What Happens in Hallways?

Behavior Patterns during Elementary School Transitions

A Prospectus for Doctoral Research

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Introduction

The hallways of the elementary school have received little systematic study, yet this is an important area of the school as what happens in hallways can influence academic and other aspects children's activities in the school. How much time is spent in the hallway? With whom do children interact in that context? What happens in the interactions? What kinds of events occur before, within, and subsequent to that interaction? Do hallway interactions influence classroom activities? Are hallway events influenced by classroom activities? What happens when children are alone in the hallway? How do whole-class groups vary from small groups in the hallway? In short, what happens in school hallways?

Theoretical Perspectives

The Hallway as Culture

The physical context of the school hallway provides a utilitarian means of movement between various contexts of the school, such as different classrooms, playground and classroom, bathrooms and classroom, and the like. These contexts of origin and destination are social contexts, which are likely to reflect either the more adult-directed classroom culture or the more peer- directed childhood culture [such as on the playground] (Baker, 1985, p. 18). Likewise, the hallway may take on some of the characteristics of one of these cultures or perhaps some fusion of the two.

The theory and study of culture is generally associated with the discipline of anthropology, and with the methodology of ethnography ["ethno" designates culture]. Ethnography is understood here to refer to the process and product of research which involves "comparative analysis of multiple entities," with an emphasis upon gaining an emic perspective [the participants' viewpoints] of events and contexts (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 1-2, 45). Ethnography tends to use inductive methodologies that are more generative of categories and theories, in contrast with the more deductive and verificative aspects of many other research approaches (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 40-44).

In the proposed study, the meanings of events to participants [the "emic" perspective"] will be informed by symbolic interaction theory (Blumer, 1972/1962; Goetz, 1975, pp. 11-14). This theory emphasizes that meaning is not inherent in behavior and symbols, but rather that individuals infuse these with meanings. Even though these meanings are distinctive from one person to the next, shared meanings are possible through the imagining of the self in an alternate social role and taking on that individual's

interpretation, expectation, and point of view (Goetz & Hansen, 1974, p.5). Shared meanings between the researcher and persons studied are essential to achieve an "emic" [insider] perspective of those studied. In addition, the shared meanings between participants are also important, whether they be micro-level [such as the shared understanding between one child and one teacher of a request to use the bathroom] or macro-level [such as the shared assumptions regarding the culture and related norms and rules of the hallway]. One concept linked with symbolic interaction, "the hidden curriculum" (Jackson, 1968), suggests that children may learn ideas and behaviors that are not overtly stated in the curriculum of the school. What happens in the hallway may constitute a hidden curriculum that deserves explication, not only to understand what is learned in the hallway context, but also to observe how that learning influences education and behavior in other contexts of the school, as noted earlier.

The Hallway as Groupings and Events

Children may enter the hallway individually [a child getting a drink of water], in formal groups [as when an entire class moves to the playground, or in small groups [several children going to a specialized instruction class]. In the hallway small groups may form and dissipate, or formal whole-class groups may form clusters, scatter, or remain in formal order [a line]. Thus a second theory informing the proposed research relates to group formation and activities. While a wide variety of theories address these concepts, Edward T. Hall's (1974) proxemic theory is a classic perspective which has been chosen for the present study, supplemented with several similar theories which converge and further elaborate certain aspects of Hall's approach. Hall proposes that the physical space surrounding a person or animal functions as a social marker to establish territory and identify the individual with a group (pp. 4-5). Various zones of proximity are suggested, which may indicate the level of relationship between individuals, although they are influenced by other factors as well. Similarly, Martin and Bateson (1993, p. 73) note that distance is a key determining factor in defining a group. They specifically distinguish groups, in which known associations take place, from parties, which are aggregates in which membership is uncertain.

Hall (pp. 8, 15) also proposes two central components in understanding events within a group: action chains and situation frames. Action chains refer to a series of actions which make up the smallest unit within a culture, such as obtaining directions or making a purchase. A key example described by Hall is the social greeting, which involves perception of someone, recognition, a recognition signal, approach, a greeting ritual, termination and withdrawal (p. 23). This common action chain is one of several possible action chains that may occur in hallways.

Corsaro (1981), in his research of preschoolers, discovered a somewhat similar sequence which he termed an "interactive episode" [adapted from Erving Goffman's idea of "face engagement"]. While noting the initiation and termination phases of the interactive episode, he placed special emphasis upon the actions of youngsters that sustained the interaction, such as the exclusion of other children. While elementary aged children probably do not follow exactly the same sequence as preschoolers, Corsaro's findings understood within Hall's more general construct of action frames is a theoretical reference for the present study.

Both Corsaro and Hall note that sequences of activities by groups in a given space form a unit, what Hall termed a situational frame. Hall (p. 22) considers the latter construct to be similar to the "standing frames" suggested by Roger Barker's ecological psychology. The concept of situational frame might in some ways be compared to Pellegrini's (in preparation, p. 255) "critical incident" in a narrative system, which is comprised of relevant behavior, participants, situational structure, and consequences.

Hall's theory was used as the basis for Herrera's (1988) research of middle school hallways, in which the latter diagramed the movements of children between classrooms and other areas of the building. He found the movements to be very predictable and constantly monitored and enforced through patterned movements and statements by teachers and school administrators. Herrera's adaptation of Hall's theory thus serves as a potential conceptual framework for the proposed study as well.

