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ABSTRACT

This paper introduces a research series recently initiated to begin to describe and interpret curriculum as practiced and experienced at the classroom and individual student levels. Curriculum is defined as whatever a student learns. A multi-year series of studies is planned to combine naturalistic and survey methods to generate theories about how society, schools, and individuals (teachers, parents, and students) operationalize the concept of curriculum. The results reported here come from four classroom case studies, in which an investigator identified and analyzed the activities and decisions that might be related to curriculum in one classroom. Based on these case studies, a working hypothesis is proposed: that curriculum is a product of negotiation between students and teachers, and that all parties to the negotiation bring more than themselves to the "bargaining table." (BW)

CURRICULUM IN PRACTICE: THE STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

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CURRICULUM IN PRACTICE: THE STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Much of the literature on curriculum consists of prescriptions for improving educational practice. Relatively few scholars have attempted to investigate curriculum practice as suggested by Schwab (1969) in his plea for researchers to discover and understand curricular activities in schools before defending and testing their theories:

> What is wanted is a totally new and extensive pattern of empirical study of classroom action and reaction; a study, not as basis for theoretical concerns about the nature of the teaching or learning process, but as a basis for beginning to know what we are doing, what we are not doing, and to what effect...(p. 16)

Goodlad and his colleagues reiterated this point; and in creating a conceptual framework for use in the study of curriculum praxis, noted that one of the most poorly understood components of the framework was the personal or experiential curriculum (1979). This paper introduces a research series we have initiated recently to begin to describe and eventually interpret curriculum as practiced and experienced at the classroom and individual student levels.

The paper is divided into three sections. First, a framework for the study is established. The definition of curriculum underlying this inquiry is clarified and the valuable role of the naturalistic inquiry paradigm for understanding, as opposed to improving, curriculum practice is posited. How this particular research study fits into the larger series is clarified.

Second, the procedures used to conduct this study are outlined briefly. Finally, a major hypothesis emerging from this naturalistic study is proposed and illustrated with several entries from field notes. Relevant literature is noted and recommendations are proposed for subsequent inquiry through the research series.

Framework

Definition of Curriculum

As summarized in Wiles and Bondi (1984) and Gress and Purpel (1978), little consensus exists as to a definition of curriculum. Although the authors of this paper do not propose to rectify that condition, we do want to clarify the operational definition used in this inquiry. Of all the categories of definitions identified by Tanner and Tanner (1975) (i.e., cumulative tradition of organized knowledge, modes of thought, race experience, experience, plan, ends or outcomes, and production system), the "experience" category appears to match our definition most clearly.

Gress and Purpel (1978) give several example definitions within this category (e.g., all the experiences the learner has under the guidance of the school, a vital interaction of people and things in a free-wheeling setting, and a methodological inquiry exploring the range of ways in which the elements of teacher, student, subject, and milieu can be seen), illustrating its characteristics as encompassing all that the various participants experience. The experiential or personal curriculum identified but left unstudied by Goodlad (1979) parallels this category.

In summary then, our operational definition of curriculum for this study may be stated thus: Curriculum is whatever a student learns. This learning includes feelings, habits, skills, ways of thinking, social behavior, recording of information, etc. The emphasis is on what students actually experience during their interactions with teachers, schools, other students, activities, materials, ideas, etc., rather than on what may be intended or planned by teachers, parents, legislators, administrators, and creators of instructional materials and guides.

Naturalistic Inquiry

As noted above by Schwab (1969), relatively few scholars have attempted to investigate curriculum practice, except incidentally. Most curriculum research studies are experimental trials of innovative programs derived from one of many theories of curriculum development. Recently, however, Goodlad and his associates (1979), in preparing a system for conceptualizing curriculum practice, called for inquiry into current curriculum processes:

> Curriculum inquiry must move back to basics, and there is nothing more basic for study than what people practice or do, good or bad, right or wrong. At long last, studying the phenomena of practice as they occur is becoming recognized and even extolled by opinion makers in various subdivisions of the educational field... theorists and researchers have turned only rarely to analysis of what exists. Instead, they have favored experiments--usually, short-term and with small samples, partly because of financial restrictions--into what could exist under certain circumstances. What exists became a control rather than itself a subject for investigation. (Pages 46-7)

Goodlad and his collegues have responded to this need by formulating a framework for organizing their observations of curriculum practice and have conducted surveys to test the completeness of this conceptual system. They suggest however, that an even more naturalistic, inductive approach to the problem is needed as well:

> Humankind has developed two basic modes of thought to guide and improve practical activity. One of these is the theoretical-deductive, the other the empirical-inductive. Perhaps because of the complexity referred to earlier, the former approach has not been very productive in the field of curriculum. It has become highly abstract and speculative, turning in on itself rather than out to the world that theory should help explain.

