Discourse rules and the oral narrative production of selected middle school students: an ethnographic study with pedagogical implications.

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DISCOURSE RULES AND THE ORAL NARRATIVE PRODUCTION
OF SELECTED MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS:
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY WITH PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

A Dissertation Presented
by
JANE ELLEN ZUCKER PERCIVAL

Submitted to the Graduate School of the University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

September 1992

School of Education
DISCOURSE RULES AND THE ORAL NARRATIVE PRODUCTION
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JANE ELLEN ZUCKER PERCIVAL

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For Florence S. Zucker
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Many people made significant contributions to my graduate studies and to this dissertation. I wish to acknowledge the contributions of:

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MONICA PERCIVAL, who assumed the responsibility of formatting and printing this document in its final form.

...ALL OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS BECAUSE THEY ENCOURAGED ME TO CONTINUE WONDERING AND WANDERING IN THIS FIELD OF DISCOURSE.
ABSTRACT

DISCOURSE RULES AND THE ORAL NARRATIVE PRODUCTION
OF SELECTED MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS:
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY WITH PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS
SEPTEMBER 1992

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This dissertation is an ethnographic study of the oral narrative production of
students in the course of their normal school day in a northeastern middle school. Oral
narrative is defined as spoken language that takes place in a social interaction in which
one intent of the speaker is to interpret or make sense of the present by telling about past
events. Reviews of the literature provide the rationale for not only studying student oral
narrative but also valuing it.

Qualitative analysis and an ethnographic approach to collecting data form the
methodology of the dissertation. I was a participant observer on a seventh-grade team of
sixty students and four teachers. I recorded their talk and my observations in settings
which included homeroom, study periods, core classes, interviews, small group
discussions, and field trips.

Through a process of rereading, coding, charting, and condensing the data, I was
able to describe episode-specific and underlying discourse rules which were most often
operative just prior to the emergence of student narrative. I found that student oral
narrative was most likely to occur just after the discourse rule context made clear that
language could be recorded for further study. Students were more likely to narrate just
after they were supported in their using language for a variety of purposes including to
answer questions and to express emotions. When students could initiate the topic of talk,
speak spontaneously, and talk with small groups of peers, oral narrative was also more
likely to occur.

Pedagogical implications include the need for educational leaders to design
in-service education that familiarizes current practitioners with a research base for
decision making in the area of developing students as oral communicators and thereby as
narrators. One of many recommendations for further research is that K-12 language arts
curricula be examined in terms of how they address students as speakers/narrators.
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CHAPTER I

PROBLEM, BACKGROUND, RATIONALE FOR METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS, PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

A. Introduction

As I sat on the cool, concrete steps leading from Southern Vermont College’s dining commons to the stifling-hot dormitory where I was staying during my attendance at a 1986 summer institute at the Prospect School in nearby Bennington, I found myself being drawn into the article I was reading by Harold Rosen -- "The Nurture of Narrative" (1982). Slowly, in the dusk of that July day, pieces of my experiences as an educator began to fit together like parts to a jigsaw puzzle. By the time the institute ended and I was again home, I knew I was ready to begin work on my position papers as a doctoral candidate at the University of Massachusetts. I was committed to finding in others’ research a validation for not only permitting students of all ages to tell about their experiences but also for creating an environment in which their stories were a vital part. I found such support in the research that I describe in Chapter II of this dissertation.

About the same time that I came upon Harold Rosen’s article, I was reading about Kenneth and Yetta Goodman’s work with the analysis of students’ mistakes in oral reading, or "miscues" (Gollasch, 1982) as they prefer to label them. If a listener observed, recorded, and analyzed what a reader did when reading aloud a printed text, the various causes of the reader’s miscues could be determined, according to their theory, because "miscues are made...and are cued by the language and thought the reader brings to the written material in his attempt to extract meaning from his reading" (Y. Goodman, Burke 1972, 5). I began to wonder whether I might be able to "see" a student’s language and thought processes by examining "miscues" in another of his/her products -- oral narratives. That question was the first of many that led me to begin the ethnographic research described in Chapter III.
The Goodmans’ perspective of learning about a child through analysis of his/her products reinforced insights I was gaining through my studies at the Prospect Archive and Center for Education and Research which was founded by Patricia Carini. She gave me and my fellow students the opportunity to know one student’s vision of the world by an in-depth examination of his productions from 1977 to 1985. Oscar’s products included his written work, stories he dictated to his teachers, art work, and other activities as reported in anecdotal records by his teachers and parents. Through our analysis of these products we saw that patterns or themes emerged. Pat Carini explains why this process is important as follows:

What I want to highlight...is the powerful, even lifelong continuity in the child’s interests and ways of making sense of the world. We are, as persons, self-consistent in terms of what we value, find interesting, and wish to pursue further. It is this consistency that teachers, parents, and other caregivers are in a position to observe and build upon in the children they educate (Carini 1986, 19).

Towards the end of my work at the institute, I wondered why we hadn’t tried to uncover Oscar’s “consistencies” in his spontaneously written journal entries. His journal had been given to us to just read over. However, as I read it, Oscar seemed to be in the room with me, talking to me. I felt very close to him. The themes I had worked hard in prior days to extract from his other productions were practically shouting out to me in his own words. It was then I knew I wanted to try to apply what I’d learned at the institute in an in-depth study of my students’ oral narratives. I would use Patricia Carini’s “documenting” research approach to see how my students actively make meaning when narrating.

While at the institute I had engaged mainly in the last phase of the documenting research approach which consists of description and analysis of previously collected data. However, the documenting research approach is designed to be used to observe and record human activities as well as to describe and analyze those recorded observations later. Because the researcher is not attempting to find a single meaning of a phenomenon
or event, there is no standard method of gathering and recording observations. The researcher chooses a procedure best suited to a particular setting and to his/her purposes. Procedures used include graphing and charting children's activities in various classroom spaces, recording interaction patterns between children, and conducting interviews with children and staff. In addition, other records of the phenomenon are collected such as children's artwork and journals as well as teachers' anecdotal records. After experiencing the phenomenon under study through one or more of these procedures, the researcher then interacts with the recorded observations themselves (Mishler 1979). Carini describes this interaction, a particular facet of documentation, as a "process of selecting and juxtaposing recorded observations and other records of phenomenal meaning in order to reveal reciprocities and therefore, to approach the integrity of a phenomenon" (1975, 29).

Once home in the Deerfield Valley, I prepared to conduct a pilot study. I set up observation notebooks according to Ms. Carini's guidelines. I readied tape recorders to record narrative. I selected five students' products to study. Permission to conduct the study was granted by their parents. Files were created in which I could store the students' art work and writing.

In September of 1986 I began recording my students' talk, writing observations, and collecting their writing and artwork. Through the process I thought I would gain insights into some of my students' oral narrative strategies, thought processes, interests, and ways of making sense of the world. Instead, I ended up with a stack of audio-cassettes, filled manilla folders, a notebook of observations jotted down in spare moments, some transcriptions, and a myriad of questions about the entire process. I realized how much I didn't know, not only about what constituted oral narrative, but also about how to create an environment in a middle school classroom in which oral narratives could be collected. In addition, once they were collected, how should I transcribe them?
How many would I need to "juxtapose?" Wasn’t I as the teacher-researcher affecting my students’ oral language? Wasn’t the tape recorder a factor influencing my students’ language?

As September became October my questions multiplied at a geometric rate. It was then I decided to put away my tape recorders and notebooks until I knew more about what I was attempting to do. The results of my learning from other researchers and from my own experiences as an ethnographer are the substance of that which follows. The final words of this introduction will be those of Zev Bar-Lev, who said to the Second Language Research Forum in Los Angeles in 1983, the essence of what I have discovered thus far:

Preliminarily, on this methodological question, let me note that even in a well-developed field like syntax, all we ever achieve is hypotheses; in a squishy field like discourse, where even the nature of the data is so much more difficult to define, it is not a trivial achievement to find a research model that works, even in a limited way (1986, 232).

B. Focus of This Dissertation

The focus of this dissertation is middle school students’ oral narrative. By oral narrative I mean that spoken language which takes place in a social interaction (Richards 1978, 16) in which one intent of the speaker is to interpret or make sense of the present by bringing knowledge of the past into the present (Genette 1980, 236). It is event driven and may tell about one event or a series of events (30). It must contain or reflect personal meaning (Cazden, Hymes 1978, 30). This dissertation addresses the following questions about middle school students’ oral narratives:

1) How prevalent is student oral narrative production in the course of events in various middle school settings?

2) What contexts support the students’ use of oral narratives? discourage it?