Hall and theorists/researchers who have suggested somewhat similar ideas, will form the initial, more etic ["outsider"] theory of reference in this study, primarily informing the early stages of the proposed research. The study of culture within the framework of symbolic interactionism will subsequently inform the more emic ["participant" or "insider"] perspective in later phases of the study. This is not to suggest that other perspectives are ruled out as potentially informing the present research. Consistent with ethnography's concept of the investigator as the research instrument, all of the researcher's training and personal background may influence the direction of the proposed investigation, and thus may potentially be utilized throughout the study. However, the theories described here more overtly and directly influence the questions asked and at least the preliminary ways in which they will be addressed.

Three Questions

Three aspects of the question "What happens in hallways?" will be addressed in the proposed research. Each aspect corresponds with an aspect of the theoretical perspectives cited, and to some extent each will be addressed more specifically at different phases of the research.

1. What formal whole-class movements occur in hallways? The first question considers macro-level patterns of movement in the hallway context of an elementary school. What are the patterns of movement as children move from one location to another as an entire class? Do they stay in lines or do they move apart from one another? How often does the entire class move from one place to another? Are macro movements of an entire class predictable, or is there considerable variability in whole-class movements? How many children are involved? Does spacing and other behavior vary by sex or ethnicity? Do teachers communicate expectations regarding staying in line, being quiet, walking slowly, and so on regarding whole-class movements in the hallway? How are these communicated and how are they enforced? This initial investigation, expected to last three or four weeks, will also provide contextual information about the hallways of the school being studied, and allow researcher effects to diminish. To some extent, Hall's proxemic theory and corollary concepts cited earlier may inform this phase of the study.

2. What group and individual activities take place in hallways?

The second question relates to individual and small group movements, clustering, and behavior in the hallway. The formation of small groups and the activities therein are one aspect of this question, in keeping with Hall's proxemic theory and associated formulations cited earlier. How often do clusters of students develop in the hallway? Is the membership of such groups stable or fluid [in Martin and Bateson's terms, are they more groups or parties]? How are informal clusters of students initiated, sustained, and terminated [as suggested by Corsaro's perspectives]? What action frames/interactive episodes/critical incidents occur? What are the immediate in-hallway consequences of the clusters and related events that take place in the hallway? How does body space in whole-class lines compare with body space in informal hallway clusters and informal lines such as form at drinking fountains? Does a teacher or administrator being present make a difference in these behaviors, and if so what difference does this produce?

The second question will also relate to individual behavior in the hallway. Is individual behavior more common than clusters? What are the destinations of isolated individuals in the hallway? When are there isolated individuals in this context -- are these times predictable and routinized, or sporadic? How long do they stay in the hallway? What children [by gender, age, and ethnic characteristics] go from what classrooms to what locations, and how long do they spend in a given hallway? Again, does a teacher or administrator being present make a difference, and if so what difference do they make?

3. What do the events and movements in the hallway mean to participants and non-participants?

The third question concerns the meanings of hallway behavior to children and adults, in keeping with cultural and symbolic interactionist theory described earlier. What do they report telling teachers regarding the intent of leaving the room? How do children understand their own behaviors, or the behaviors of others, in the hallway? What do they describe as happening? How do they feel about what happened?

Were they bored, frustrated, angry, happy, or indifferent about events? What details can they provide about events in the hallway? Do they perceive events in the hallway as hindering or facilitating classroom and other school activities? In what ways--if any--do they see hallway events as influencing attitudes about school more generally? [For example, taking time from more important instruction, encouraging cooperation, producing aggression or chase games, reflecting boredom, etc.].

Teachers' perceptions of events in the hallways will also be considered as part of this third question. What do teachers tell students about hallway behavior when children are sent out alone or in small groups? What do teachers report regarding students' reasons for leaving the room? Do these correspond with what students report? How do teachers interpret events from the hallway? What are their reactions and feelings in response to observing events in the hallway? Do they see clustering and other events in the hallway as hindering or facilitating classroom and other school activities? Do they believe hallway events can influence attitudes about school? If so, in what ways can those events influence attitudes [see questions raised with children]?

Rationale

Why is such a study needed? Since so little is known about elementary school hallways, what occurs in that context may be undermining the functional base [basic purpose] of the school, or it may unknowingly be facilitating the purpose of the educational institution. Hallway events may influence children emotionally in a positive manner through encouragement and positive exchange or negatively because of associated aggression or mischief. Perhaps there is no emotional influence. Teachers may think a child is going to the restroom while destructive or purposeless events actually occur. Children may use skills or rehearse lessons learned in the classroom. Excursions to non-relevant parts of the building may delay urgent notes to teacher or principal, or the wasted time involved may reveal latent attitudes towards the school. Or does that "wasted time" provide an emotional outlet for the child? Answers for these questions do not exist because so little is known about this potentially important context.

Why should elementary aged children be studied? It is during the elementary years that children acquire hallway normative behavior (Cox, 1980, pp. 37-39). While Cox emphasizes the initial acquisition of desired behaviors in the earliest weeks and even days of kindergarten, it seems likely that hallway behavior changes with age. In an experimental study I conducted, it was noted that first graders seemed to manifest overt emotional reactions to changes in hallway control to a greater extent than older children. Perhaps other age-related variations in hallway behavior occur during the elementary years. One might also suggest that the earliest years of education are particularly important in forming life-long attitudes towards schooling -- might hallway activities influence those attitudes to some extent?

As noted previously, the hallway may reflect learning from the classroom, or be the context for events that subsequently reflect themselves in the classroom.