> Ideally, theory and practice should feed each other, the latter providing the "stuff" for inquiry and the former returning useful insights.
>
> Practice, in turn, tends to be expedient. Since people are at center stage throughout, experiments are neither favorably regarded by practitioners nor easily carried out. Consequently, the empirical-inductive mode of thought has suffered from a dearth of cumulative evidence about recurring phenomena.
>
> Human advancement occurs most rapidly when there is a productive interplay between the two modes of inquiry. But, with both relatively empty of useful materials, the body of knowledge produced by curriculum as a field of study is limited, indeed. (Page 46)

With this observation clearly in mind and using the framework described above, a naturalistic approach to discovering the nature of curriculum practice as experienced by students seems most appropriate. The term "naturalistic inquiry" distinguishes several alternative "qualitative" approaches (e.g., ethnography, sociological field methods, participant observation, case studies, etc.) from the typical positivistic methods (e.g., experiments, quasi-experiments, surveys) commonly referred to as social research methods.

In naturalistic inquiry, a case (a person, group, community, program, or social system) is studied intensively over an extended period of time. The case is studied in and for itself, not as a sample element representing a population of similar cases. Attention is paid not only to the case itself but also to the ecology, context, or milieu in which it exists. The researcher is in direct, personal contact with the case and is solely responsible for gathering and interpreting the data. The researcher does not intervene (institute an experimental treatment), but instead studies the natural stream of events as they occur.

In naturalistic inquiry, unlike experimental and survey studies, the meaning of constructs or ideas to be studied is not fixed (operationalized) in advance of the data collection. Instead the researcher deliberately tries to elicit the multiple meanings about those ideas held by each person.

Similarly, hypotheses are rarely derived from theory stated in advance. Instead, explanations about the relationships among variables come from the data (inductively) rather than from pre-existing theories (deductively).

In this paper, we propose one hypothesis based on our initial naturalistic efforts to begin a multi-year series of inquiries into the nature of curriculum practice. In the following sections, the planned research series is outlined briefly and the procedures and conclusions from this first year's activities are summarized.

Research Series

A multi-year series of studies is planned to combine naturalistic and survey methods of inquiry to fill the void described by Goodlad and Schwab. Eventually, we want to understand and generate theories about how society, schools and individuals (teachers, parents, and students) operationalize the concept of curriculum. We want to address the question, What is curriculum in practice? We assume that a clearer understanding of this issue will facilitate efforts to improve practice by increasing the accuracy of problem diagnosis and by guiding efforts to tailor curriculum interventions to actual weaknesses.

The series of studies will accumulate a wealth of descriptive data. In the early phase of the series, these data are being used to generate hypotheses. At later stages, we will continue to build, test and modify theories with experiments and quasi-experiments as well as surveys and naturalistic methods. Given this perspective, it is clear that many more specific research questions will be identified as the projects evolve. Some initial questions to be addressed by the series are listed below.

1. Goodlad (1979) postulates four levels or domains of curriculum decision-making: the Societal, the Institutional, the Instructional (or Classroom), and the Personal. Can the real-world existence of these levels be proven or disproven? If they exist, what is the nature of the choices made at each level?

2. In general, what attitudes and knowledge do classroom teachers hold or have with regard to the curriculum making process? What kind of information of this type would be useful to public school officials or other educational policy-makers?

3. How much personal involvement do students and their parents have in various subject-matters (or grade-levels, or both) with regard to (a) instructional matters, and (b) curricular matters? How much to they perceive they have? How much do teachers believe they (students, parents) have? How much do disinterested observers believe they have?

4. How important is the universal vagueness about what the word "curriculum" signifies in causing dysfunction at the district or classroom level?

5. What is the nature and range of diversity of understanding of the term "curriculum", or "curriculum development" among (a) teachers, (b) principals, (c) district administrators, (d) board of education members, and (e) parents? What are the implications of that diversity?