I began my research with certain assumptions which were based on my study of the literature on oral narrative, as well as on my experiences as a child, parent, teacher, and student. One of my assumptions was that students and teachers benefit from the nurturing
of narrative in their classrooms. Students using oral narrative gain an important and powerful bearer of information (G. Bennett 1986, 431), a cognitive resource (Rosen 1982, 13), a persuasive tool (Scollon, Scollon 1981, 5-6), and a way to interact socially (Richards 1978, 16; Blakey 1988). In addition, their oral narrative can be a means to cope with the present (Santino 1988, 217) and a source of pleasure (Applebee 1978, 31-35).

By encouraging the production of oral narrative by their students, teachers can gain a fertile data base from which to learn about their students’ cognitive and linguistic skills (Klecan-Aker 1985, 3; Applebee 1978; Stenning, Mitchell 1985). They can get a view of their students’ "theory of the world in their heads" (Smith 1982, 98) and can, thereby, better support their students’ development as a learner (Applebee, 1978; Richards 1978, 142-143). By using this multi-faceted window through which to observe their students, teachers can also catch glimpses of what their students hold as meaningful (A. Bennett 1983, 71; Cazden, Hymes 1978, 30). With insights which they have thereby gained, teachers can create classrooms that are more personal -- ones in which students are active and involved (Cazden, Hymes 22; Blakey 1988, 56).

A second assumption of mine was that this product of children -- oral narrative -- is worthy of study. The literature on oral narrative suggests that we secondary teachers often create a language environment in our classrooms which restricts the growth of our students’ language repertoire and discriminates against those for whom oral narrative is central to their communicative style (Barnes 1971, 25; Tattershall, Creaghead 1985, 47; Scollon, Scollon 1981, 6). It is our responsibility as educators to respect and listen to our students’ oral language, including their narratives (A. Bennett 1983, 53-74; Stubbs 1983, 124-128). We need to make certain that our students find a broad range of meaningful language activities in the classroom in which they can participate successfully (Barnes 1971, 64; Nicholson 1984, 436-451; Richards 1978, 133). We need to create classrooms in which our students feel free to try out more ways to use language to learn (Cazden,
Hymes 1978, 21-23; Staton, Shuy, Kreeft 1982; Barnes 1971, 61). To do this effectively, we need not only to value our students’ language, we need to study it (Iglesias 1985; Lindfors 1987, 385-386; Stubbs 1983).

I also assumed that an ethnographic study of this topic would result in my finding out more about this human behavior -- oral narrative -- in a school setting. This assumption was based on my experience of having learned more about children’s language use in school settings through the reading of the ethnographic studies of others and by doing short-term qualitative research projects in my own classroom. When reading Lucy Calkin’s *Lessons from a Child*, for example, I learned what writing can mean to a student, to a person. Through the author’s thick descriptions of classroom events, I was able to enter into her world and watch individual children developing as writers. Marilyn Cochran-Smith’s *The Making of a Reader* showed me children becoming readers during one school year in a private, cooperative nursery school. When focusing her attention on storyreading time, for instance, her descriptions of the contexts of the language events and her transcriptions of them permitted me to see and hear for myself how adults were socializing children into particular patterns of literacy.

One short-term qualitative research project which I carried out in my own sixth-grade classroom was a replication and extension of a study that was described by Adrian Bennett in "Discourses of Power, the Dialectics of Understanding, the Power of Literacy." By using Mr. Bennett’s method of studying oral narrative, I learned how my students were relating to me -- as an equal or as someone to perform for. I gained a better understanding of what strategies they were relying on to build their texts in both written and oral storytelling. In addition, I noticed subtleties in their use of language which I had never noticed before. Perhaps most important was my seeing each student as an individual with particular abilities in building an oral narrative.
I began my study in several middle school classrooms rather than just one. It was my assumption that the teachers in those classrooms would represent a variety of teaching styles which would yield different oral narrative production by their students. That is, I expected that different teachers would place different as well as similar communicative demands on their students. Iglesias, in his study of two bilingual kindergarten classes, found this to be true (1985, 84-93). He explained that each classroom is a minicommunity controlled by the teacher whose goal is to teach children particular skills in a short period of time. To accomplish that goal, the teacher determines the activities or tasks which need to be done and the rules for participating in these activities. These rules include discourse rules (84-85).

Another assumption that I had was that different children rely to different degrees on specific strategies for building an oral narrative. Deborah Tannen (1982) and Harold Rosen (1982) have each constructed continuums on which a researcher can indicate where a particular speaker’s narrative lies in terms of the denoted strategies. Because no speaker is single-styled (Labov 1975, 19), I would expect speakers to shift strategies according to the context of the language event and his/her repertoire of available strategies.

Once I had made explicit the topic of my study, the questions that I would explore, and my assumptions underlying the study, it was important that I begin my field work by attempting to suspend these preconceived ideas so that they would not interfere with my describing the phenomenon under study (Goetz, Lecompte 1984, 9).

C. Background of the Problem

In November of 1989, I conducted a workshop for teachers in which we explored ways to develop students' storytelling abilities. At the end of this participatory workshop in which the participants told stories from their past to each other, I asked that each person write a brief evaluation of the workshop. On one card was written the following:
"I really enjoyed the storytelling workshop. It helped me to see the importance of storytelling with my own children and how I do some storytelling without even knowing it. Until now I thought that I wasn’t a storyteller but I am in my own ways."

Reading that statement brought to mind a conversation that I had had with my son the prior year. He was a senior undergraduate student of French when he called my attention to an essay that he had just read by Montaigne of the sixteenth century. Knowing my interest in oral narrative, my son thought that I would want to know what he had discovered. Montaigne, the father of the essay, had confessed in "On Presumption" that the best story in the world, when it was in his hands, became dry and tarnished. He stated that he could only speak intentionally. This was a handicap in his era, my son went on to explain, because the princes liked stories that tickled the ears, rather than Montaigne’s form of discourse.

The discourse which the princes preferred in Montaigne’s day was that which was grounded in the oral traditions of rhetoric: formulas, epithets, proverbs, analogy, dramatization through direct quotations and open-ended thinking (A. Bennett 1983, 55). Montaigne, in his discourse, on the other hand, deemphasized these oral traditions. He chose to speak intentionally -- not in an ongoing oral dialogue with others. He preferred a form of impersonal, expository discourse which is often referred to as the essayist model of discourse (55-56).

Today, as evidenced in the comment of the teacher attending my workshop and in research findings (Bennett 1983, Cazden, Hymes 1978, Duncan 1988), it is the form of discourse of writers like Montaigne that now is the discourse of power in our and other societies of the Western world (A. Bennett 1983). The teacher who wrote to me did not see herself as a person with stories to relate in ongoing dialogue with others -- even her own children. She, also, did not recognize the important functions of oral narratives until
she built narratives with others (Mandelbaum 1988, 997A) in the storytelling workshop. Therefore, she would not have been likely to provide a classroom environment which nurtured oral narrative production in 1989.

It was twenty-three years prior to this storytelling workshop that a group of classroom teachers in an industrial area of England designed a language study research project to find out why British, first-year secondary students began the sixth year of their schooling eager to talk about their personal experiences in classroom discussions but then stopped doing so within the first few weeks in their new secondary school environment (Barnes 1971, 25). The results of this study, along with a second study done in 1967 by Barnes and a second group of classroom teachers, showed that there were few opportunities for the students to bring their own experiences into classroom discussions (24). These studies are presented in greater detail in Chapter II.

Seven years after this research led by Barnes, Courtney Cazden heard a Tlingit female graduate student from a small village in Alaska describe how alienated she felt when her Harvard professors would acknowledge a student’s contribution that was based on what some authority said, expand upon it, and incorporate it into the next portion of the class presentation but would not do the same with a student’s personal experience narrative (Cazden, Hymes 1978, 23). This experience is elaborated on further in Chapter II.

In 1987 Donna Janet Duncan reported in her dissertation study of the language functions used by four middle-grade students that the middle graders used the informative function more frequently than a given group of first graders studied by Pinnell in 1975. The middle graders used imaginative and personal language less frequently than those same first graders (1988, 2006A).

The emphasis on the essayist model of discourse in classrooms appears to leave little room for students’ oral narrative to be heard. However, if a student does produce a narrative text, it is to be “literate.” That is, it is to have those stylistic elements valued in
the essayist tradition (Scollon and Scollon 1981, 48). Adrian Bennett showed in "Discourses of Power, the Dialectics of Understanding, the Power of Literacy," how this preeminence of the essayist tradition in our society could result in a discriminatory situation for those whose language use is rooted in the oral tradition.

When Adrian Bennett was working as a researcher on a language proficiency assessment project in 1980 in Tucson, Arizona, he listened to and analyzed an audiotaped narrative of an eleven-year-old Mexican-American boy Carlos. Carlos, when telling a story to accompany the pictures of a wordless book, produced a text in which Adrian Bennett found "inaccuracy, inconsistency, misrepresentation, grammatical mistakes, incompleteness of detail, and confusion..." (66). Judged according to the essayist model of discourse, Carlos' text showed a lack of language proficiency.