So there are intimate interdependencies between the strategies chosen to maintain hall order and the ends and means which can be sought in the classrooms adjoining. The reverse is also the case, ideas and attitudes absorbed in the classroom leave with the students and affect their behavior elsewhere in the school. (Metz, 1978, p. 237)

Design

As noted earlier, the design for the proposed study is ethnographic (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993), a methodology derived from anthropological studies of culture (Lancy, 1993, p. 4). Thus children in the hallway can be considered much like a cultural group or tribe.

The Research Site

In keeping with ethnographic design, I anticipate a lengthy stay in the field (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 268), probably visiting the site/s two or three times a week, two to four hours a day, balanced between mornings and afternoons, over several months. Researcher location in the hallway will be systematically varied throughout the study. At present I am thinking of doing most if not all of the research from February to June, 1994, although initial exploratory investigation may be initiated January, 1994. These dates were determined for the convenience of the researcher. It is proposed that a follow-up study take place at a second school during the fall of 1994.

The county superintendent of schools for Preissleville [pseudonym], Georgia has been contacted and given a general overview of the proposed research. He fully agreed to the study and provided a letter of recommendation to the principals of all four elementary schools in his district. The four schools vary widely in terms of student population characteristics, locality, and class scheduling, all of which might have an effect upon hallway behaviors. Most crucial, I believe, in the decision of which school to research are: 1. the support of the principal, 2. scheduling that maximizes hallway movements, particularly the informal movements needed to study questions two and three, and 3. a student body that reflects numerous ethnic and sociodemographic groups, since such diversity may add to the spectrum of behavior exhibited in the hallway.

While I intend to discuss the project with all four principals, at present I am inclined toward Pellegrini Elementary School [pseudonym]. This school is located near the center of Preissleville, a town of about 10,000 in Northern Georgia. Advantages of this site include a student body that represents a wide variety of backgrounds, from inner-city like youngsters, to more or less suburban and rural children. The racial makeup of the population is also quite diverse, and the county-wide program for exceptional children is located in the building. A personally appealing aspect of the school is having visited the site on several occasions for non-research purposes, as well as my friendship with the president of the Parent Teacher Organization, who has offered to help in any way she can.

Phases of the Study

A tentative outline of what I would like to do follows: 1) The first phase of the study involves observation of global patterns, durations, and frequencies of movement and related activity of entire classes going to and from classrooms. These will be observed by means of ad libitum sampling, in which no pre-specified set of sampling rules are followed, which is particularly valuable during the beginning phases of an observation (Pellegrini, in preparation, p. 154). While continuous recording in narrative form is expected, preliminary observations of several school hallways indicate that there will be times when no activity will be observed. Thus events, patterns of behavior that are relatively brief, will probably be the focus of attention (Martin & Bateson, 1993, p. 66). From my informal observations, whole-class hallway events tend to be fairly predictable, generally coinciding with the teachers' classroom schedules. Thus patterns of movement may be charted according to time, number of children, origin and destination, and so on. This initial, global level of observation also includes mapping of the environment (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 84, 113) including literally drawing maps of the hallways in the school site (Lancy, 1993, p. 241). This is aspect of preliminary observation is sometimes referred to as "hanging around" (Pellegrini, in preparation, pp. 123-124). Descriptions of the physical setting will be supplemented by notations of traffic flow at various times of the day. The three to four weeks involved will also allow time for students and teachers to habituate to my presence in the hallway, thus minimizing researcher effects for subsequent phases of research. Observations during this first phase will be scheduled to include either all morning or all afternoon on Tuesdays and Thursdays [the only days I am available], and hallways and locations within each hallway will be systematically varied in the sampling procedure. Preliminary analysis during this phase will involve the description of general patterns observed and perhaps preliminary tentative category formation. 2) The second phase of the study involves more specific study of students not in whole-class formations, concentrating on the behavior of individuals and group clusters that occur in hallways. These individuals or small clusters tend to be in the hallway for a wide variety of purposes: going to the restroom, getting a drink of water, delivering messages and materials, and so on. A number of questions might be asked about such groups, questions similar to those asked by some ecological psychologists and ethologists (Lancy, pp. 118-133), addressing the who, what, where, when, and how of

the subject (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 199-200); or the relevant behavior, participants, situation structure, and consequences (Pellegrini, in preparation, p. 255). Are there patterns in the timing and spatial movements of these children? Do youngsters cluster in consistent clusters? How large are the clusters and how long do they last? What do these individuals or small groups do in hallways; in other words, what is the apparent purpose of their being in the hallway? Do they tend to be stationary or do they move from one place to another? What is the gender or ethnic composition of such clusters? What interpersonal behavior occurs in the process [e.g., fighting, helping, talking, touching, proxemic patterns as described by Hall]? Which of these is most salient? How do such features of clusters compare and contrast with similar behaviors in whole- class groupings in the hallway? I would also like to address issues such as time of day and location differences, and how these might interrelate with the above issues.

To address these questions, similar sampling and recording rules will be used as in the first phase of the study, with particular emphasis upon event sampling and determining the social structure of hallway events. Again, a variety of hallways and positions in hallways will be observed, using the previously mentioned Tuesday-Thursday schedule [except for the second week in March when I can observe half days all week long]. [Half day observations will be used to avoid observer fatigue and so the other half of the day can be used for typing observation field notes and reflecting upon them.

Analytic induction may be useful in developing working hypotheses and typologies during this phase, a method that involves scanning data to determine categories and relationships between categories, with a constant search for negative instances which serve to refine emerging constructs (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 254). To the degree possible, I wish to develop original categories at this phase that are homogeneous, mutually exclusive, and exhaustive of data (Pellegrini, in preparation, pp. 129-130), although categories from previous studies may be considered and possibly adapted if original categories are not forthcoming from the data. This phase is expected to begin by the end of February [or earlier] and will continue to some extent until the end of the school year in June.