Before conducting any survey, quasi-experimental or experimental studies, two types of naturalistic studies are being conducted to begin addressing these questions: classroom and individual student case studies. The results reported here come from four "classroom case studies" conducted by four researchers during the current school year. Both types of study are clarified below.

Classroom Case Study. Each investigator attempts to identify and analyze the activities and decisions that might be related to curriculum in one classroom. Interactions of the teacher and students with each other and with other teachers, students, parents, administrators, etc., are documented. The intent is to generate hypotheses regarding the nature of curriculum as practiced at the classroom level.

Student Case Study. The researchers attempt to identify and analyze the activities, interactions, and decisions that might be related to curriculum in one student's life. These studies involve documenting the learning experiences of a single student as they occur in all settings constituting that student's world. Settings will include much more than time in school (e.g., neighborhood, T.V., home, athletics, church, etc.). The intent is to generate hypotheses regarding the nature of curriculum in the practical realm of a school child's life, a realm often assumed to be a major focal point for all curriculum decisions in the society. These studies will help clarify the types of curricular innovations that actually reach their intended audiences.

It is anticipated that classroom and student case studies will be conducted in a variety of geographical settings, at all school levels. Hypotheses will be generated and refined through negative case analyses (searching for evidence counter to that hypothesized in an effort to modify the hypothesis in light of the data). Eventually, more powerful hpothesis testing methods (e.g., experiments) may be employed also to help develop a "grounded" theory of curriculum practice.

Procedures

As stated above, the research reported here consisted of four classroom case studies. These were conducted during the 1983-84 school year at a single junior high school. Two eighth grade science teachers, a seventh grade science teacher, a seventh grade health teacher and their associated students (approximately 600) participated in the study.

The principal data-gathering procedure was participant observation. Researchers spent several hours per week throughout the year sitting in the classrooms, observing teachers and students. They also interviewed teachers repeatedly and administered a survey to the students.

Detailed field notes were compiled by each researcher who recorded their observations, interview transcripts, personal reactions, initial analyses, etc. These notes were shared with the other members of the research group, stimulating discussion and further analysis. A fifth member of the group provided summaries of literature related to the emerging descriptions and analyses generated by the four participant observers.

The analysis activities were initiated as soon as the data began to be gathered. The focus was on a search for themes that describe the curriculum as it is practiced and experienced by students and teachers. The intent was that from this descriptive analysis and synthesis across the four

case studies, hypotheses regarding practiced relationships between students, teachers and curriculum would be generated.

Emerging Hypothesis

Based on the case studies conducted this year, several working hypotheses will be proposed. This paper presents only one of these. The hypothesis to be discussed here is stated in the following assertion.

Curriculum is a product of negotiation between students and teachers. All parties to the negotiation bring more than themselves to the "bargaining table."

Teachers come with expectations based on their training and experience. They bring a sense of responsibility to include in the curriculum those items legislated by law, written in texts, established as school traditions, or generated by their own expectations and those of their peers.

Students come with attention spans, previous experience with the content, experiences as students in other classes, expectations of the teacher's role, expectations of the students' role, problems and encouragement in their personal and family lives, experiences (or lack of them) in which they have learned to be responsible or relinquish responsibility to others.

Of course these are not all the elements students and teachers bring; but the point is that as students and teacher meet in a school setting, their background experiences, expectations, abilities, etc., come to play a major role in defining exactly what curriculum is practiced. Teachers are pressured to modify their plans. Students are re-oriented and modify their expectations. The result is a negotiated curriculum--in terms of content, purpose and procedure. Case study evidence from which this hypothesis was derived will be summarized below in a series of examples. Pure descriptions of the scenes observed will be reported in longer technical reports. The citations made here reflect our interpretation of events in light of the "negotiation" construct.

Examples from the case studies will be discussed under three subcategories. First, teachers' expectations, actions, and other characteristics which influence the bargaining process are illustrated. Then students' characteristics are identified. Finally, examples of the negotiation process are presented.

Teacher Variables

Although there are probably many more, five variables that influence teachers and prepare them for the negotiation process were identified by these case studies.

Certification Versus Reality. Most teachers claim that what they learned in their certification programs did not prepare them for the "reality of teaching." This point suggests that something about the reality surprised them and they had to change their expectations. As the rest of this analysis

suggests, most teachers do not realize they are going to have to negotiate with the students to jointly create the curriculum. Schools of education do not prepare teachers to bargain intelligently. Beginning teachers assume students are there to receive the curriculum as the teacher provides it. This encounter with "reality" can be shocking.

