti, 2025). Communication is not only a means of delivering information, but also functions as a medium to influence attitudes, behavior, and individual motivation within educational organizations. According to (Nurhadi & Kurniawan, 2017), communication is a process of delivering messages aimed at creating certain effects on communicants, either directly or indirectly. In the context of educational organizations, effective communication is able to create good work coordination,



International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ISSN(Online): 3090-2959

Vol 2 no 2 (2026): July 2026

<https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijir/index>

Email: ijireditor7@gmail.com

increase trust, and build positive interpersonal relationships between leaders and educators.

As the leader of an educational organization, the principal has a major responsibility in creating a conducive working environment for teachers (Ayyubi et al., 2025; Syafi'I et al., 2024). In addition to being responsible for administrative aspects, principals are also required to establish effective leadership communication in order to improve teachers' work motivation (Chaanpraserta et al., 2024; Yulianti et al., 2024). Teachers who possess high work motivation tend to be more committed in carrying out their duties, capable of creating a positive learning atmosphere, and able to contribute to improving the quality of education in schools. On the other hand, weak leadership communication can lead to decreased teacher morale, misunderstandings, and low work effectiveness within the school organization.

Organizational communication is basically a process of exchanging messages within an organization to achieve common goals. Goldhaber in (Gani, 2019) explains that organizational communication is the process of creating and exchanging messages within a network of interdependent relationships. Furthermore, organizational communication also includes internal communication, vertical communication, horizontal communication, and interpersonal relationships among organizational members (Katuuk et al., 2016). Within the school environment, the principal acts as the main communicator who has a significant influence on the organizational climate and teachers' work motivation. Leaders with effective communication skills will be more capable of building participation, creating a comfortable working atmosphere, and increasing employee loyalty. (Zahara, 2018)

In practice, principals need to adapt their leadership communication style to the diverse conditions and characteristics of teachers. One relevant approach used in this study is the situational leadership theory proposed by Hersey and Blanchard. This theory emphasizes that there is no single leadership style that is effective for all situations; therefore, leaders need to adjust their leadership approach based on the readiness and condition of their subordinates (Toana, 2018). Situational leadership consists of four main approaches, namely directing, coaching, supporting,



International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ISSN(Online): 3090-2959

Vol 2 no 2 (2026): July 2026

<https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijir/index>

Email: ijireditor7@gmail.com

and delegating (Darmawan & Roselini, 2022).

As one of the vocational schools in Jakarta, SMK Budi Asih also faces challenges in maintaining teachers' work motivation, such as workload, changes in educational policies, and the dynamics of workplace relationships within the school environment. Under these conditions, the principal's leadership communication strategy becomes an important factor in maintaining organizational stability and improving teachers' morale (Minarti et al., 2024; Sholeh, 2025). Therefore, research on principals' leadership communication strategies in improving teachers' work motivation is important to conduct in order to provide an overview of effective leadership communication practices in educational organizations.

Several previous studies have examined the role of principal leadership and communication in educational settings. For instance, (Sihotang et al., 2021) found that principals' communication styles influence teachers' work motivation through both formal and informal interactions. Similarly, (Sofia et al., 2023) emphasized that effective communication between principals and teachers contributes positively to teacher performance and organizational effectiveness. More recent studies have also highlighted the importance of transformational communication and leadership practices in fostering teacher motivation and satisfaction (Holisoh et al., 2026; Zahriyah & Fuadi, 2026). However, most existing studies focus on leadership styles, teacher performance, or job satisfaction in general, while limited attention has been given to how principals employ communication strategies through the dimensions of Situational Leadership Theory to enhance teachers' work motivation. Furthermore, empirical studies exploring leadership communication within vocational school settings remain relatively scarce. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining how the principal of SMK Budi Asih Jakarta implements leadership communication strategies through the dimensions of directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating to improve teachers' work motivation.

METHOD



International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ISSN(Online): 3090-2959

Vol 2 no 2 (2026): July 2026

<https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijir/index>

Email: ijireditor7@gmail.com

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore the leadership communication strategies implemented by the principal of SMK Budi Asih Jakarta in improving teachers' work motivation (Creswell, 2007; Patton, 2002). A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because it allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' experiences, perspectives, and communication practices within their natural context.