3) A third phase, overlapping with the second, perhaps beginning in late March or April, will more directly address hallway antecedents and consequences in the classroom, as well as the meanings of hallway behavior to teachers and students. One or two specific classrooms will be chosen on the basis of high frequency hallway behaviors and teacher willingness to participate. Individual parental permission will be secured for all students in this/these classroom/s. Observations will continue on the Tuesday/Thursday half day sequence [counterbalancing mornings and afternoons] until May; during the final month of school each day of the week will include a half day of observation, since my other work commitments will allow increased time in the field.

The researcher will attempt to learn all the names of the children, to facilitate rapport (Corsaro, 1981). Periodically during the day, such as during recess, during lunch, or in the closing moments of the school day, I will talk with those children, for whom parental permission was acquired, that were observed in the hallway. Taking the role of visitor and friend [to the extent possible], and disclaiming any school-related role, I would ask them why they went into the hallway and ask them to talk about their activities there. It is expected that my talking with them may influence the frequency and activity in the hallway, and this will be so documented, but hopefully these researcher effects will diminish within a week or two, as children come to appreciate the fact that I do not criticize or question their behavior and that I do not inform the teacher or school authorities of what they do.

At the end of an observation period [at noon or at the end of the school day] the researcher will talk with the teacher/s [when children are not nearby] regarding what children she knew had left the room and why they had asked to leave. I will also ask what had been happening in the classroom at the time, whether the teacher had asked the child to delay leaving or not, and what resulted after the child returned.

While the content of interviews are expected to follow the above guidelines, the researcher would like to reserve the right to explore other hallway-relevant details. Specifically the descriptive question matrix (Spradley, 1980) may help elicit richer data if the results of interviews are not sufficiently detailed.

This phase includes videotaping movements of whole-class groups, as well as individuals and clusters, in the hallway. The locations of the camcorder will vary, making use of the placements most likely to derive data as determined by the variation of researcher position earlier in the study. The camera will be focused on the hallway as a whole, not on individual children, so that a separate camera operator will not be required. However, the researcher reserves the possibility of changing this plan should specific angles of camera work produce better data. The camcorder will not be hidden, but the camera's influence upon children's should be temporary as video cameras are frequently used in the Preissleville area; they are a more or less natural part of the environment, although perhaps alien to the school context. If the videocamera appears to have a sustained influence upon the data, the researcher will attempt to maximize that influence [and hopefully speed habituation] through use of an monitor by which children can view their own behavior in the hallway. After a few days of watching the monitor, it will be removed and hopeful the camera's influence will also be removed. Videotape recordings will thus become a second form of data [in addition to observation notes], but will also be used as a stimulus to which children will react. Segments of the tapes will be shown to one or more of the students involved [for whom parental permission was received] in the hallway activity filmed, for their descriptions and explanations of what took place. This constitutes an attempt to gain an emic [insider/participant] perspective of what takes place. Network selection may be used as a selection technique (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 73-74) to include several of the students involved. These children will be shown the tape within a day or two of the event so they can adequately recall what happened.

Two other groups will also be shown the tape and asked for their reactions, each representing a bit less emic perspective. Segments will also be shown to students not portrayed for their descriptions and explanations of what took place. These may be selected more randomly (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 78-79), although other selection methods may also be considered--fluidity in selection is inherent to ethnography (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 56). Teachers of the children portrayed will be asked to observe the videos as well, for their descriptions and explanations. By interviewing participating children, I will attempt to discover the meanings and purposes of hallway behavior from an emic [insider] perspective (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 200), yet as interviews move from participants to student non- participants to teachers, increasingly etic [outsider] perspectives should also become apparent. This will help to determine how differences in perception and understanding vary due to the degree of involvement [participating vs. non-participating children] and how these vary by social status/role differences [children vs. teachers].

4) A fourth phase of research, overlapping with the second and third phases, probably beginning in April and extending essentially full time through the summer months after the end of the school year, involves triangulation of verbal descriptions and explanations of participant children, non-participant children, teachers, and my own observation notes (Lancy, 1993, p. 20; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 48-49). Hypotheses developed from this triangulation process, as well as earlier phases of the proposed research, would be "tested" and refined by subsequent observations in the hallway setting [hypotheses that emerge prior to June can be tested immediately, those that emerge afterward may be tested by repeated viewing of videotapes or by subsequent observations in the fall]. Lofland and Lofland's (1984) typological analysis system may be helpful at this stage in the research.

During this phase of research, hypotheses that emerge will be shared with children and teachers for their reactions, such as affirmation, refutation, elaboration, or modification (Lancy, 1993, pp. 243-245; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 319-320). During these interviews, the children and teachers will be encouraged to contradict and add to the hypothesized findings and constructs. I will attempt to document how the interviews and videotapes during in this phase may have modified what takes place in the hallways. These additional observations should to some extent clarify the tenability and comparability of observer, student, and teacher perspectives.

5) The anticipated outcomes of the research are: 1) a descriptive account of movements, grouping patterns, and related activities of children in hallways, 2) a comparison of children's stated reasons for leaving the classroom with what teacher's perceive as their reasons, and 3) an analysis and comparison of the meanings of hallway activities. Each of these will also include hypotheses emergent from the data

derived from the preceding phases of research. These will be stated in a tentative manner, since they are open to verification, contradiction, or modification by research at other times and settings, including a second research site [phase six].