Instead of labelling Carlos as language deficient, Adrian Bennett analyzed Carlos' text in terms of strategies grounded in an oral tradition. Bennett found that Carlos, through his oral performance, had created a text which permitted the listener "to experience a created world which is replete with implication, a world whose boundaries are undetermined, a world where lines of force, as it were, extend beyond our horizons and yet confront us with the familiar" (71-72). This study is described in greater detail in Chapter II.

Sarah Ann Michaels showed in her descriptive analysis of representative samples of "sharing time" in a multi-ethnic first-grade classroom how a discriminatory situation does result for those children whose narrative discourse style does not match the literate one of the teacher. She found that children who did not share this "literate" style, had difficulty collaborating with the teacher during this somewhat formal discourse activity. There were often asynchronous exchanges between student and teacher and misinterpretation of intent. "Over time, this kind of disharmonious interaction may adversely affect school performance and evaluation" (Michaels 1983, 2581A).
Even when oral narratives are brought into classrooms through various folklore programs throughout the United States, Dr. Bhekokwakhe Langa found that they "exhibit a highly literary and text-oriented bias" (1985, 3062A). Dr. Langa conducted an experiment using three teachers and seventy-one elementary and junior high school students. The results showed that folklore scripts do not provide sufficient information about the social context and performance of the oral narratives on which the scripts are based.

The "highly literary and text-oriented bias" which Dr. Langa observed in folklore programs reflects a concept of literacy in our society, according to Angelane B. Daniell, that is based on the Great Leap theory. In "Ong's Great Leap: The Politics of Literacy and Orality," Daniell describes the theory as one supported by Walter J. Ong, S.J. (1987, 3417A). Ong is considered a prominent rhetorical theorist of the twentieth century (Palmeri, 1987). Daniell states that this theory claims that literacy itself actually causes a "great leap" in the cognition of individuals and cultures. Its central assertion, in her opinion, is that literacy actually causes the development of abstract thought (3417A). Daniell believes this theory has dangerous ramifications in the classroom. She, therefore, proposes an alternative "conversational" model of literacy which is based on the notion of discourse communities. This alternative, she believes, would result in a more humane teaching. It would not ignore social, economic, and political constraints on both literacy and cognition (3417A).

The deemphasis of oral narrative in classrooms has been described by Harold Rosen. He views oral narrative as a cognitive resource (1982, 10).

This is the axiomatic element of narrative: it is the outcome of a mental process which enables us to excise from our experience a meaningful sequence, to place it within boundaries, to set around it the frontiers of the story, to make it resonate in the contrived silences with which we may precede it and end it. But to perceive it and invent the story is not enough. It must be verbalized; it must be told. There must be a telling which delivers it as a narrative discourse" (10-11).
Rosen proposes that oral narrative should be allowed to have "its honourable place" in the classroom, along with other forms of language (18). He asks educators to re-examine their practices to make certain this is happening. He also provides them with an approach for studying oral narrative by using a grid of style elements that illuminates the link between narrative and learning (15).

Rosen is not alone in trying to stimulate the study of oral narrative with implications for educational practice. Dell Hymes recommends that there be studies of the treatment of narrative experience in present educational practice to explore the possibility of a form of inequality of opportunity in our society -- the right to use narrative (1978, 21). He views the dominant culture of the United States as dichotomizing form and function of language use and treating one side of the dichotomy as superior and the other side as inferior. Language that is standard, written, abstract, context-independent, and technical/formal is seen as superior. Language that is non-standard, spoken, concrete, context-dependent, and narrative is cognitively inferior (24-26). If narrative is an inescapable mode of thought, as Hymes argues, and teachers rule out its use by students as a valid means of providing evidence, then teachers need to covertly rely on narrative forms of understanding in their classrooms (27).

Researchers who have chosen to study discourse in general and oral narrative in particular have moved from looking at language as an intrapersonal event to viewing it as an interpersonal one. Before the mid-seventies, language was studied out of context. For example, William Labov in 1969 studied the Black English dialect of the United States primarily by looking at the syntax of the microstructures of text. He found, through using this form of analysis, that a student speaking the Black English dialect might be at a disadvantage in school, not because his language was deficient but because it was different (Stubbs 1983, 44).
Around the mid-seventies, researchers moved towards the study of the communicative functions of language. They analyzed utterances or texts in their nonlinguistic contexts as well as in their linguistic contexts (Westby 1984, 103). Classroom research developed quickly (Stubbs 1983, 91) in the form of interaction analysis studies (Payne 1971). Such studies focused on the roles of the producers and receivers of classroom language and used systematic observation techniques such as the Flanders Interaction Analysis Techniques (Payne 1971, 82-83). According to Michael Stubbs, such techniques have very important shortcomings. One is that the classroom talk is coded by the observer on the spot so that the actual language of the students and teacher is lost forever. A second drawback of using such an approach is that it deals only with what can be directly observed and easily quantified (1983, 92).

Some researchers who studied the communicative functions of language in linguistic and nonlinguistic contexts tried to avoid these shortcomings. They did so by focusing on linguistic contexts. They tried to find a methodology that would get at the personal dimension of a text such as a student’s oral narrative. A.L. Becker’s translating process model (1988, 31) and Idrenne Lim-Alparaque’s phenomenological finding of themes (Blakey 1988, 51) are two such methods.

Other researchers examining the communicative functions of language primarily in its linguistic contexts developed models to discover producer strategies for building texts. Bernstein, for example, set up a dichotomy coding system to label speaker strategies (Richards 1978, 37). However, sociolinguists do not support his and like systems because they are based on the assumption that speakers are single styled (Labov 1975, 19). Stubbs believes, however, that Bernstein may have inadvertently shown in his studies that different speakers reflect different preferred modes of discourse and different value systems which result in their making different choices about what to elaborate and make explicit. This, Stubbs thinks, would be very important to demonstrate in the field of education (1983, 62).
Uncovering the structure of a narrator’s text through analyzing its macrostructures while continuing to view these structures as part of a communicative event has been done with the help of story grammars. Sleight analyzed the narrative of adolescents in this way (1987, 169) while Komenaka used this methodology to understand better how speakers structure their narratives in a second language (1988, 178).

Some researchers have looked at the communicative function of language by examining how meaning coheres within a text and how these microstructures relate to each other and to larger contexts. DeStefano and Kantor studied the dialogue of characters in children’s storybooks and basal readers, as well as of mothers and children of three ethnolinguistic groups through this form of analysis (1988, 105). Their findings clarified what makes basal dialogue different from the oral language patterns and communicative functions of the children to whom the basals are given (118-119).

In order to study more effectively the communicative functions of language in linguistic and nonlinguistic contexts, some researchers have chosen to enter the classroom in the role of an ethnographer -- the very same role that I chose for myself in this dissertation study. By so doing, a problem was avoided which Bloome and Knott have observed in language studies: glossing over important differences in communicative contexts (Bloome, Knott 1985, 63).

D. Rationale for Methodology

I chose to enter my research site as an ethnographer and to use qualitative methodology to learn about the oral narrative of middle school students for several reasons. First, the topic itself demanded this research approach. Because oral narrative, like all oral language, is so context dependent (Kantor, Kirby, Goetz 1981, 299), only by using the tools of an ethnographer could I begin to understand this language behavior. I needed to have a means to examine what people were doing to each other with their
narratives. I needed to be able to see how the oral narrative helped to define the relations among the students and adults in order to gain a better understanding of oral narrative in the classroom (McDermott 1975, 168).

Second, as an ethnographic researcher I was able to recognize that I was part of the classroom communities that I was studying. I would have an effect on the social phenomena that I was studying (Labov 1972, 62). However, instead of treating this reality simply as a source of bias, I could gain information from how those whom I was studying responded to my presence (Hammersley, Atkinson 1983, 15).

Third, ethnography permitted me to begin my study of a complex phenomenon -- oral language -- with articulated assumptions but without a hypothesis that I wanted to prove valid. If ethnography had not been available, I would not have attempted to enter this "squishy field" of discourse study where even defining what I was studying -- oral narrative -- was difficult (Bar-lev 1986, 232). However, it was available and I was grounded in its methodology through my reading in the literature, my post-graduate course work, and a mini-pilot study I conducted in my classroom. Therefore, I was confident as an ethnographer that describing the oral narratives of middle school students in context would result in my testing my preconceptions, discarding misconceptions, formulating new hypotheses, testing them, and thereby developing theory while being in extended contact with the students in their classroom setting (Hammersley, Atkinson 1983, 23). I appreciated being able to work within a "context of discovery" (21).