Student Image. Teachers' conceptualizations of students' capacities and the differences between students and themselves have a definite effect on the curriculum. There appears to be a generation gap in this junior high. Teachers and students really do "live in different worlds." Although a few students drop in to teachers' rooms before and after class to visit informally, most of them talk only to one another. The teachers' lounge is formally off limits to students. Teachers talk about "kids" a lot. The fact that they see themselves as representing very different social groups suggests they also consider themselves to have different purposes and interests; therefore, they may have different and perhaps opposing curricular components to negotiate.

One teacher suggested that every teacher who is going to teach junior high ought to take a psychology course on this age group so their expectations of the students' emotional ability and stability will not be too high. After teaching awhile, she decided that her expectations of these students were way too high. She learned that they "needed her to help them develop much more than an understanding of facts about science." She came to believe they needed her to help them build their self-esteem and to teach them responsibility.

After the last class period of the day, the teachers regularly tell the students to put their chairs up on the tables so the janitors can sweep the floor. One day I commented that it looked like many chairs did not make it onto the tables. The teacher said that even when she was right there in the classroom many "kids" don't put their chairs up before they leave. "They don't seem to be aware of the fact that if there isn't a chair up on the table they can reach over and put it up, even if they already put theirs up." Likewise, when students see a piece of paper on the floor, she observed, "they are more likely to kick it down the hall than they are to pick it up and put it in the garbage; just goes with the age I guess." This comment reflected several teachers' expectations of the capacity of the students. The expectations don't seem very high.

We wondered what to expect, when as observers, we noticed the students jumping up and down, hitting each other, laughing, pulling books out of shelves, dropping things on the floor, passing notes, talking loudly, running in and out of the doorway and into the hall. I recalled when I was in the 7th grade, we gave some teachers a very hard time; yet, in some of our classes we were quiet and respectful.

On another occasion, in the teachers' lounge, we asked a group of teachers if they thought students were capable of helping to identify what was important to learn and include in the curriculum. These teachers unanimously agreed that students are incapable of identifying things they should be interested in. In fact, many students are not really interested

in any of the things that are taught or should be taught in the school. Teachers have to identify the topics and skills of importance and then motivate the students through tests, points, punishments, etc. to study those things.

Socialization. Socialization by others influences teachers' expectations of themselves and their students, thereby setting limits to the definition of curriculum that can be practiced by those participants.

Shortly after the final period on the first day of class, two other teachers came into a classroom I was observing. One of them commented to the teacher, "How is it going? You didn't let them get away with anything did you? Did you lay down the law?" She replied, "yes, I did."

She commented to me later in the year that at times she is overwhelmed by the responsibility she feels she has to help individual students. Then she looks around and sees older teachers who have "given up on the idea of providing any 'extra' help to students." They just teach the material and try to keep the students under control. She does not want to become like they are, but worries that she will; because even now, she can not do all the "extras" she expects herself to do.

One veteran teacher educator put it this way: "I get depressed after years of observing new teachers. They begin excited and anxious to do something wonderful for kids and humanity. Then they encounter 'reality', finding that many other teachers, parents, administrators and students don't seem to care much about learning." He estimated that it takes about one hour of being a teacher for most to "realize they were naive for thinking they could make a difference."

Vulnerability. A major influence on teachers which affects the ways they define curriculum is their feeling of vulnerability. One teacher commented in an interview that very rarely does she get any positive feedback about how she is doing as a teacher. Students infrequently tell her if she has done a good job and she often wonders how she is coming across to the students. This comment suggested that one way students could play a greater role in curriculum formulation would be by giving teachers positive feedback when they do things the students really like.

Some of the teachers we observed openly acknowledged that they feel woefully inadequate many times and wonder why they are teaching. They wonder whether they will make a difference to anyone. This sense of pending failure can make them vulnerable to pressure from students. They may respond by modifying their
emphasis in the classroom or by retrenching and being defensive.

A strong feeling I often had as an observer was that the teachers were riding a surf board--always struggling to keep their "control balance." They gave students very little or no free time in class; and when they did, students did not know how to respond. Teachers appeared to want to keep students occupied for fear they would become disruptive. In some teachers, feelings of vulnerability lead to defensiveness and an urge to

control, which delimits the boundaries of the negotiation process, often severely.