6) A second field site will be chosen with phases much like the above, for comparative purposes. This phase of the study will take place in the fall of 1994 at a second school in the Preissleville system. The second site will be chosen on the basis of 1) principal support, 2) having a very different school schedule from the first site so that hallway activities are expected to be very divergent from the first site. If two or more schools fit this first criterion for selection, the second site will be selected on the basis of difference of student body population from the first site. Data and conclusions from the second site will be triangulated with the first, thus serving as a replication using extreme case selection (see LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 75).

The preceding plan is a tentative outline of the proposed study, which will probably be revised and modified with the emergence of relevant data during the study (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 64-65). It may be that movements and groupings, which appeared to be the most salient macro-elements of hallway behavior in my own informal observations, are in actuality not the best framework for understanding what happens in hallways. For example, while I have observed small group hallway clusters on one occasion, this may be an extremely infrequent event, or even nonexistent in the school where this study occurs. Revisions and modifications to the proposed outline may be required, should emergent data so indicate. It is generally best to enter the field with several versions of a research plan, which can be negotiated with gatekeepers (Pellegrini, in preparation, p. 93). Data Collection and Analysis

The above phases include comments regarding the frequency and type of both data collection and analysis, but further detail is warranted. Data collection will be recorded in observation notes throughout the study. Data will also be collected with videotapes during the latter phases of the study. Videotapes will not be transcribed, but will be used for reliability purposes and refinement of categories and hypotheses over the summer. Observation notes will follow the form described by Corsaro (1981), which was adapted from Anselm Strauss: Field notes [FN] will include descriptions of events, interviews, and quotations from children and teachers, Personal Notes [PN] will mark personal reactions to events, Methodological Notes [MN] include comments on events which have methodological implications, and Theoretical Notes [TN] relate to categories and emergent hypotheses. It is expected that most field notes will be recorded in the field, with major details written during events and other details written between events when there is no activity in the hallway. These "dead times" in the hallway may also allow for comments in the other three categories, but I expect most of these will be written outside the school context, upon reflection at the end of the day or at least by the end of the week. Handwritten field notes will be typed at the end of each day, or as soon as possible thereafter.

Consistent with ethnography, qualitative analysis of the data will begin while collecting data (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 238), using analytic induction, producing categorizations and typologies by the observation of common patterns across persons and different locations in the hallway. Categories will be reassessed and either discounted or refined by searching for negative examples. Following Anselm Strauss' approach [also used by Corsaro], patterns that emerge will become the framework for theoretical sampling, thus the hypotheses developed can be considered "grounded theory" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

While the "replication" at a second data site might be considered a means of reliability, the qualitative approach often makes strict replication impossible due to lack of standardized controls (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 332). Multiple sites produce different data sets, which may reveal much about the variability of behavior but little about reliability and validity. However, multiple observers viewing the same events can suggest a degree of reliability (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 338-340; Pellegrini, in preparation, p. 178-179). Qualitative reliability will be determined through independent data analysis by peer examination [though not independent data collection] for category revision, clarification, and verification by students enrolled in an advanced qualitative research class planned for Spring, 1994, at the University of Georgia. As LeCompte and Preissle note, reliability is also suggested by triangulating the observed data through interviews of students and teachers in the field, as proposed throughout the above

description of the research phases. Internal validity is a major strength in qualitative research (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 341), evidenced by the lengthy stay in a naturalistic setting, reliance upon informant interviews for data, and constant self-monitoring by the researcher (pp. 342-348). A long period of time in the field allows for contradictory evidence to surface, and a researcher who stays relatively open [via self-monitoring and the active search for negative cases] is more likely to observe alternative perceptions. Likewise, interview data is likely to counteract preconceived notions, assuming interviews are relatively open- ended and not unduly influenced by the researcher's constructs. As seen in the above outline, conclusions at every phase of the study will be tested by participants [children involved in events] and non-participants [other children, teachers, and graduate students]. These make up what Corsaro (1981) terms "indefinite triangulation"; validity through the involvement of others. My educational, professional, and personal background is expected to influence what is observed, as ethnography assumes the researcher is the instrument of research (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, pp. 91-92; Lancy, 1993, p. 23). So the reader can determine the degree of influence these aspects of the researcher have on the data as well as the analysis, some description of my life history will be included in the written report. One presupposition in particular is expected to influence my research. I affirm the value of multiple perspectives of events, as some theories are believed to apply better to some situations than others, and different theories can represent different levels of understanding the same phenomena. In the quest for a holistic perspective of hallway activity, a theoretical eclecticism may influence my data collection, analysis and results. To some this may be seen as a strength, to others a weakness, but perhaps most crucial to this study, it is a readily admitted influence. However, I will attempt to keep an openness to the data, so that the results of observations and interviews may also generate substantive theory and hypotheses grounded in what is observed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I'm open and ready for surprises. External validity is more problematic in qualitative studies (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 348), but extensive description of the research site can help readers determine the typicality and generalizability of the study to other contexts (p. 349). Multiple sites also enhance the likelihood of generalizability. Should categories become saturated, so that further data from the site no longer clarify or generate categories, typologies, and hypotheses, additional research sites may be investigated (Lancy, 1993, p. 16). Saturation of categories occurs when additional observations [including the search for negative cases] no longer produce change in the definition of categories, nor do those observations produce additional categories, typologies, or hypotheses. Additional sites may also be considered should the data appear truncated because of the nature of the initial research site [in other words, little variation or minimal data of any kind is acquired because so little occurs in the hallway]. Decisions on site selection and change of site will take place only by mutual consensus of the researcher's major professor, co-major professor, and the researcher.