The participant in this study was the principal of SMK Budi Asih Jakarta, Mrs. Iryanis, S.E., S.Pd, who was selected through purposive sampling. The principal was chosen as the key informant because of his central role in planning, implementing, and evaluating communication practices and leadership strategies within the school. As the primary decision-maker and organizational leader, the principal possesses comprehensive knowledge regarding communication processes, teacher management, and motivational practices in the school environment.

Data were collected through an in-depth semi-structured interview conducted with the principal. The interview lasted approximately 60 minutes and was carried out in a face-to-face setting at the school. The interview focused on communication patterns, leadership approaches, teacher motivation, conflict management, and strategies used to address the diverse characteristics of teachers. During the interview process, the researcher recorded and transcribed the conversation to facilitate data analysis.

To ensure the credibility of the findings, member checking was conducted by providing the interview transcript and research interpretations to the participant for confirmation. This process allowed the participant to verify the accuracy of the information and interpretations presented by the researcher. In addition, prolonged engagement during the interview process enabled the researcher to obtain a deeper understanding of the participant's experiences and perspectives.

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing (Miles et al., 2014). Data reduction was conducted by selecting relevant information related to leadership communication strategies.



International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ISSN(Online): 3090-2959

Vol 2 no 2 (2026): July 2026

<https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijir/index>

Email: ijireditor7@gmail.com

Subsequently, the data were organized and displayed according to the dimensions of Situational Leadership Theory, namely directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on recurring themes and patterns identified from the interview data.

Ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Prior to the interview, the participant was informed about the objectives of the study and the intended use of the data. Voluntary participation and informed consent were obtained before data collection commenced. The participant was also assured that the information provided would be used solely for academic purposes and reported responsibly in accordance with research ethics.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Communication plays an important role in organizational life, particularly within educational institutions where interactions between leaders and teachers influence organizational climate and teachers' work motivation. According to Goldhaber in Gani (2019), organizational communication is the process of creating and exchanging messages within a network of interdependent relationships in dealing with uncertain environments. In educational organizations, principals function as communicators who play a strategic role in establishing effective communication patterns with teachers. Effective leadership communication enables principals to build harmonious relationships, encourage participation, and maintain teachers' motivation within the school environment.

Based on the interview conducted with the principal of SMK Budi Asih Jakarta, it was found that interpersonal and family-oriented communication approaches are prioritized in managing teachers. The principal emphasized the importance of direct communication and emotional closeness with teachers to create a comfortable working atmosphere. The principal stated:

"...I prefer direct communication with teachers rather than only communicating through WhatsApp groups because face-to-face interaction creates a stronger sense of closeness..."

This statement indicates that direct interpersonal communication is considered more effective in building emotional relationships between the principal and teachers. In addition, the principal also applies informal communication through activities such as casual discussions, shared meals, and recreational activities outside the school environment. The principal explained:

“...sometimes we eat together, have casual conversations, and we have even gone hiking together so that our relationship becomes closer and less formal...”

These findings reflect the concept of organizational communication, where interpersonal relationships become an important factor in creating a positive organizational climate and strengthening work motivation among organizational members.

The findings of this study were analyzed using Situational Leadership Theory proposed by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard. According to (Toana, 2018), situational leadership is a leadership model that adapts to changing situations because there is no single leadership style that is effective for all conditions. Leaders are required to adjust their leadership style according to the readiness and conditions of subordinates. Furthermore, (Darmawan & Roselini, 2022) explain that situational leadership consists of four dimensions, namely directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. Based on the interview findings, all four dimensions were identified in the leadership communication practices of the principal of SMK Budi Asih Jakarta.

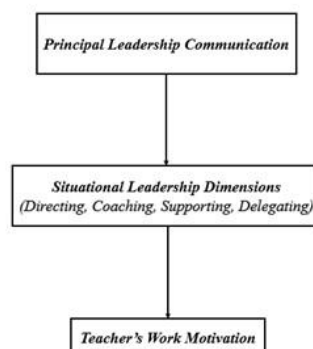


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

Directing

The directing dimension refers to leadership behavior that emphasizes giving instructions, supervision, and task-oriented communication to subordinates. In this dimension, leaders provide clear guidance regarding what tasks should be completed and how those tasks should be carried out.

Based on the interview findings, the principal implemented the directing approach when teachers experienced difficulties related to classroom management or school responsibilities. The principal explained:

“...if there are teachers experiencing difficulties in handling students or work-related issues, I ask them to come directly to me so that we can immediately find solutions together...”