Autonomy. Another relevant characteristic of teachers is their autonomy. As we asked teachers how they decide what to teach, they reported knowing about scope and sequence guides provided by the district; but those guides often played little or no role in the teachers' planning. Rather, their own interests, the materials available to them and their personal experiences as students and as teachers provide the major guide to content selection. Although district officials, school boards, state planning agencies, curriculum writers, textbook creators and other have ideas about what ought to be in the curriculum, the teachers clearly have control over what is actually presented to students, at least as far as students will allow them to have that control.

Student Variables

A variety of characteristics and activities of students impinge on the practice of curriculum and the negotiation process.

Student Identity. My first surprise when I began visiting this junior high was seeing the students' dress styles. The short, tight pants, the clashing colors, the strange hair cuts certainly distinguished these young people from their adult counterparts. It may be a long shot, but I wondered if they were saying with their clothes that they are different from the teachers and have different values that may not be represented in the curriculum as it is interpreted by the adults in the school and the society.

Transition People. A common stereotypic assumption among adults is that junior high age students are in a transition period. They are neither children nor adults. Rather, they are shifting back and forth between these roles. It is assumed that they feel ambivalent about their abilities and society's expectations of them. Perhaps teachers have pigeon-holed them as either children or as adults or as transition people and so these labels play a role in defining the limits teachers and students believe they are working under in the curriculum negotiation process.

For example, one teacher described a male student who's voice is changing and who often sounds much younger than he looks. When his voice is in the upper octaves, she feels he is trying to manipulate her. It bothers her when he "uses his high squeaky voice" although she admits this probably happens because his voice is changing. This child reminds her that her expectations of these students are probably too high. Perhaps the students are using (unconsciously maybe) the fact that they are in between childhood and adulthood as a means of manipulating teachers. They are able to complain and blame the teachers more than they will when they are older.

Peer Pressure. Similar to the teacher socialization variable described earlier, students are powerfully influenced by peers. During every observation period, students demonstrated how important it is for them to have peer approval. Clearly, the negotiation of what will be learned is influenced by group as well as individual values. Students are testing their peers'

interests and willingness to compromise with the teacher's proposals all the time, as they make their own choices to cooperate or fight.

Student Power. Students have power positions which can ensure that negotiation must be used if teachers are going to influence the curriculum. The fact that there are so many students and only one teacher gives the students power. The teachers we observed can and did ask them to be quiet. But they could ignore those requests much of the time because the teachers moved on to other disturbances, hands or activities without really insisting that students be still. Only when they were very disruptive would the teachers insist on their control. Of course, the degree of power which teachers acknowledged students had varied from teacher to teacher and from day to day within teachers. But it was clear that students could revolt if they so chose.

Likewise, students in large groups are able to communicate with one another without the teacher monitoring and controlling every conversation. Several times, we observed students whispering to one another and even to the teachers. When the teacher indicated she could not hear what students were saying to her, they would often simply reply, "never mind." Although most of the students doing this probably had no intention of alienating themselves from the teachers, they derive a form of power by being able to communicate to other students around them without the teacher hearing. More explicit forms of this "communication power" are note-passing, whispering to one another, and visiting in hallways between classes.

Parental Values. In a pluralistic society, the diversity of students' and parents' values affect the curriculum. For example, one teacher noted that some parents don't like values clarification activities which his college professors had lauded. He had planned to use those activities as part of his unit on ecology. Another teacher warned him that he could "cut his throat now or wait and cut it later but he should not use values clarification procedures" in this geographical area. Here is an instance in which parents (as an extension of the students) have clear influence on the curriculum. At least they can influence it if they so choose.

Student Interest. Students influence the curriculum through their expressions of interest or lack of interest in topics and activities proposed by the teacher. In this school, students do not participate in the science fairs and science club initiated by faculty. In seventh grade, they ask very few science-related questions in class, but in eighth grade they do. The teachers prepare activities based on past responses of students. They adjust the content and assignments to what they believe the students can and will do. The students do have a legitimate negotiating position, informal though it may be.

Examples of Negotiation

With some of the characteristics of the teacher and student positions identified, this section of the paper portrays a few examples of interactions we observed between teachers and students which suggest the negotiation hypothesis proposed in this paper.