In sum, the intended results of the proposed study are descriptions of the point-to-point movements of children through hallways, analysis of various groupings and individual children in hallways and associated activities, descriptions of meanings of these activities as perceived by participants and nonparticipant peers and teachers, development of categories and typologies, and creation of researchable hypotheses. These form the framework for possible future research studies, either qualitative or quantitative. Yet, because of the broad scope and lengthy time frame of an ethnographic design, this proposed dissertation study will not include a quantitative verificative component; it will be entirely qualitative in design and generative in function.

[Note: I would like to include an account of an experimental study I conducted in Fall, 1993, of varying control in a school hallway as an appendix in the dissertation. This study was done as a class assignment and with regular input from Dr. Anthony Pellegrini.]

Brief Review of the Literature

The following review of the literature is a very brief form of a much longer and detailed review developed for my comprehensive exams, with a few added references. The full literature review of school transitions is available on request. I plan to blend the complete literature review with research findings in the dissertation report of the proposed study, rather than have the literature review in a separate chapter.

Middle School Hallways

Very few studies have been conducted that focus on school hallways, and most of these are not of elementary school passageways. The study most similar to the proposed research was a middle school ethnography conducted by Ebaristo Herrera (1988) for his doctoral dissertation at Harvard University. His study involved detailed observations of the hallways of a Boston school. The transitions that occurred in that middle school involved regular changes of students from one classroom to another every hour or so, unlike most transitions in elementary schools, and of course those studied were older children [seventh and eighth graders] than would be considered in my proposed research. Herrera (1988, pp. 109-153) diagramed the patterns of movement in hallways, noting the strict separation of the bilingual Hispanic section of the school from the Vietnamese section and a third general area of the school building. While Hispanic students were allowed to speak quietly to one another while in the hallway, harsh reprimands discouraged any kind of verbalizing in the Vietnamese area. One-way communication and extremely rigid control measures dominate Herrera's description of all the school hallways. He also mentions students being sent alone to the hallway for punishment. The harsh policies were thought to be currently irrelevant remnants from an earlier desegregation period of the school's history (pp. 154-155). Metz (1978, pp. 148-151), in her study of a middle school, also describes intensive control of youngster's behavior in hallways, but explains that noisy students could interfere with teacher-student communication and difficulty in settling down students once they enter the classroom. She also emphasizes that students who stop to talk with one another can obstruct traffic, and this can multiply until all movement in the hallway ceases. Violence, threats, and extortion of money from younger students can also be the result of little or no control in the hallway. [McLaren (1980, pp. 6-7) provides a vivid example of such an out- of-control situation in an elementary school hallway, where students coordinated a spitting attack on a teacher and "floaters" were allowed to roam the hallways and enter or leave classrooms at will.] Metz (p. 150) emphasizes the school's attempt to balance the need for order with the individual child's need for freedom. She concludes that an emphasis on order is usually predominant, although hallways that are supposed to be empty are not effectively patrolled (pp. 150-152). Yet Metz also cites evidence that gaining order in hallways may be at the cost of increasing disorder in the classroom (p. 157), and that relaxing discipline in the hallway may bring benefits in the classroom--allowing some noise outside class may prevent open hostility in class (pp. 158, 162).

Two other studies of middle schools briefly mention some of the problems that can exist in hallways. Staub (1987) notes the prevalence of misbehavior in hallways, such as punching and foul language. Williams (1987), however, found that more problems occurred in the cafeteria [56% of those cited] than in hallways [25%] or restrooms [19%].

Elementary School Hallways

Far less is written about what happens in the hallways of elementary schools. A search of ERIC, Psychlit, Sociofile, and University Microfilms dissertation abstracts did not reveal a single major study of this topic. However, several references from these and other sources mention hallway behavior, often as a peripheral comment to other subjects.

The architecture of the school building and surrounding areas is considered by Johnson (1982) and Sitton (1980). Sitton describes school hallways as "sociofugal" in that they lack features than might encourage interaction and lingering, while both Johnson and Sitton believe hallways are designed to facilitate surveillance and efficient movement. Johnson comments on the careful monitoring of who is allowed to enter hallways from the outside world, since the school is deemed responsible for children during school hours.

Several writers note that children walk in hallways as fast as they can to the playground or the cafeteria, sometimes even "bursting" out of the building or classroom (Parrott, 1972; Sutton-Smith, 1990; McLaren, 1980, p. 29). This finding is consistent with novelty theory (Pellegrini & Davis, 1993), that novel and different activities increase awareness and possibly activity level. Similarly the high levels of aggression when children were in transition from a group dominated by an autocratic leader to a group led in a democratic or laissez-faire manner (Lewin, Lippitt & White, 1939) may have a parallel in higher aggression during transitions from the classroom to recess or the cafeteria. In contrast to the running and

shouting of obscenities reported by McLaren, Goetz (1975, p. 101) describes children walking in a more controlled manner to lunch. Boys often bump into one another, punch one another, wrestle, and grab one another while in hallways (Paley, 1984, pp. 61-69).

Children may individually use the hallway to move to remedial instruction in reading, speech, or other subjects, or conversely they may move through the hallway as an entire class to the library or for specialized classes (Goetz, 1975, pp. 100-101; Paley, 1989, p. 134). Running errands, field trips, fire drills, and even parades may require the use of hallways (Bossert, 1979, p. 27; McLaren, 1980, pp. 171-172, 188, 191; Goetz, 1975, pp. 110- 111, 176; Schwartz, 1975, p. 105).