Finally, ethnography did not require that I do extensive pre-fieldwork design. To do such would have been inefficient. After I was in the field, I found that my strategy for learning about my topic needed to change given the circumstances of the classroom communities of which I became a member. As a matter of fact, even the direction of my research might have needed to change as I better understood the culture of those communities and had seen oral narratives from the members' point of view (24).
E. Data Analysis

Analysis and data collection proceeded simultaneously during my field work. I began by discovering which questions I needed to ask as I formed initial impressions during my fieldwork. These questions influenced how I went about collecting data during my visits to the middle school. After I collected data, I read and reread the data. Over time, I developed a clearer understanding of middle school students’ oral narrative so that I could progressively focus my research and thereby narrow its scope. Eventually, I gradually shifted from concern with describing social events and processes to developing and testing explanations (Hammersley, Atkinson 1983, 175).

As I read and reread my data, I looked for interesting patterns, surprises, relationships to previous theory, and inconsistencies. Some of these I had already noted in my field notes. These concepts suggested next steps for me to take as an observer. I began to develop these concepts into a theoretical scheme by finding links between the old concepts and adding new ones. Through a process of systematic sifting and comparison of the data, the emerging theory became clearer. However, I did not limit myself to a single theoretical framework within which to analyze data. There were advantages to "approaching the data with multiple perspectives and hypotheses in mind" (181). This form of triangulation supported my looking for alternative explanations and thereby better comprehending my data (181).

F. Significance of This Study

The research project, while developed on a foundation of prior studies (Kuhn 1984; David 1986; Phillips 1988; Susan 1988), differs from those and other cited studies in several important ways. For example, there have been ethnographic studies of various kinds of talk in the classroom (Stoll 1983, 3755-A), including narrative (Schuman 1986), but my working definition of narrative was broader and less culture bound than the one that they utilized.
In addition, while I focused my collection of oral discourse to four, middle school classrooms, I was not limiting my study to oral narrative or talk produced in reading groups (Puro, Bloome 1987), writing groups (David 1986, 2061-A), or teacherless groups (Phillips 1988, 12A-13A). Collecting data while children are narrating in a broad range of social contexts has been relatively neglected by researchers. There are formidable methodological difficulties posed by collecting discourse produced during the course of a school day. Making comparisons among narratives and among narrators is very difficult, for instance (Stenning, Mitchell 1985, 262). In addition, the amount of material that needs processing can become overwhelming. Researchers have, therefore, tried various ways to control narrative production even though it is the verbal behavior they have set out to learn more about.

The questions that I was setting out to explore did not arise from my wanting to test a particular model of narrative structure when analyzing my data (G. Bennett 1986) or to place children on a continuum of narrative competency based on their ability to produce a particular narrative structure (Klecan-Aker 1985). My questions arose from my curiosity about the place of students’ oral narratives in middle school classrooms. For these reasons, this study should be of interest to other researchers in the field.

Moreover, this project has implications for educators. For instance, my presence at the research site for the stated purpose of learning about the oral language of middle school students focused the attention of the participants upon the language events in which they participated. The teachers involved in the project gained another perspective from which to view the discourse within their classrooms. They and the larger school community saw that students’ language is valuable -- that it had been deemed worthy of study.

Also, by producing a dissertation which includes thick descriptions of the oral narrative language events of middle school students, I am giving my readers the opportunity to experience for themselves those events and to determine if more needs to
be done to nurture narrative in their educational institutions and how it might be accomplished. It is my hope that fewer children will move through our classrooms to become adults who do not recognize that telling about their past experiences in the present is a significant use of language -- that they are all storytellers in their own way.

G. Delimitations of This Research Design

The delimitations of research using ethnographic methodology included the challenges of processing vast amounts of data and of being sensitive to people, being flexible socially, having excellent organizational skills, and having curiosity to pursue a topic so that a theory might be found (Goetz, Lecompte 1984, 9). During my course work at the University of Massachusetts, I applied ethnographic methodology to explore questions related to middle school students’ oral narrative so that I knew that I had strategies for meeting these inevitable challenges.

Comparability and translatability are factors that contribute to effective generalization in any study. However, these factors are crucial to the legitimacy of ethnographic research (Goetz, Lecompte 1984, 9). Therefore, to the extent possible, I used standard terminology and analytic models. I delineated the characteristics of each group that I studied so that there was a basis of comparison with other like and unlike groups. In addition, I described research methods and analytic categories that I used, as well as the characteristics of the phenomena that I observed, so that comparisons could be made.

The main limitation of this specific study was my being on the research site for the second half of the school year. I missed the beginning context of the behaviors that I observed. Through talking with people throughout the institution in informal situations, interviews with key informants, and detailed descriptions of current contexts, I gained an understanding of what came before my first site visit.
Another limitation of my research design was the very limited out-of-school data that I had available to me. Because language is social behavior that is influenced by the norms of the social groups to which an individual belongs, as well as by the factors within each context in which it is produced, I needed to have as much information regarding each participant’s group membership as possible. On the other hand, Deborah Tannen contends that people use language strategies in the school which researchers like MacLure and French associate only with the home and family in groups (1982, 3).

Also, because I had been a teacher at the research site for seven years, am acquainted with the adults with whom I collaborated, and taught some of the students during the past school year, my objectivity could be questioned. However, because I was using ethnographic methodology which permitted me to examine language in context, that very familiarity with participants and membership in the community was an asset. According to Labov, it is essential (1972, 62). Because I was not in the school the first half of the year, I also was able to bring a degree of openness to the research site -- that helped me maintain the necessary tension between being an insider and an outsider (Hammersley, Atkinson 1983, 100).

I regret that the student population which I have targeted for this study was not more culturally diverse. Because of this limitation, throughout my research when I was selecting students from within the larger population of fifty-nine to study, I chose to maximize diversity along those factors which were represented. For instance, I was beginning my observations in the core group communities which were heterogeneous. What that heterogeneity meant became clearer to me as I collected demographic information from the participants.

**H. How My Dissertation Unfolds**

Chapter I of my dissertation began with a statement of the problem that I addressed through my research. I then described the background of that problem, the rationale for my methodology and analysis and then stated the purpose and significance of my study.
In Chapter II, a review of the literature addresses the broad topic of oral narrative. Specifically, I examined other researchers' work regarding the following: the attributes of oral narrative (Cazden, Tannen, Scollon and Scollon); oral narrative and the classroom (Bloome, A. Bennett, Stubbs); cultural differences of narratives (Labov, Iglesias, Komenaka); the value of narrative to the speaker (G. Bennett, Hymes, Michaels); and oral narrative as a window for an observer (Applebee, Klecan-Aker, Rosen).

In Chapter III, I describe the design of my study. I explain ethnographic methodology and my reasons for handling the research problem by relying on that methodology. The research site(s) and participants are described in detail as are the data collection procedures enumerated in section 3.2 of this proposal. Finally, I address the delimitations of the study.

Chapter IV contains the presentation of the data followed by analysis.

In Chapter V, I state my conclusions, implications for academic instruction, and recommendations for further research.
A. Introduction

In the autumn of 1986 I became a member of a committee of science teachers who were responsible for evaluating the elementary science program of the Greenfield Public Schools. As I worked on this committee through September and October, I realized that we were ignoring one segment of our school community in our evaluation plans. We had developed tools for collecting data from administrators, teachers, and parents; however, no one had suggested we find out what our students thought about their science classes.

"What about our students? Shouldn’t we be asking them what they think about our science program?" I asked the committee when I realized what we had done. Only a photograph taken at that moment could fully convey how startled my colleagues were. After much stammering and many nervous smiles, one by one, they acknowledged that of course we should be getting information from our students. "But how?" they asked. I volunteered to bring to our next meeting information about various approaches which we might use. I knew about resources I could draw upon because of my doctoral studies at the University of Massachusetts.

For instance, I had recently read William Labov's article "Academic Ignorance and Black Intelligence" and remembered some strategies he had suggested regarding approaches to interviewing children and young adults. In addition, I found myself thinking about the in-depth interviews I had conducted the prior semester to learn about what teaching English meant to middle school teachers. When the science committee reconvened, I was ready to present not only various approaches for gathering data but also a specific recommendation with my rationale. The committee enthusiastically accepted my recommendation. They were excited by the prospect of finding out what students thought about science by listening to them talk.
To collect the students' ideas about science, the committee followed this course of action. First, we asked science teachers to volunteer to facilitate student discussion groups. Then we chose teachers from the pool of volunteers in a manner that would result in our having data from each grade level in each neighborhood school. After a brief training session, each teacher volunteer asked one of his/her average science students to be a member of a discussion group which was to participate in a survey taking place in the elementary schools. Then the teacher asked the student to choose three other students from the same grade level to be members of the discussion group. The students s/he chose were to be from other science sections and as diverse as possible.