Changing Teacher Expectations. One teacher reported she was surprised as a first semester teacher when students asked their parents to bring complaints to her instead of coming to her directly. She had to change her anticipation of personal interaction with some students to a negotiation through adult representation in the face of her actual experience. As a result, she began to believe she was dealing with youngsters who needed to learn to be responsible for their own actions instead of hiding behind protective parents. Thus, her emphasis changed from an almost exclusive focus on the content formally identified as the curriculum (science) to include helping students "stand on their own two feet." By changing her focus, she changed her expectations of the curriculum. She responded to a negotiation offer by some of her students. she did not have to respond as she did. She could have encouraged students to have their parents bring her their complaints. Either way, she would be negotiating with the students.

Rules. On the first day of a new semester, one teacher spent most of the day explaining her rules to a new set of students. One of her early comments was "when I'm talking you don't; these are basic rules you should have learned in grade school. When I talk, there is usually a reason. Just because I'm not talking doesn't mean you need to. Raise your hand and you can talk to your heart's content." Getting students to believe and act according to this rule was clearly a curriculum objective for this teacher. Perhaps it would not have been if students the previous semester had not talked and behaved as they had.

In a sense, the students were modifying the curriculum by behaving so the teacher felt the need to set up an elaborate set of rules and regulations. As she reviewed the requirements for the course, she made side comments like, "write these down so in the future you can't accuse me of not telling you." These comments were in response to experiences we saw her have the previous semester.

One teacher told students he had revised his policies on taking class notes and turning in late work because of responses students had to his policies the previous semester. This term, he required students to turn in their class notes. He claimed he "was foolish" for not doing so the previous semester "because no one took notes."

He also said that last semester it was okay for students to turn in work up to 2 weeks late but it was a "real pain" for him because he had to grade it. This semester he said students could turn their work in any time, but they would have to grade it themselves under his supervision.

Another teacher told students that in previous semesters, friends who sat together usually made noise, but she was willing to give these students a chance to prove that they were different. She said that for the first two weeks, she was willing to let them sit by their friends as long as they sat in the same seat everyday. She planned to monitor the noise level and if it did not work, she would revise the seating chart.

This seemed to be an occasion when a teacher was suggesting that students could help formulate policies and arrangements if they were willing to act responsibly. It was clear that self-responsibility was an important characteristic she wanted the students to learn as part of the curriculum. She gave students an opportunity to make learning of responsibility part of their curriculum. She made them an offer to participate in formulating the circumstances surrounding the curriculum if not the curriculum itself.

Student Questions. On the first day of class, after discussing his rules, one teacher ran out of things to say with 20 minutes left in the class period. He asked if there were any questions, got no response, then asked if they wanted to know what they were going to cover in the class. At that point, the student aide asked if he shouldn't tell them about grade reports (an administrative issue). He got diverted and talked about that, never returning to give students a chance to ask questions about what they were going to cover in class. Eventually one student did ask if he was going to give pop quizzes.

With 10 minutes left, he briefly summarized what they were going to cover in the class (the scientific method, how to use the microscope, ways to classify living things). Then he asked if there were any questions. There were none, so he told the students they could talk quietly for the next 10 minutes.

This was an occasion when the students could have asked a lot of questions which would have revealed their interest in the curriculum. The only question that was asked was about pop quizzes. It is really hard to tell. The teacher did not insist that the students formally voice their interests in the curriculum. And the students (perhaps because of 6-7 previous years experiences of responding to teachers' proposals instead of proposing their own) adopted the typical bargaining stance of letting the teacher reveal his or her version of the curriculum for the students to respond to and negotiate.

Student Initiation of Curriculum. During the last 10 minutes of the period described above, students demonstrated their bargaining role by the way they used time. Some just sat and talked, others got up and looked at the aquarium and other displays around the room. The teacher responded to their responses by ignoring the talkers and asking those who were exploring the displays what they thought and knew about them.

On this occasion, the roles were reversed a bit. Usually the teachers initiate activities and/or curriculum content and the students respond selectively either by warming up to what is being proposed by the teacher, ignoring it or misbehaving. This time, the students were given 10 minutes to do whatever they wanted. In essence, they initiated the curriculum activities for that 10 minutes and the teacher responded selectively (by ignoring the talkers and showing interest in the explorers). The teacher said later he felt free to do that on this occasion because there was nothing really planned that had to be covered in the 10 minute period. In the majority of occasions, the negotiation process proceeds with the teacher initiating and the students responding.