Children often move through hallways in lines, particularly if the entire class is making a transition. Place in line may either be assigned in some manner or be the result of competition between students, usually with stronger or bigger children winning the anterior positions (Best, 1983, pp. 20, 75-76). Cutting in line often results in a fight, although this is less likely if permission was received from the person immediately behind the line place desired. Boys are particularly likely to push in line. Straight, orderly lines are usually encouraged by teachers, and sometimes talking is allowed in line, yet some teachers forbid talking (Carere, 1987; Goetz, 1975, p. 102; Paley, 1984, pp. 61- 69). Studies of lines in elementary school cafeterias suggest that touching decreases and interpersonal spacing increases between white children with age, but is more stable across time between black children. Children tend to segregate by race in lines, a trend that increases through the elementary years. Same sex children tend to stand closer to one another, while distance between opposite sex children increases with age (Willis & Hofmann, 1975; Willis, Carlson & Reeves, 1979).

Children often use drinking fountains as they move through hallways (Jackson, 1968, p. 14) although teachers often discourage use of the bathroom or drinking fountain during class (Goetz, 1975, p. 250; Barker & Wright, 1951, p. 136). Social interactions in hallways may result from clusters of students that form as they move to other areas of the school, while game-playing and free exploration of the hallways are most likely when children are left unsupervised in the hall (Goetz, 1975, pp. 109-111). Clustering in hallways tends to be on the basis of ethnicity and sex (Douglass, 1982, p. 85). Sometimes elementary aged boys and girls kiss while in the hallways (Best, 1983, pp. 114-115). Rewards and lectures can increase prosocial helping behavior in hallways (Honig & Pollack, 1988).

The development of lining behavior and other hallway activities was briefly considered in a study by Cox (1980, pp. 37- 39). The teacher used verbal instruction and peer modeling to teach kindergartners appropriate hallway behavior during the first day of school. One might ask if the ripple effect found among kindergartners (Kounin, 1970, pp. 7-13) might extend from the classroom to the hallway.

To summarize, only two major studies give sustained attention to the hallways of schools, and both of these emphasized middle school transitions. A number of studies mention elementary school transitions, though usually in a somewhat tangential manner, providing some tentative topics and hypotheses, but a more comprehensive study specifically addressing elementary school hallway behavior needs to be attempted.

Conclusion

Hallways are a part of school life, and they may exert an important influence upon the education that takes place in elementary schools. Do events in that context influence children and what is that influence? Even more fundamentally, what does happen in those hallways, day after day, often out of the sight of teachers and administrators? The proposed research may help target this often forgotten or overlooked social context and the activities that take place there.

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Prospectus Appendage

by Donald Ratcliff

The Predominant Theoretical Framework

Throughout the proposed research, two theories will be primary, as noted at the beginning of the prospectus: Blumer's symbolic interactionism [with an emphasis upon culture, consistent with the origins of

ethnography] and Hall's proxemic theory [and corollary concepts by others]. As noted, these theories will take different degrees of prominence at different phases of the study: proxemic theory will predominate during the first two phases [large group observation, followed by cluster/individual observation], and symbolic interaction theory during the third and fourth phases [videotapes/interviews followed by triangulation].

These two broad theories may potentially overlap in a number of respects in the final product of this study, but one particular area of overlap is the somewhat narrower theory of school/classroom culture in contrast to peer/playground culture. School/peer culture theory is described or implied in several previous sections of the prospectus, and provides an important basis for studying the hallway. Peer culture and school culture often interface in the school hallway, although that interface probably varies by who is in the hallway, the purpose of being there, size of group, and so on. The situation frame, which includes time and specific location of children, characteristics of the children, language and nonverbals used, results or goals of activities, and meanings of what occurred (Hall, 1974, pp. 22-23), interfaces with the notion of culture. Each of these components reflects peer-directed culture, school-directed culture, or--most likely--a combination of the two.

The dichotomy between peer culture and school culture is described by a number of researchers working within a variety of research traditions. Baker (1985, p. 19) traces this theoretical formulation to the early work of anthropologists James Spradley and Ward Goodenough. Children are understood to live within at least three different cultures: that of the home, the peer group, and the school. Each of these cultures has distinct normative guidelines and expectations, with adult rules being predominant at school, and children making most of the rules in the peer culture. The classroom generally exemplifies school culture, with strong control by the teacher. In contrast, the playground exemplifies peer culture, with adult direction relatively absent [except when major altercations occur]. The cafeteria, restrooms, and other areas of the school may represent more peer or school culture depending upon the specific nature of those contexts.

The hallway is a physical means of transition between these two cultures. Thus a central question for the proposed study is, "In what ways are peer and school cultures represented in the hallway?" School culture may be reflected overtly by the presence of teachers and other adults who enforce formal or informal rules [these constitute artifact data that will be included in the study]. School culture may be more covertly represented by students enforcing those rules or in more implicit ways. Peer culture, in contrast, might be reflect more or less overtly through game-playing, peer-dominated talk, scuffling, and the like.

The distinction between peer and school culture will be a very important concern of the study, but not the only issue of interest. In a sense peer/school culture theory is a pervasive substantive theory, which potentially triangulates the other two major theoretical perspectives for this study, symbolic interactionism and proxemic theory. Ultimately, the goal of the study is to provide a fairly comprehensive description of the elementary school hallways studied. But the theory of school/peer culture is an important reason why school hallways should be studied, and will drive many of the dependent measures, the categories to be developed.