Each teacher then met with his/her group of students to arrange a convenient meeting time of thirty minutes. They also decided upon a meeting place where they were not likely to be disturbed, since the discussion was going to be tape recorded. Next, each teacher contacted the parents of his/her involved students, stated what they were going to be doing just as s/he had stated it to the students, and told what would be done with the taped material. Then each teacher sent the parents permission slips that needed to be signed and returned before their children could participate in the survey.

When the discussion group met, the teacher-facilitator established an informal atmosphere. S/he brought refreshments for the group. While s/he was setting them out, s/he encouraged the students to have fun talking into the tape recorder to make certain the equipment was working. Then s/he restated their purpose for being together and began the discussion with the words, "Now let's talk about science...Who would like to start?" The teacher then worked to keep the discussion going and on the topic of science in general. Each facilitator took care not to lead the discussion into any specific areas of science such as science in the classroom. When the discussion slowed, the teacher used his/her expertise to encourage the students to tell more or give examples to clarify their ideas for others. At the end of the session, the teacher sent his/her audiotape and anecdotal description of the session to me.
The taped discussions were a reservoir of valuable data for our science committee and ultimately for our entire school community. However, it is the response of the teacher-facilitators on which I want to focus at this time. They contacted me directly or indirectly to tell me the entire process was one of the most exhilarating experiences of their teaching careers. They had never before taken a half hour to listen to their students in this way. The process had expanded and enriched their view of the participating students. They had also learned through their students’ talk, rich in narratives, that science to them was squishing through the marshes with their parents on the weekend. Science was a summer occurrence in Florida when the rabbits came out of the bushes near the swamp. Science was a father teaching his son bird calls.

My experience as part of the science evaluation committee, along with other experiences I had had as a teacher, parent, counselor, and student, confirmed my belief that schools should make more room for the oral narrative of their students. Where narrative was respected and encouraged, I had seen both children and teachers benefit. In order to understand more fully why this was so, I decided to explore the topic of children’s oral narrative. After beginning my exploration in the library, I discovered that few researchers have focused on this product of a child, particularly of the pre-adolescent. This finding at first surprised me, but then I remembered how the science evaluation committee of Greenfield teachers had overlooked their student’s talk as an important resource. That memory and others like it stimulated me to dig deeper to uncover validation of my hypothesis that children’s oral narrative is a valuable product worthy of study. I found such support in the research I describe herein.

I have organized the presentation of that which I discovered so that initially you have my definition of oral narrative -- the meaning I ascribe to that key phrase throughout. In Section 3, I have included school practices that are related to students’ and teachers’ having very limited access to oral narrative in their classrooms. This condition can result in an inequitable learning environment for children. Section 4 clarifies why...
teachers’ awareness of and respect for the narrative structures prevalent in other cultures is essential if their students from nondominant cultures are to have opportunities to learn that are equal to those of children from the dominant culture. Section 5 focuses on some of the important jobs speakers can get done when they are able to use oral narrative. In Section 6 are insights that researchers have gained about children through using the window of their oral narrative. Teachers, who encourage oral narrative production by their students, are also in a position to gain those perspectives on their students. Section 7 highlights some of the pedagogical practices that teachers use when they value and encourage their students’ oral language development in general. Because oral narrative is often embedded in other forms of talk, these practices necessarily nurture oral narrative in the classroom.

B. A Definition of Oral Narrative

Oral narrative is spoken language that takes place in a social interaction (Richards 1978, 16) in which one intent of the speaker is to interpret or make sense of the present by bringing knowledge of the past into the present (Genette 1980, 236). It is event driven. The narrative may tell about one event or a series of events (30). It must contain or reflect personal meaning (Cazden, Hymes 1978, 30). The personal meaning may emerge over time and a series of narratives. It is preferable that the listener be non-judgmental (Rosen 1986, 230) and of equal status with the speaker (Stubbs 1976, 151). The more experience the speaker and listener have with each other, the more likely it is oral narrative will occur. Oral narrative can often be found embedded in other forms of discourse (Rosen 1986, 230).

As speaker and listener interact, the norms of the social groups to which they belong influence them. Michele Foster underscores the importance of these norms through her study of one black teacher’s use of culturally appropriate ways of speaking in an urban community college class. The Afro-American teacher, Ms. Morris, told
Ms. Foster that she tried to make economics relevant and exciting to her thirty-three students, twenty-four of whom were also Afro-American. Ms. Morris believed that "if black folks ain't talking and excited and involved, they ain't learning a thing" (1989, 24).

To achieve her goals, Ms. Morris often used black preachers' sermonic style of talking when conducting her class. Transcripts of class sessions elucidated the functions of her speech when she shifted to this style as well as when her talk became oral narrative. Ms. Morris, for example, was most likely to use the black sermonic style when she was trying to interpret and make relevant a concept from a textbook or a formal lecture. Certain devices marked this style. She lengthened vowel sounds to call attention to her speech, used alliteration, speeded up phrasing, and patterned repetition for special effect (17-18). Her students participated appropriately with laughter, spontaneous contributions, interjecting comments into ongoing talk, and responding in unison (13).

When Ms. Morris got her students involved in this stylized but familiar Afro-American speech event, they did learn. For example, although eighteen out of twenty-five students failed an exam that Ms. Morris gave them, they did exceptionally well on those test items which she reviewed through the familiar sermonic style (19). At those times in her review for the exam, she had created an identification with an indigenous black cultural norm. Learning took place as a social activity -- by talking collectively about words in a book or from a lecture. This norm is reflected in the words of one of her students: "I like the way she draws from our real-life experiences to explain the textbook. I can learn from her presentation, manners, and ways. I don't learn from books, I learn from people" (25).

Analysis of the transcripts of Ms. Morris' classroom language revealed that her speech broke into oral narrative when her intent was to help her students understand the present academic content by telling about one or more past event or action (Foster 1989, 18). The primary function of her speech at these times was not to persuade, question, or entertain but rather to explain (Stenning, Mitchell 1985, 262).
Because Ms. Morris, like any narrator, builds an oral narrative on a base of "meaningful sequences," the listener hears this significance throughout the telling (A. Bennett 1983, 71). Oral narrative must contain or reflect the speaker's personal meanings because it contains or reflects the choices s/he has made out of a vast reservoir of past experiences.

Genette and others call the content of narratives, like that of Ms. Morris, "story" (Genette 1980, 27). Story or narrative content does not need to be interesting or fully developed. Genette posits that "I walk" is a minimal form of narrative because the clause contains an action or event. It is a story because there is a transformation. There has been a transition from an earlier state of departure to a resultant state of arrival (Genette 1988, 18-19). Further development of this story or narrative content would merely be an expansion of the verb "walk." He then states that the Odyssey can be viewed as an amplification of "Ulysses comes home to Ithaca" (Genette 1980, 30). Regardless of its length, the oral narrative has the quality of coherence (Klecan-Aker 1985, 3). However, the way the elements adhere one to another may not be readily apparent across cultures (Scollon, Scollon 1981, Labov 1975).

How "I walk" can be oral narrative that contains or reflects personal meanings also may not be readily apparent. Let me give an example from my own past which shows "I walk" functioning in this manner. When our three children were in the early grades of elementary school, they used to complain about the long waits for the school bus. My husband Jim and I would hear their complaints many evenings at the dinner table. Jim would then change his speech from requests about how school went or to pass the platter of chicken to telling about his walking eight long city blocks to his elementary school and two miles to his high school through wind, rain, hail, snow, and blazing heat. Over time and a long series of these narratives, the children and I heard his personal meanings in his response of "I walk" to our complaints about getting from here to there.
Context factors that encourage the production of oral narrative are the listener's being non-judgmental and of equal status with the speaker. A non-judgmental context is important for a speaker to produce oral narrative because of the nature of narrating. The content of narrative "is the outcome of a mental process which enables (speakers) to excise from (their) experience a meaningful sequence..." (Rosen 1982, 10-11). The speaker goes through this process not in isolation but in the presence of others. It is important to note that the speaker's audience contributes to this process through their verbal and nonverbal responses indicating confusion or understanding. The speaker monitors these responses and then adjusts the narrative so the audience grasps its meaning (Shuy 1982, 8). Speaker and audience work together to understand the speaker's past experience through the oral narrative. This collaboration of speaker and audience is difficult to achieve if the context of the telling is such that the listener is judging the speaker.

Egalitarianism also supports the production of oral narrative. In the previously cited study of the classroom speech of the Afro-American teacher Ms. Morris, researcher Michele Foster observed this factor's impact. When the teacher was most successful in moving from formal English to a more familiar black style of speaking, she was able to lessen the social distance between her and her students (Foster 1989, 25). At these instances, her personal knowledge entered the classroom through oral narratives (18).