This statement demonstrates that the principal provides direct guidance and opens communication channels for teachers who require direction regarding their work. In addition, the principal also adjusts communication pressure according to organizational situations and teachers' conditions. The principal stated:

“...there are certain situations where teachers need to be pushed more firmly so that the school's targets can still be achieved, but their conditions must also be considered...”

This finding indicates that the principal applies directive communication while still considering situational conditions within the organization.

Coaching

The coaching dimension refers to leadership behavior that combines direction with emotional support. Leaders not only provide instructions but also motivate and guide subordinates in solving problems and improving performance.

The interview findings revealed that the principal prefers persuasive communication rather than directly blaming teachers when problems occur. The principal explained:

“...if mistakes occur, I do not immediately get angry or blame the teachers. Instead, I invite



International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ISSN(Online): 3090-2959

Vol 2 no 2 (2026): July 2026

<https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijir/index>

Email: ijireditor7@gmail.com

them to discuss the issue together so we can find solutions collaboratively...

This approach demonstrates the implementation of coaching communication because the principal attempts to encourage teachers to evaluate problems collaboratively while maintaining emotional comfort. Furthermore, the coaching dimension is also reflected in the principal's communication strategy toward younger teachers, particularly Generation Z teachers. The principal stated:

"...younger teachers nowadays require different approaches. We cannot be too harsh with them. They are more suited to being given space to learn and guided gradually..."

This finding is consistent with previous studies emphasizing the importance of adaptive leadership communication in educational organizations. (Sofia et al., 2023) found that principals who employ supportive and participative communication strategies tend to foster higher levels of teacher engagement and performance. The findings of the present study support these perspectives, demonstrating that coaching-oriented communication can strengthen teachers' motivation and commitment within the school environment.

The findings also highlight the growing challenge of managing multi-generational teachers in contemporary educational institutions. Differences in work values, communication preferences, and professional expectations between senior teachers and younger Generation Z teachers require principals to adopt more flexible communication strategies. In the present study, the principal acknowledged that younger teachers respond more positively to supportive guidance, collaborative discussions, and opportunities for learning and self-development. This suggests that leadership communication should not rely on a single approach but instead adapt to the characteristics and expectations of different generations of educators. Such findings reinforce the relevance of Situational Leadership Theory, which emphasizes the importance of adjusting leadership behaviors according to the readiness and needs of followers.

Supporting



International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ISSN(Online): 3090-2959

Vol 2 no 2 (2026): July 2026

<https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijir/index>

Email: ijireditor7@gmail.com

The supporting dimension refers to leadership behavior that emphasizes emotional support, interpersonal relationships, and participation between leaders and subordinates. Leaders focus on creating comfort, trust, and psychological support for employees.

Based on the interview findings, the principal demonstrated the supporting dimension through family-oriented communication and informal interpersonal interactions with teachers. The principal explained:

“...I often come to the teachers’ room just to have casual conversations so that they feel comfortable and not too tense...”

The principal also acknowledged that teachers may experience boredom and decreased motivation, particularly during the end of semesters or when school activities become less active. To overcome this situation, the principal attempts to maintain teachers’ morale through supportive communication approaches. The principal stated:

“...when teachers begin to feel bored or exhausted, I usually invite them to have relaxed conversations or create a more comfortable atmosphere so that their motivation returns...”

In addition, the supporting dimension also appears in the way the principal handles conflicts among teachers. The principal explained:

“...if conflicts occur among teachers, I usually speak personally with each individual first before bringing them together...”

This finding demonstrates that interpersonal communication and emotional support are considered important strategies in maintaining harmonious organizational relationships within the school environment.

Delegating

The delegating dimension refers to leadership behavior in which leaders provide trust and responsibility to subordinates according to their competence and readiness levels. In this approach, leaders reduce direct supervision and allow subordinates to complete tasks more independently.

Based on the interview findings, the principal applies delegation strategies by considering teachers' competencies, experiences, and personal conditions. The principal explained:

"...task distribution is usually adjusted according to each teacher's abilities and experience..."

The principal also stated:

"...new teachers are still given opportunities to learn and develop even though they may not yet have much teaching experience..."

