Sudarshan Srirangapatanam

March 25, 2016

**First Field Visit (3.25.16) (Note 4)**

**Meta-Data**

* Place: Our Lady of the Rosary, Union City
* Date and Time: Wednesday, March 13, 2016 from 3:00PM to 6:00PM (after school)
* Interactions: Ms. America (Teacher), Rudy (7th Grade boy), Alex (8th Grade boy), Joshua (8th Grader)
* Activities: Homework time, Math puzzle.
* Ideas to focus on: Interacting/Mentoring Kids

**Context**

I entered a middle of outdoor session where the same groups as before were formed, a basketball group, a group of skip rope and a group that were just roaming around. I observed the group with Ms. America and noticed that the people who roamed around joined other groups and quickly came out of the group to resume their roam. The group that changed the most were the ones in the skip rope. The basketball group had their team set up and as a result didn’t accept any other students. After about an hour, the students were taken into a classroom and were told that they didn’t have math club this week, but instead were supposed to work on any homework that they had preferably math.

Everyone told Ms. America that they were done with the homework for other classes, and since everyone told the same thing except a few Ms. A doubted them. She asked all of the students to show her the work they have finished and soon everyone started to do their work. Joshua and few of his friends gathered around a desktop nearby pretending to finish their online math homework. And Rudy insisted that he finished his work and told Ms. A that he wanted a laptop since he was done with this work. Ms. A asked him to show his completed work but Rudy refused, and Ms. A quickly decided to let him know that if he didn’t do his work she would have to talk to his dad, after hearing this Rudy started to do his work.

Joshua and his colleagues, as usual, started to browse YouTube for some funny video and distracted the whole class and this made Ms. A very angry and ordered everyone except Joshua, who still pretended he has some online homework, to stay away from computer and if they won’t agree, she asked them to go talk to the office. Everyone started to work on their respective homework while Joshua continued to browse stuff unrelated to math on the internet. Ms. A caught this and asked Joshua to leave the computer as well.

After a while, about 30-45 minutes, the noise settled down and I asked Ms. A what she taught about the puzzle I gave her a week earlier. The puzzle I gave her was a math puzzle that was intended to increase students’ interest in the subject since they would gain this non-academic language that their peers they encounter in future are very unlikely to know. After taking permission from Ms. A I wrote the puzzle on board with three instructions necessary to complete the puzzle. Ms. A asked everyone in the class to finish the puzzle on the board after they complete their work, and also told them they would get to use a computer only if they complete the puzzle on the board. There was huge protest from Rudy regarding this but a few students started to complete the puzzle. After Alex finished the puzzle everyone started working on them and with some help form me and Alex, everyone slowly started to finish the puzzle and started to get a laptop for their enjoyment.

**Detailing the Interaction**

Interactions during outdoor activities were usually between students themselves, where everyone tried to help each other out to play a game. And during second half of the session the interactions were equally distributed between all participants. We started our day with free time and slowly moved into lesson time where everyone took a while to get adjusted to indoor environment. Towards the very end of the day, after finished the puzzle I gave, students transitioned back to free time but this time it involved technology.

The major interaction was between Rudy, myself and Ms. A when the puzzle was introduced. Ms. A asked Rudy to compete the puzzle before he could get his hands on a laptop, and Rudy protested to the idea telling her that he didn’t have to do it. She tried to explain to him that it would only help and wouldn’t hurt him, but Rudy continued to refuse to do. It was at this time I jumped in the conversation and told him that I could help him to do it. Rudy tried to ignore me, but I told him that I would give a clue to complete the puzzle.

After a while, Rudy came to me asked me the clue and I gave him a middle number, which actually is a cornerstone to the puzzle. He then tried to solve it and the whole class started to revolt against the puzzle, so I decided to provide them all with the clue I gave Rudy. I also told Rudy a sample method to complete the puzzle, and after Rudy went back to his seat Alex came to me to ask for some help. I helped him to complete the puzzle by giving him a method, after compellation he was able to get a laptop and soon everyone started to work on the puzzle and with some help from Alex and me they were all able to solve the puzzle.

After completing the puzzle and officially ending their lesson time, everyone transitioned into free time and this transition was drastically different to the earlier transition, from free time to lesson time. Receiving what he wanted, Rudy started to browse the internet for some games he could find. A small group started to play some funny videos on YouTube, one of them involved a student of Indian decent, with thick accent, dancing and this resulted in half of the class laughing. While this was taking place a small group continued to work on their homework and started to chime in when they were extremely distracted by other activities. Ethan, a 8th grade student, started to play some trailer on his laptop and this resulted in a huge conversation about movies with Ms. A. This included talking about *Ride Along 2, Civil War, Avengers* and many other movies.

**Reflection**

Learning focus for this week was to increase students’ interest in math and in order to do it a puzzle was designed. The puzzle, shown below, has three rules: 1) one must use number 1-9 to fill in all 9 boxes, 2) one shall not repeat any numbers, 3) the numbers should be place in such a way that sum of any row, column or diagonal results in the number 15. This puzzle seems very simple yet very different to all other math puzzle and thus only a small population is familiar with this. As a result anyone could use this to show off his math skills in his/her future, and this character for a puzzle is very rare. The key for the puzzle in the middle number which is the only box that remains constant for many different solutions that exists for this puzzle.

In order to complete this puzzle one would have to find all combinations of 10 and place it around the number 5. However, this puzzle didn’t seem to catch any attention from the students during instruction due its presence between a transition of free time and lesson time. The program I attend in OLR is designed to have both structured and unstructured time. Structured time here includes official lesson time and execution of any academic work, and unstructured time focuses on free roam for students where they build their own plan. By the virtue of existence of both kinds within a single day, we see transitions between these times to mark some unexpected reactions from the students. The sequencing of these times results in sequencing multiple other aspects on teaching.

One other sequencing we observe in this type of design is that of banking-model and problem-posing model as described by Freire. Where structured time correlated with banking-model of education while unstructured time related to problem-posing model. With the design of the afterschool program we can also observe the prevalence and influence of technology in students learning during both of these times. Where the structured time focuses on academic learning and unstructured focuses on self-mediated learning.

Taking the above reflection into consideration we can ask the following question: How does the sequencing of structured an unstructured time mediate the Freirean concepts of banking and problem-posing models of educations? And what place does technology take in the environment despite the presence of dichotomy?

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| 8 | 1 | 6 |
| 3 | 5 | 7 |
| 4 | 9 | 2 |

Adding on any of the columns or rows would result in 15.