The more experience a speaker and listener have with each other the more likely oral narrative will happen. As they share more and more of the same world of experience, they are better able to see "a bit of experience becoming an event to be told" (Cazden, Hymes 1978, 31). Speaker and listener over time become communication partners, so to speak. Collectors of oral narrative work to establish just such a relationship with their speakers (Labov 1975; Hymes 1978; Santino 1988).
When a speaker does choose to bring the past into the present through oral narrative, s/he often does it by fitting it into ongoing talk (Rosen 1986, 230; Komenaka 1988, 178). For example, Ms. Morris, during her lectures to her students about economics, moved from the frozen word of text or lecture into an oral narrative and then onto questions about a concept (Foster 1989, 11). She utilized stylistic devices such as vowel elongation to distinguish the oral narrative from her other classroom discourse (17). We often hear oral narrative within other forms of discourse because it is "embodied in the rhythm of continuing life and observation and the reflection of life" (Cazden, Hymes 1978, 32).

In summary, oral narrative is one form of social behavior speakers choose in order to make sense of a present situation by telling about events or actions from their past. Speakers are likely to use a narrative way of clarifying meaning when they are with an audience of their peers whom they perceive to be nonjudgmental listeners. Oral narrative is language which contains or reflects personal meanings. It meets the speaker’s need to transform experiences of living, to use the power of imagining the past in the present.

C. Oral Narrative and the Classroom

Students who produce oral narratives in the classroom provide a multi-faceted window through which their teachers may be able to see what those students consider significant. Studies show, however, that secondary educators not only ignore this means of observing students but through their practices also discourage the production of oral narrative by their students (Barnes 1971, Bennett 1983).

One such study involves a group of classroom teachers in an industrial area of England in 1966 who designed a language study research project to find out why British, first-year secondary students began the sixth year of their schooling eager to talk about their personal experiences in classroom discussions but then stopped doing so within the first few weeks in their new, secondary school environment (Barnes 1971, 25). The research project’s setting was in seven classrooms of first year, eleven-year-old.
secondary students during the sixth week of the 1966 school year (15). They were in the process of making the transition from being primary school students to being secondary students. The classrooms studied were in college-preparatory grammar schools, in secondary-modern schools which provide a general education, and in comprehensive schools which provide a more specialized or technical training.

Assuming that teachers’ talk had to be the determining factor, the researchers audiotaped, transcribed, and analyzed instructional lessons to clarify how teachers’ talk affects pupil participation in lessons and therefore their learning (16, 76). The results of this study, along with those of a second study done by Barnes and a second group of classroom teachers of five, secondary classrooms in 1967, showed that there were few opportunities for the students to bring their own experiences into classroom discussions. Even when the observed teachers used questions to stimulate students to talk, they hardly ever asked open-ended questions (24). (Barnes defined open-ended questions as those for which a teacher will accept either a wide range of answers or a limited range but in any order) (23).

Also, as might have been predicted, there were few, pupil-initiated responses. That is, there were only twenty instances in the twelve classrooms observed when a pupil of his/her own accord introduced a new issue either by a question or an unsolicited statement. Of these twenty instances, Barnes determined that only nine showed students actively engaged in learning (46).

These results of the Barnes studies did match his teacher-researchers’ original impressions — children who arrived at secondary schools ready to explore personal experience aloud stopped doing so within a few weeks (25). Barnes concluded that teachers saw their role as dispensers of ready-made material, whether facts or processes (24). Determining whether their students had received the information accurately was the factor which guided their use of language in the classroom.

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Earlier, in 1960, Griffin and Hannah also found teachers seeing their students primarily as receivers of language. Their study showed that while much of what goes on in school is verbal, "students spent from 50 to 90 per cent of their day listening, with high school students listening the most" (Tattershall, Creaghead 1985, 47). Although teachers in this study may have been narrating to willing students and thereby showing they value this form of language in the classroom, they were not providing equal time for students to choose to tell narratives.

More recently, Cazden and Hymes have stated that this lack of opportunity for the students’ active use of narrative places limits on their ability to exercise adequate means of expression in the academic and educational world. Cazden and Hymes have argued that this situation "may in fact constitute the basis for discrimination against some groups or individuals for whom narrative is a central component of communicative style" (Scollon, Scollon 1981, 6). The "some groups" to which Cazden and Hymes referred are Afro-Americans, working-class Americans, Tlingits of Alaska, and Native-Americans (Cazden, Hymes 1978, 22-32).

In "Discourse of Power, the Dialectics of Understanding, the Power of Literacy," Adrian Bennett described a study which illuminates this argument of Cazden and Hymes. In 1980 a committee of teachers, researchers, and administrators in Tucson, Arizona, conducted a pilot project to test the language proficiency of schoolchildren whose home language was reported to be other than English. One such child was an eleven-year-old Mexican-American boy whom Mr. Bennett called Carlos. Mary Kitagawa, a staff member of the Tucson Unified School District who had skills necessary to elicit narrative, took Carlos to a room outside his regular classroom (53). There Carlos played a board game with her and then was asked to describe the board game. After performing this task, Carlos was asked -- or asked himself -- to "read" a story based on the wordless picture book *Frog Goes to Dinner* by Mercer Mayer [1974]. Carlos' "reading" was audiotaped for later analysis (61).
Adrian Bennett analyzed the transcript of Carlos’ audiotaped "reading" to determine to what degree Carlos used traditional strategies of building an oral narrative and to what degree he used strategies common in constructing a written text for a picture book. Mr. Bennett’s criteria for traditional oral narrative strategies were: making the listener feel s/he is an equal, communicating spontaneity, giving each story character a distinctive voice and speaking style, evoking inferences, making the narrator a strong but unnamed presence, and opening up new worlds to the listener. His criteria for the traditional, so-called "literate" strategies to create a written narrative were: making the listener think s/he was being read to because the teller was using formulaic expressions like "once upon a time;" communicating the polished quality of a performance; being clear, precise, and explicit; giving the telling a definite beginning and end; and drawing inferences for the reader.

Analysis of Carlos’ "reading" resulted in the following findings:

Carlos’s virtuosity is certainly in the traditions of oral storytelling. His narrative persona is almost Homeric. It appears everywhere, like a chameleon, in the guise of the presented characters, bringing with it a sparkling array of variations in mood, attitude, and perspective. This narrator is certainly a fictionalized self, but, far from being anonymous in the way the author of the modern scientific essay is supposed to be, he appears as a rather mysterious but strong presence behind all that is presented (1983, 72).

Upon completion of the Tucson pilot project, Mr. Bennett wondered if Carlos would find his teachers doing anything "to promote Carlos’s already considerable skills in oral narrative performance" (73). Would they value "his invitation to a relationship of equality between himself and his adult listener, his creation of an open-ended narrative that invites appropriation and dialectical understanding, his power to perform a narrative self that is at once impersonal and uniquely determining?" (73)

David Bloome, in 1983, raised a question similar to Mr. Bennett’s. He studied what teachers expected their students to do with spoken language. (Bloome, Knott 1985, 67). If Carlos were a student in one of the middle-school classrooms Bloome described in his results, Adrian Bennett would have found that "text reproduction dominated
According to Bloome's definition of "text reproduction," a student like Carlos would be expected to use language to give an oral rendition of written texts, copy written texts, write what is dictated to him, and imitate that which is said to him. He would not be constructing his own narratives -- in writing or verbally. His own significant experiences would not be read about or listened to in these classrooms.

Practices like those of the teachers in Bloome's study are based on a belief about language that Jill Richards articulates in *Classroom Language: What Sort?.* Teachers, according to Richards, are to encourage students in most classroom activities to put aside their own everyday language style. In her opinion, a student's basic language style often lacks direction and explicitness and is therefore adequate only for informal conversations. In classrooms, pupils and teachers should mainly work for the development of a "simple, direct style of English" (1978, 65). It is a style, she states, which not only does not confuse the listener but also is most suitable for adaptation by students in a wide variety of contexts in our complex technical and bureaucratic society (65). Ms. Richards also believes that students, as they move through the grades, have increasing difficulty learning because primary and secondary teachers have not adequately helped them to develop a simple, direct style of English. Without this language base, she contends, students cannot develop the communicative repertoire that they need to actively participate in the increasingly complex technical language activities she has personally observed in science, mathematics, and geography classes (90).

In "Understanding Classroom Communication," Pamela Puro and David Bloome have described a classroom conversation in which a teacher was socializing her first-grade students into what Jill Richards would label as a "simple, direct style of English." While with an instructional reading group, the teacher asked one boy a question to help him understand the story which the group had just read. When he answered her question, he gave a factually correct answer. However, she did not accept his response
because it was in his own everyday language style. Instead, she modeled how he was to structure his answer. It was to be in a book-like sentence. When he changed his answer from "Go get a wagon," to "He asked Kevin to get the wagon," she told him the answer was "very good" (1987, 26). Her student's response now had the quality of explicitness so she could commend him on his producing the language style she wanted him to use in her classroom.