These findings indicate that the principal emphasizes empowerment and professional development through delegation strategies. Teachers are gradually entrusted with responsibilities according to their readiness and competencies. This communication strategy is considered effective in increasing teachers' confidence, responsibility, and work motivation within the school organization.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that the leadership communication strategies implemented by the principal of SMK Budi Asih Jakarta significantly contribute to improving teachers' work motivation and maintaining a conducive organizational climate. The application of directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating dimensions demonstrates that leadership communication within educational organizations requires adaptive, interpersonal, and emotionally supportive approaches. These findings also reinforce the relevance of Situational Leadership Theory proposed by Hersey and Blanchard in understanding how principals' communication strategies influence teachers' work motivation and organizational relationships within schools.



Figure 2. Interview with the Principal of SMK Budi Asih Jakarta, Mrs. Iryanis, S.E., S.Pd



International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ISSN(Online): 3090-2959

Vol 2 no 2 (2026): July 2026

<https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijir/index>

Email: ijireditor7@gmail.com

Practical Implications

The findings of this study offer several practical implications for educational leadership and school management. For school principals, the study highlights the importance of adopting adaptive communication strategies that combine formal, informal, and interpersonal approaches. Principals are encouraged to build closer relationships with teachers through regular interactions, constructive feedback, emotional support, and open communication channels. Such practices can foster a positive organizational climate and enhance teachers' work motivation.

For educational administrators, the findings emphasize the need to support leadership practices that prioritize effective communication within schools. Educational authorities may encourage principals to develop communication competencies that enable them to manage diverse teacher characteristics and workplace challenges more effectively. Strengthening communication skills among school leaders can contribute to improved teacher engagement and organizational performance.

The findings provide implications for teacher development programs. Professional development initiatives should not only focus on pedagogical competencies but also address communication, collaboration, and interpersonal relationships within educational organizations. Programs designed to facilitate constructive interaction between school leaders and teachers may help strengthen teacher motivation and job satisfaction.

The study offers insights for school leadership training initiatives. Leadership development programs should incorporate situational leadership principles, particularly the dimensions of directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating. Training that emphasizes adaptive communication strategies can better prepare current and future school leaders to manage multi-generational teaching staff and respond effectively to the evolving challenges of contemporary educational environments.



International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ISSN(Online): 3090-2959

Vol 2 no 2 (2026): July 2026

<https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijir/index>

Email: ijireditor7@gmail.com

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the principal of SMK Budi Asih Jakarta employs leadership communication strategies that play a significant role in improving teachers' work motivation. Through the integration of interpersonal, formal, informal, and situational communication approaches, the principal creates a supportive and conducive working environment that encourages teacher engagement and commitment. The findings demonstrate that effective leadership communication contributes not only to teachers' motivation but also to broader organizational effectiveness by fostering positive relationships, strengthening collaboration, and maintaining a healthy organizational climate within the school.

The study further confirms the theoretical relevance of Situational Leadership Theory proposed by Hersey and Blanchard. The dimensions of directing, coaching, supporting, and delegating were clearly reflected in the principal's communication practices and proved useful in understanding how leadership communication can be adapted to meet the diverse needs and characteristics of teachers. These findings reinforce the applicability of situational leadership within educational settings and highlight the importance of adaptive communication in managing multi-generational teaching staff.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that school leaders should develop communication strategies that balance guidance, support, and empowerment in order to maintain teacher motivation and organizational cohesion. Educational policymakers and administrators may also consider incorporating communication competence and situational leadership principles into leadership development and professional training programs for school principals.

This study is limited to a single case study involving one principal at a vocational school. Therefore, future research is encouraged to involve multiple schools, diverse educational settings, and broader participant groups, including teachers, vice principals, and educational administrators. Such studies may provide a more comprehensive understanding of leadership communication



International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ISSN(Online): 3090-2959

Vol 2 no 2 (2026): July 2026

<https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijir/index>

Email: ijireditor7@gmail.com

practices and their influence on teacher motivation across different organizational contexts.