Student Feedback. One teacher claimed that although he plans his lessons in advance and coordinates them with a partner teacher who has other sections, he looks at the students' eyes and adjusts his plans accordingly. For example, if they seem particularly interested in a topic he has initiated (as indicated by "interest in the eyes" of a certain number of students) he will go into greater depth on that topic than originally planned. Here, the students may be unknowingly negotiating, but they are influencing their experienced curriculum.

Anticipating Terms of Agreements. During one observation period, a class was divided into two groups for a game. Each group was supposed to ask questions of the other group from a prepared sheet on lab safety rules. The responding team was supposed to select a representative who would answer the question. The teacher urged the students to select, as a group, the persons who would ask each question and the persons who would answer each question for their team. At first, it seemed she was giving the students an opportunity to either respond to her suggestion, or to ignore it. Actually they could not ignore it. They had to select someone to answer the question because they were motivated to participate in the game and earn the associated points.

This game and the students' response illustrated power the teacher had in controlling this curriculum activitiy. She knew that the students would enjoy playing the game, so she was able to get them to perform the memorization task quite easily. In a sense, she anticipated the terms of their negotiation, what they would respond to, and built that into her negotiated "offer." Thereby, she obtained greater control over what the curriculum was going to be. There were many fewer dissenters than we observed responding to some of the other activities she proposed.

Negotiation Flexibility. There were several occasions on which the teachers proposed curriculum content and/or activities, with promised rewards and/or punishments attached and some students chose to modify the proposal and received the rewards anyway. Other rejected the proposal and received the punishment. Their examples suggest that the students do have autonomy and therefore are in a position to negotiate.

On several occasions, seventh graders came to class claiming they forgot to bring assignments or texts from their lockers. The teacher reminded them each time that if they forgot to bring materials to class, they would have to pay the consequences. She clearly stated a position she held and believed they should hold. The fact that some of the students did not bring materials indicates that they had a different set of values, a perfect setting for negotiation.

One teacher regularly announced that she would not continue her instructions until students were quiet. But then she did continue, although they were not completely (or even very) quiet. Here is evidence again that students can and do bargain for power. They control to a certain degree what the teacher can do. It is true that other teachers wait until

everyone is quiet and/or impose more serious punishments. But even then, the students choose to respond or not respond to those conditions.

Another teacher told students that if they did not put their assignment away by the time she counted to five she would take it away from them and they would have to come in after school to finish it. One student said, "I don't care." She hesitated for a second and then said, "Oh gee, just put it away," and began counting, "one, two three." She waited for a few seconds and then said "four, five," after all the students had put away their work. Here was more evidence that students can choose to care or not to care about the rewards and punishments the teachers offer. They are negotiating what is possible and what is impossible for the teacher to do. Likewise, the teacher can be more or less flexible in the negotiation process.

Recommendations

After the hypothesis reported here had been generated from analysis of the case study field notes, a book by Anselm Strauss entitled Negotiations, (1978) was discovered by our research group. Strauss summarizes the literature on the concept of negotiation, proposes a paradigm for analyzing negotiations, and then uses that paradigm to analyze several negotiation cases drawn from various research publications. On page 92, he suggests this paradigm might be useful for analyzing the case study data on curriculum practice:

> ...when faced with understanding a particular group, organization, institution, nation or society, a researcher generally must either ask "What is this all about - What is its structure of relationships? " or perhaps simply assume an answer to these questions and proceed to study whatever is central to his or her interests. But...researchers' conceptions of social order - and their (usually) implicit assumptions about negotiation - generally lead them to overlook or misconstrue their data on negotiations; . . . close examination of those data would raise some sharply critical questions both about their conceptions of social order and about some of their actual research conclusions.

Because the analysis of our field notes has not proceeded beyond description and initial generation of hypotheses, we plan to use the Strauss analysis paradigm to ferret out and understand the negotiation components of the curriculum process, if they exist. We also plan to continue the research series by searching for negative instances in the cases we have studied, sampling more widely to conduct other case studies in other schools, and eventually testing the hypotheses that emerge from this process through the use of experiments in laboratory school settings.

If this hypothesis about negotiation is substantiated, there are important implications. Both teachers and students should be better informed about the elements entering their negotiations. Students should be involved formally in the curriculum development and negotiation process. Learners should share more fully with teachers and others the responsibility of the experiential and personal curriculum they receive.

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