This "simple, direct style of English," which Richards promotes and Puro and Bloome reported students being socialized into, has the qualities of a written text like the one Adrian Bennett wrote for his wordless picture book. Although such a style of English is an important option of language use in our culture, it certainly cannot meet the needs of all speakers in all contexts. In addition, when teachers have such a judgmental view towards language use, they deprive their students of becoming more adept in selecting the best language option for a particular context.

Courtney Cazden has heard her students describe their feelings of alienation when their teachers discourage them from using oral narrative in the classroom. While teaching at Harvard Graduate School of Education, Ms. Cazden heard a Tlingit, female graduate student from a small village in Alaska describe how she felt when this means of expression was denied to her and her classmates. The woman said that if a student contributed an idea that was based on what some authority said, the professor would acknowledge the student's contribution, expand upon it, and incorporate it into the next portion of her presentation. However, when a student spoke out of personal experience, the ideas were not recognized. The professor might say, "Um-hm," and then proceed. It was "as if we hadn't been heard" (Cazden, Hymes 1978, 23).

To avoid such alienation, two black students from Ms. Cazden's morning graduate class in "Child Language" frequently opted to attend the section she taught in the evening as part of the Harvard University Extension. The evening section had a mixture of two groups -- degree candidates like a tuna fisherman who was working towards a law degree
and teachers from area day-care centers, bilingual programs, and an institute for the deaf. When Ms. Cazden asked the two students why they chose to attend the evening section, they stated that in the morning section people raised their hands to talk about some article that the rest of the class hadn’t read. That shut people out of participating. In the evening class, people talked from their personal experience which made the class "a more human environment" (22).

When addressing those attending the 1982 International Reading Association, Harold Rosen supported educators who nurture the oral narratives of their students. He believes teachers should help their students become better at telling, and responding to narratives. As a matter of fact, Rosen states that developing the students’ ability to produce oral narratives should be a major goal of teachers (1). Children of all ages, as well as adults, need to use this "cognitive resource" (10) of narrative to test out others’ hypotheses about the world, make discoveries, and then construct their own explanations (14).

D. Cultural Differences of Narratives

The ways people organize oral narratives, as well as other forms of language, are extensions of their culture. In order for classroom teachers to nurture their students’ production of oral narrative in an equitable manner, they need to be aware of the existence of these structural differences. With this awareness, teachers can recognize that structures differing from their own enrich the language environment of their classroom. Without this awareness, teachers may mislabel the diversity as deficiency in language development.

1. Western European and Afro-American Narrative Structures

Teachers who are English speaking and from Europe or North America generally organize their oral narratives in an "outline" structure. That is their oral narratives develop a topic in a linear, cause-and-effect, two dimensional string (Grimes 1972, 513-524). Scollon and Scollon link this structural preference to the widespread literacy
among Westerners after the development of the printing press (1981, 141). "Language came to be viewed as primarily visual, that is as writing, as highly organized or grammatical and as a transparent representation of the natural order of the universe" (44). Because speakers of such narratives view their spoken language as writing, they freely interrupt their narratives to give evaluative statements which are often said in an impersonal style (Labov 1975, 37). This particular oral narrative structure is often referred to in the literature as being in the essayist-literacy tradition. It is the tradition out of which "literate" speakers of English speak and write.

To produce a "literate" oral narrative, speakers focus primarily on signalling important relationships between sentences (Scollon, Scollon 1981, 48) while attempting to uncover some truth from telling about their past experiences (A.Bennett 1983, 56). Signals include connectives such as "also, another thing, so this shows that" (Ripich, Spinelli 1985, 107). "Literate" speakers are more concerned with building a logical, cohesive text than with interacting with their listeners. In addition, they maintain a distance from their own words. That is, the "I" in their narratives is a character that exists only in relationship to their text and the events therein (Scollon, Scollon 1981, 70). This is the tradition out of which the majority of teachers in the United States use language. This is the standard of "literate" language use the majority of teachers bring into their classrooms.

The example of a "literate" oral narrative that follows is from a transcription of my interview of a middle-school teacher in 1986. The narrative was in response to my asking about her experiences with students’ parents.

The first two years I was here, I had two parents that showed up at every parents’ evening. We had those every term at least. The refreshment stand was also in my classroom and so under the guise of having a cup of coffee and a sandwich, they would sit and would listen to every other conference going on because the mother was most concerned. I think she somehow knew I had not (yet) been to college and she was waiting for me to make some awful gaff that would reveal my unfitness to teach her son, if not in my conversation with her, in some conversation she overheard with some other parent, or (she would hear) that some parent also shared with her (certain beliefs) about my ability. They would come in at eight o’clock and they would leave at eleven. That
went on for two years until finally one day when the mother came in saying how upset she was, the headmistress let her have it. That was that. But it just sort of soured me on parents.

In sharp contrast to this narrative, which sounds as though it is being read from a book, are the narratives of Afro-American teachers who speak out of their culture’s oral traditions. Afro-American speakers generally structure their narrative by setting the scene for bringing the past situation into the present. They make explicit relevant information which later becomes shared background knowledge for the entire narrative. Then they pose a problem to be resolved, resolve the problem, and then close off the narrative (Akinnaso, Ajirotutu 1982, 135).

An Afro-American woman in her early twenties told the following narrative with this characteristic structure when responding to a question she was asked during her first formal job interview:

(1) Well...yes when I...OK...there’s this Walgreen’s Agency
(2) I worked as a microfilm operator OK
(3) and it was a snowstorm
(4) OK and it was usually six people workin’ in a group uhum
(5) and only me and this other girl showed up
(6) and we had quite a lot of work to do
(7) and so the man he asked us could we you know
(8) do we...do we thinks we could finish this work
(9) so me ’n’ this girl you know we finished it all (134)

While telling about this event from her experience, this Afro-American speaker used traditional Afro-American strategies to actively interact with her audience. One way she did this was by using back channel cuing. In the literature this is also known as "Call and Response." She used cues such as "OK" and "you know" to elicit confirmation from her audience that what she just said was clear. She expected her audience to give her verbal and/or nonverbal cues to indicate they understood, they agreed with what had been said, or they needed more clarification of her previously stated point. Some verbal cues she would expect her audience to use are "um hum, um um, yeah, and okay" (140).
Afro-American narrators grounded in the oral tradition rely on prosodic elements other than back channel cuing. For example, they lengthen vowels to emphasize a word or phrase, cue a change in rhythm, or signal special meaning of a word or phrase. Main could refer to a male who is also the boss (141-142). Often, these speakers effectively stylize their speech by shifting tonal qualities of their voice towards rasps, growls, falsettos, or whines (141). In addition, they slow down the rhythm of their speech to build listener anticipation, mark a phrase, or signal completion of a passage (142).

2. South American Narrative Structure

J.E. Grimes in his study of South American narrative found the more typical narrative structure was the overlay. The narrator backtracks in time which results in his/her starting over again with additional information (1972, 516). The completed narrative "is layered and accumulative" (G. Bennett 1986, 422). This overlay structure allows speakers "to hold the floor indefinitely and to refocus, reiterate, redefine, and amplify (narrative) elements as often as they like or in any manner they choose" (425).

The overlay structure appears repetitious to educators grounded in the essayist-literacy tradition. Grimes found such teachers were especially frustrated when they attempted to teach writing to students who constructed oral narrative with the overlay structure. Rather than developing a topic systematically and logically in English, the students insisted on going over the same topic again and again (Grimes, 519). However, instead of depriving their students of using the overlay structure, Grimes suggests these teachers present the outline structure of narrative as a characteristic of English when used in the classroom and in contacts with the outside world (519).

While the overlay structure is expected by South American audiences, it, like any narrative structure, can be found across cultures. Gillian Bennett observed adults in Manchester, England, resorting to oral narrative with an overlay structure when a powerful, analytical, thinking tool was needed. "Overlays present narrative information in overlapping planes, each of which backs up to some earlier time reference and starts that
stretch over again, incorporating novel elements alongside the old ones, so the story accumulates subtleties and resonances of meaning as it unfolds" (1983, 420). Below is a portion of a narrative which Gillian Bennett describes as having this overlay structure.