How Categories Will Be Developed

I do not expect the category system that emerges from the proposed research to be entirely original, since there is an existing literature on school and peer culture, as well as a much larger literature on symbolic interaction and proxemic theories, which includes numerous categories. However, I will attempt to pose original, borrowed, or adapted categories that best represent what is observed. Theory drives category development, although discussions with others, researcher insights, and reflections by participants also contribute. I expect my initial questions will be refined and refocused throughout the study by emergent findings (Pellegrini, in preparation, p. 117).

Pellegrini (in preparation, pp. 119-123) describes three levels or types of categories: physical, consequential and relational. Physical categories are descriptions of physical patterns grouped by co-occurrence either by time or place, such as the lining that often occurs when whole classes move through hallways. Consequential categories consider the results or outcomes, which imply intention or motives. For example, children may ask to go to the restroom when in fact they want to meet with peers in the hallway. Relational categories describe with whom and where people interact, such as the location and number/identity of peers selected when children gather in clusters in the hallway. Physical descriptions may become very cumbersome because of the immense amount of detail, and thus broader patterns may be missed, while consequential descriptions require more inference and thus are more subject to bias (Pellegrini, in preparation, p. 120-121). Pellegrini also notes the importance of "hanging out" by looking at a wide variety of details at the initial phase of research, recording notes on what occurs either in writing or by tape recorder, and making interpretive notes on what occurs (pp. 124-125).

As seen in the examples given, all three types of categories are potentially useful in the proposed study. Physical and relational categories are most likely to emerge in the first two phases of the study [the group and individual observation phases], while consequential categories are more likely during the third phase [the videotaping/interviewing phase]. Specific decisions about the kinds of categories to be developed will be determined in the field from the most salient data.

In addition to Pellegrini's suggestions, four other sources have significantly influenced my plans for category development. LeCompte and Preissle (1993, pp. 240-249) suggest four steps in theorizing and discovering categories: 1) perceiving with "studied naivete," 2) contrasting, comparing, ordering, and aggregating by massing and scanning data, 3) finding relationships and linkages between data, and 4) speculating.

Tesch (1990, pp. 142-145), in her book about qualitative data analysis using computer programs, recommends: 1) reading observation notes, writing ideas as they come to mind, and attempting to obtain a sense of wholeness, 2) marking topics in the margins of observation notes, 3) noting similar topics and clustering them, 4) organizing topics into a preliminary category system, continuing to write memos on the data, and trying out the categories on additional data, 5) refining the system by using descriptive wording and determining what categories are most important and which are subcategories [20 to 50 categories are recommended], 6) abbreviating each category and coding observation notes, 7) conducting preliminary analysis on all notes within a particular coding, summarizing that content and emphasizing common features, distinctives, contradictions, confusions, and missing data, and 8) recode data if need be, as the system of categorization is applied to additional data sets and categories become concepts.

Erickson (1992), in a chapter on qualitative data analysis of videotapes, suggests a somewhat similar approach: 1) review the entire event without pausing the tape, 2) identify the boundaries of the event by replaying segments several times, 3) replay tape as needed to determine how aspects of the event are organized, often determined by nonverbal actions such as nodding and changes in gaze, 4) observe actions of individuals and transcribe relevant behavior from tape, and 5) compare observed activities with previously observed activities to determine if they are representative or atypical, emphasizing key contrasts, frequencies, discrepancies, analogical activities, and functional relationships between events.

Herrera (1988, pp. 77-82) describes eight phases in pattern development used in his study. He notes that these steps were retrospective descriptions; the phases emerged throughout research; they were not prescribed prior to the study. The steps included: 1) reviewing some field notes, 2) focusing on an interaction event, 3) describing the event's characteristics [e.g. level, setting, order, consistency, etc.], 4) defining the type of event, 5) stating relationships between types of events, 6) stating types of relationships that exist, 7) noting sequences, and 8) emergence of patterns. Patterns are later crystallized into researchable questions, the final product of the research.

Summary and Conclusion

Several themes are found throughout the above sources. First, categories may emerge by linking events that co-occur or are consequent/antecedent to others. Conversely categories may relate conceptually similar events, such as physical or relational aspects of the situation. Second, details are more likely to make sense by initially concentrating upon the whole of the event or upon macro-levels rather than details. Third, a degree of trial and error seems implicit in the above data analysis schemes. Finally, the initial questions and associated theories influence the development of categories. I expect that different categories will be at different phases of development at any given time during the research, and I suspect categories may develop in a variety of ways.

While I do not anticipate following any of the above procedures precisely as described, they represent guidelines that I will refer to and adapt in my study as needed. Again, data analysis may be influenced by the nature of the data obtained, and since elementary school hallways have not be studied in the manner I anticipate, I prefer to keep an open-ended approach.

[Note: there are a number of other forms of qualitative data analysis in the literature that may also be adapted in my research -- see the section on data analysis in my comprehensive exam done for Dr. Judith Preissle, available upon request.]

A final caveat on category development seems warranted. It was noted in the prospectus that the ideal is to develop homogeneous, mutually exclusive, and exhaustive categories. Unfortunately, ideals are not always accomplished. Homogeneity is undercut by the reality of fuzzy boundaries (Tesch, 1990, p. 136). While reformulations of categories may increase mutual exclusiveness, specific observations are likely to be coded in multiple categories in qualitative research (p. 138). Some observed data will not fit any category because it is irrelevant to the purposes of the study (p. 138). However, these ideals may be approximated, as well as the goal of parsimony (Pellegrini, in preparation, p. 128). Ultimately, my goals are relative accuracy and descriptive value in the categories formed, not perfection.

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