Sudarshan Srirangapatanam

February 27, 2016

**First Field Visit (2.27.16) (Note 2)**

**Meta-Data**

* Place: Our Lady of the Rosary, Union City
* Date and Time: Wednesday, February 24, 2012 from 3:00PM to 6:00PM (after school)
* Interactions: Ms. America (Teacher), Jaden (6th Grade boy), Alejandro (6th Grade boy),
* Activities: Homework time, Research watch.
* Ideas to focus on: Interacting/Mentoring Kids

**Context, Participants, Observable Goals, of the Teaching Event**

This week the students were moved to another classroom and was adjacent to previous classroom. The room was a 7th grade classroom where the arrangement of the classroom was a little more compact compared to others, in terms of the spacing between the chairs and desks. The teacher’s desk was located at the back of the classroom and got the most sunlight, and has two rolling chairs. To the left of the classroom [facing the whiteboard] were a line of computers, and a book collection consisting *Harry Potter* and various other books was behind the teacher’s desk. In the center was chairs and desk arranged to form groups of four and to the right side of the classroom was number of cabinets. The tome of the event was after the school was done with heir regular instruction since students have an early release on Wednesdays, and consisted mainly of ELP students.

Main goal for this week was to get students practice on researching a coherent topic and writing a formal essay on their research. A conversation between two teachers, Ms. A and another, revealed that this task was intended be a punishment as well for students’ misbehavior earlier this week. Ms. America told the other teacher that their students were given 3 options to choose from: copying from dictionary, doing research or another task which I can’t recall. Since the students declined two of the options, they had to continue with the only the option left. The research topic was to compare and contrast Black Panthers and Brown Berets and to start their research, they were given a formal introduction to the assignment, i.e. the format of the essay, logistics, places to start their research and information regarding valid sources.

In order to conduct the research students are supplied with iPads and MacBooks, in addition to which they are allowed to use the desktop computers. Of these students preferred MacBooks, and one student [Rudy] worked using iPad. Without enough MacBooks some students worked on a desktop computer. Rudy didn’t actually work on research, and instead played games on iPad. Some students continued to show this pattern using their MacBook, while a small group of students worked on their research. Students who worked promptly visited the official website and some questioned the authenticity of the party’s official site. Students who decided not to work for any reason were given an option to leave the class and go to administration to have the problem resolved, and this option was used by one person.

Ms. America had to constantly remind student to stay on task since some students starting playing videos on YouTube which caused more students to go off task. She even asked a few to go to administration, some to move to desktop computer [so that she has a better view of what they were doing], and warned a few that she would talk to their parents if they were not able to compete their work. Despite these warnings students continued to stay off task by browsing YouTube, funny images and other queries irrelevant to the research. Observing this Ms. A decided to be a little lenient and asked the class to just turn in a page of notes this week and told them they would be writing next week. Students, however, continued so she said that if they fail to turn in a page of notes they would have to turn in longer essay.

Students were given till 4:10 PM to complete their notes and were given their regular homework time after they finish their notes. During the homework time the most students quietly did their homework and one person [Alejandro] asked me for help with his math packet, and together we completed his homework.

**Detailing the Interaction between Teacher and Learner**

During the first half of the session interaction between teacher and students was very limited, usually it was warning and reminding them to stay on task. One student, however, started asking question to me, he started out with an introduction “My name is Alejandro”. I replied, “I am Sudarshan”, and he asked me for an alternative name since it was too long. After a couple of question I told him to complete his research so I can answer all his questions, so he started doing his work. After a while he came back to me and asked a few more questions, I answered the first two [where I was from, and where I study] and reminded him to complete his work again. After a while some students started to ask why Wikipedia wasn’t a good source, to which I replied “anyone could go and edit a page, so we can’t be sure if the information written there true”.

For the rest of the research time, the interaction were very limited. During homework time, however, Alejandra came back and asked Ms. A to help him with his packet. Ms. A took a look at the packet and told him that she can’t help him with all of it, she would also need to help others and asked him to go ask his peers for help. After about 5 minutes of roaming around the classroom, he came to me and asked me if I could help him out with his homework, and I gladly accepted to help. The very first problem was involving graph, and I asked him to start working on it and told him I would correct any mistakes. He immediately replied saying that he has trouble starting, and I gave him basic introduction on how graphs work. The first four problems involved questions regarding graphs and I asked him questions to help him answer the overall question himself. One example of this is when I asked him how many units does (3,4) move from the origin, does 3 say left-right or up-down, and so on.

When we continued to math problems involving just numbers, which I categorize as number problems, Alejandro was able to complete without any help. He finished a page full of problems, 10 to be exact, in about 10 minutes. Later we moved to word problems, and he wasn’t able to complete the first one correctly due to an interpretation error he made. For the first few of them I tried giving him the exact operation he would have to do and he was able to correctly identify which number to use on which side of the operation. For example, if I to him that he should use division, he would correctly identify the answer to be 15 divided by 3 and not the other way around. For the rest of the problem we decided to apply what the question was asking to ourselves to better understand the scope of the problem and finished the exercise.

The very last problem he had to complete was interpreting a graph and answering questions regarding the graph. In order to help him with the problem I decided to ask him the same set of questions: what coordinate does this mean, what do you label it, let’s count it. He identified what asked and was confident in his answers, and a couple of time he gave me a wrong answer and immediately corrected himself. After a while, he was able to answer them himself, and when his mother came to pick him up, he wanted to finish the problem set before he left and asked his mom to wait a couple more minutes.

**Reflection**

The overall learning focus this week was researching and being able to write an essay. The overall event can be described as unsuccessful despite the efforts of Ms. A to keep the student focused on the task. This is because the students’ choice of staying off task didn’t help them develop more, i.e. they stayed at their current level of development. Ms. A’s effort to keep them on task might show banking model at play but it is very important to consider the events and changes made to the lesson plan. With students showing very low interest on the topic she decided to reduce the work-load which is completely opposite to banking model of education as proposed by Freire. It is also important to consider the opportunity the students declined by using problem-posing model. In using problem-posing model, students were able to get to their academic homework sooner and in doing they missed the opportunity to develop their researching skills. And this researching skill could have been in their ZOPD, this also affected their future development of writing skills since writing is developed through practice and feedback.

My mentoring focus, however, was a great success since my focus this week was to get students to start the interaction and I decided to execute this by not taking notes on-site. Alejandro was the first one to take notice of me, and Jaden was more comfortable with me around. I was able to use some scaffolding techniques while helping Alejandro, when I analyzed that he would need help understanding the problem and not necessary to execute it I only assisted him understanding by applying it to himself. This technique was greatly effective with Alejandro since he started to complete problems with little assistance as we progressed. More observation would be required to see whether he grasped this technique and committed it to his memory. By helping him with his academic work I was in a sense using banking model but I tried my best to let him choose the subject and gave him freedom to leave at any time.

This image shows a keyboard with the text “Research” in it. I picked this image to show the main focus of this week, research. And the medium through which it was conducted, mostly MacBooks and Desktops.