REFERENCE

- At-tamimy, M. I., & Eloy, M. J. A. (2025). Educational Perception in Urban and Rural Communities: A Qualitative Study. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 1(1).
- Ayyubi, I. I. A., Prayetno, E., Annastasya, T., & Rahmawati, S. (2025). *The Influence of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) on Students' Mathematical Logical Thinking Skills in Junior High School*. 2(1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.71305/ijemr.v2i1.168>
- Briganti, A. (2025). Implementation of Inclusive Education for Students with Special Needs in Public Schools: A Qualitative Study. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 1(1).
- Chaanpraserta, P., Thomas, J. L., & Mitchelle, S. (2024). Innovative Learning Strategies for Enhancing Student Engagement in Multicultural Classrooms. *JTL: Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 1(1), 57–72.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). QUALITATIVE INQUIRY & RESEARCH DESIGN Choosing Among Five Approaches. *SAGE Publications*, 16(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524839915580941>
- Darmawan, S., & Roselini, B. T. (2022). Studi Gaya Kepemimpinan Situasional (Situational Leadership Model Hersey-Blanchard) pada Rumah Makan Padang Se-Kabupaten Sleman D.I.Y. *Telaah Bisnis*, 23(1), 50–62. <https://doi.org/10.35917/tb.v23i1.248>
- Gani, S. A. (2019). Komunikasi Organisasi: Penerapannya Dalam Pengelolaan Perpustakaan. *Libria*, 11(2), 128–135.
- Holisoh, I., Hasani, A., & Jakaria. (2026). Transformational Leadership Strategy of School Principals



International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ISSN(Online): 3090-2959

Vol 2 no 2 (2026): July 2026

<https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijir/index>

Email: ijireditor7@gmail.com

Implementing Academic Supervision to Build A Quality Culture. *Jurnal Eduscience*, 13(2), 495–510.

Katuuk, O. M., Mewengkang, N., & Kalesaran, E. R. (2016). Peran Komunikasi Organisasi dalam Meningkatkan Eksistensi Sanggar Seni Vox Angelica. *E-Journal "Acta Diurna,"* 5(5), 1–10.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. Sage Publications.

Minarti, S., Ma'arif, M. J., Manshur, A., 'Azah, N., Sholeh, M. I., & Sahri, S. (2024). The Influence Of Teacher Training And The Use Of Educational Technology On The Effectiveness Of Islamic Education Learning At Man 1 Bojonegoro. *Educational Administration: Theory and Practice*, 30. <https://doi.org/10.53555/kuey.v30i4.1404>

Nurhadi, Z. F., & Kurniawan, A. W. (2017). Kajian Tentang Efektivitas Pesan Dalam Komunikasi. *Jurnal Komunikasi Hasil Pemikiran Dan Penelitian*, 3(1), 90–95.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*. Sage Publications.

Sholeh, M. I. (2025). *Penerapan Metode Montessori dalam Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini Untuk Meningkatkan Kemandirian dan Kreativitas Anak*. 1(1).

Sihotang, W., Sitanggang, N., & Lubis, J. (2021). The Principal's Communication Style In Motivating Teachers' Work At Sma Brigjend Katamso Ii Medan. *International Journal of Educational Research & Social Sciences*, 2(6), 1544–1548.

Sofia, Syaidah, K., & Shunhaji, A. (2023). Principal's Effective Communication and Teacher Performance: A Classroom Perspective. *Kelola: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 10(2), 101–



International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research

ISSN(Online): 3090-2959

Vol 2 no 2 (2026): July 2026

<https://journal.as-salafiyah.id/index.php/ijir/index>

Email: ijireditor7@gmail.com

114.

Syafi'I, A., El-yunusi, M. Y. M., & Sholeh, I. (2024). *Religious Considerations In Educational Policy In A Multicultural Society. 1(2)*.

Toana, A. A. (2018). Kepemimpinan Situasional Dalam Kebijakan Publik. *Jurnal Kebijakan Pemerintahan, 1(2)*, 91–102. <https://doi.org/10.33701/jkp.v1ino.2.1099>

Yulianti, D. R., Laily, S. M., & Sahdiyah, H. (2024). Studi Literatur Tentang Sumber Konflik Dalam Menyusun Strategi Penyelesaian Yang Efektif. *JTL: Journal of Teaching and Learning, 1(2)*, 135–148.

Zahara, E. (2018). Peranan Komunikasi Organisasi Bagi Pimpinan Organisasi. *Jurnal Warta, 56*, 1–8.

Zahriyah, N., & Fuadi, I. (2026). World Journal of Islamic Learning and Transformational Leadership of School Principals in Developing Teacher and School Achievement. *World Journal of Islamic Learning and Teaching, 3(1)*, 37–44.