May: I don’t know whether it was my own imagination...
I'll say this before I start. I was the only daughter and I had two brothers, and my mother and I were rather close -- very close -- and she lived with us for 17 years after my father died. She was nearly 90 when she died and she was only really seriously ill the last 12 months. She had a stroke which left her memory impaired but not her faculties. She couldn’t remember people and places. She never remembered living in Newtown before we came to Crofton, but apart from that, it was a case of when anyone came she would say after they’d gone, she covered up very well, and then she would say, "Tell me all about them and I would know next time." But I was telling your father...
After she died, she died at home, and she’d only been...She’d had a stroke, as I said, and she was...She didn’t wander at all, and, anyway, then she had a second one and she lived only a fortnight after that, the last two days she was unconscious.
But after she died, I never felt she’d really gone. Her presence seemed to be particularly in her bedroom, and it was about 12 months after until her room felt empty to me. And it is very strong at times. I would go up. And I used to wake in the night and think I heard her, because she slept with her door open and so did we -- to hear her. And I was confident I’d many a time heard her cough. Well, that would be sheer imagination, of course. (420-421)

May, as well as other participants in Gillian Bennett’s study, used this oral narrative structure specifically when the matter to be aired was too complex or too important to be placed within a cliché or a story in the essayist-literacy tradition. The oral narrative with an overlay structure served each speaker as a means of privately thinking about a matter while at the same time explaining it publicly (1986, 425). May, for instance, was dealing with the matter of the empty house which was in sharp contrast to her feeling a presence in her mother’s bedroom.

3. Athabaskan Narrative Structure

Native speakers of the Athabaskan languages in Alaska and Northern Canada use a narrative structure Scollon and Scollon describe as thematic. The Athabaskans use these themes to group what is known about the world into sets of predictable relationships. This structure results from the behavioral orientation of the Athabaskans, according to the Scollons (1981, 142).
How this orientation affects the use of language can be seen in an anecdote involving Suzanne Scollon and CB. CB was a two-year-old Chipewyan boy who often visited the Scollons' home to play with their two-year-old daughter Rachel and infant son Tommy. One day CB came into the Scollon home with a new music box. Since Suzanne had seen CB’s father at the store recently, she asked CB if his father had bought him the music box. CB answered "Moose kaya," which translates into English as "He went for moose." Suzanne knew CB’s statement was not literally true because she knew CB’s father had not gone out hunting moose and she also knew that CB was aware that his father had been in town. "What (CB) was saying in this case is that it was his father’s role to hunt, not to buy toys at the store. That is what his mother and older sisters would do" (142). CB had organized his very brief oral narrative in terms of predictable, behavioral relationships. The theme of his narrative would be "Gender Roles."

While the Scollons studied for ten years to better understand how the Athabaskans organize their world and their language, others, such as educators, often unwittingly discriminated against the native Alaskans. According to the Scollons, the discrimination arose out of their not knowing how the discourse patterns and the world view of the Alaskans differed from their own (9).

Teachers need not only to be aware of the existence of diverse language structures but they also need to cultivate a "deep respect for the fundamental differences of individuals, groups, and communicative styles" (10). With this deep respect, they can help children from nondominant cultures use language successfully in the classroom. However, "successfully" should not be equal to the students’ repressing or denying their own background language knowledge, the situation Bloome unfortunately found in the classrooms he studied (Bloome, Knott 1985, 69). "Successfully" should be equal to students’ choosing the language best suited to a particular context.
E. The Value of Narrative to the Speaker

Oral narrative is a "multifunctional kind of discourse" (Rosen 1986, 229). Its speakers get many important things done as they transform past experiences into the present. When narrating, speakers can experience the pleasure that comes from imagining the past in the present. They can feel more in control of the present through sharing relevant situations from their past. Oral narratives can be memorable bearers of information while simultaneously affording their speakers a very personal way to present themselves to their listeners. Through oral narratives speakers can explore their world, make connections, and assimilate their experiences within the context of understandings they share with their listeners.

1. Source of Pleasure

In The Child’s Concept of Story, Applebee describes how one speaker took pleasure in reliving and feeling events from his past through his oral narratives. (1978, 31-35). This speaker was Ruth Weir’s son Anthony when he was twenty-eight months old. Although Anthony was alone when his mother tape recorded his pre-sleep monologues, the monologues took the form of social interchange. He commanded, chided, questioned, addressed and narrated to a series of hypothetical companions in his imagined world (32). A paragraph from one of Anthony’s monologues, which includes examples of his recounting or narrating past events in condensed form, is as follows:

(1) Find it
(2) With juice
(3) Drink it (2x)
(4) Juice
(5) That’s the right way
(6) Right way
(7) Where you going
(8) I’m going
(9) Juice
(10) Shoe fixed (4x)
(11) Fix it (3x)
(12) It took it
(13) Anthony
(14) Good night
(15) See morrow morning
(16) Shoe fixed
(17) Bring it back
In Ms. Weir’s analysis of this particular instance of Anthony’s bedtime language, she showed how there was linguistic sense in what at first seemed to be nonsense (Weir 1962, 146). Ms. Weir stated lines (1) to (6) reflected Anthony’s not only liking juice but also dealing with the current parental request to drink from a glass, not a baby bottle. Line (7) was a question which he then answered in a dialogue with himself in lines (8) through (24). In this portion of his talk, Anthony narrated to an imaginary listener. He recounted going to the shoemaker with his mother -- a very enjoyable experience for him according to Ms. Weir. This trip meant being with his mother, going onto the university campus where the shoemaker and his mother’s office were located, and watching students milling around. Lines (12) to (15) were part of the family’s ritual for putting him to bed (131-133). This social speech of Anthony’s, spoken on the edge of dreams, contained much that was out of his past and permeated by happy associations.

2. **Means to Cope with the Present**

Sharing past experiences is another important function of oral narrative. Jack Santino, a researcher studying the effects of social context on the telling of oral narratives, attempted to collect airline workers’ narratives that were about a fellow worker who had been killed in the December 29, 1972, crash of a jumbo jetliner but had returned to warn former coworkers of impending airline disasters. Santino found the workers freely told each other about this event during an informal patio party (1988, 213).

However, when Santino encouraged the airline workers to tell about the ghost of Flight 401 at the 1983 Festival of American Folklife at the Smithsonian Institution (213), he found they did not want to share their knowledge with the public. He concluded:
I was asking them to entertain the public with these stories, but although they are well told, the primary purpose of these stories is not entertainment but rather the sharing of ideas and the passing on of information, information that is of relevance and importance to the job (216).

These stories are taken seriously, he found, because they encompass for each worker a "symbolic system in which to locate events and oneself. They present a world in which there is balance" (217). The returned worker or ghost helps the coworker deal with that which is uncontrollable. Similar elements have been found in ghostlore associated with the occupations of fishing, sailing, and mining (209).

3. Memorable Way to Inform Others

Language users can rely on sending information in memorable form if they are skillful narrators. Narratives can be "illustrations, examples, or case histories, and (are) valued for their usefulness as an information-bearing resource as well as for the delight they give to tellers and audience" (G. Bennett 1986, 431). Dell Hymes has voiced concern about the decline in the quality of narrative performance in the United States. This is partially due to the assimilation of ethnic groups, formerly grounded in the oral tradition of narrating, into the mainstream or "literate" culture. However, he also believes the right to think and express oneself in narrative has come to be taken as a privilege restricted only to those who have status. "My account is to be listened to because I am x; yours is of no interest because you are only y. All this in independence of narrative ability" (1978, 33).

The power of the spoken word is also acknowledged by Peter Elbow in Writing with Power, his practical handbook for beginning writers. He recommends to those choosing to deliver information through the written word, which includes narrative, to write their first draft and then read it aloud. It is writers hearing their own words that gets them to move from writer-consciousness to audience-consciousness (1981, 36). Writers, who have necessarily focused on putting their ideas into words on paper, become speakers who can concentrate on what an audience hears in their words. Through this
process writers move towards the oral tradition which emphasizes the personal component of communication and the world which the speaker and audience hold in common (Applebee 1978, 12).

A written narrative is less likely to develop into that which is "permeated with significance" (A. Bennett 1983, 71), and therefore memorable, if a writer does not follow Elbow's advice. "When you only make marks silently on paper and don't make noises with your throat, it is possible to withhold some piece of yourself, to keep your fingers crossed behind your back" (Elbow 1983, 22-23). When writers listen to their words on paper, they are more likely to hear those that are hollow -- that echo the writer's detachment from his/her audience and are therefore forgettable.

4. Tool to Persuade

Goffman has discovered another function of oral narratives -- to persuade the audience to share the speaker's point of view. He has "pointed to the little narratives with which we constantly characterize ourselves and the world about us so that our listeners are encouraged to take our view of things" (Scollon, Scollon 1981, 5-6). In studying the discourse of informants in Manchester, England, regarding the supernatural in an urban community, Gillian Bennett made a similar finding. She found that her speakers rarely expressed an opinion about a controversial matter without explaining and justifying their point of view through oral narrative (1986, 419).

Bennett also found that if stated opinions were to be forceful then the narrators' explanations or justifications needed to be clear and engage the audience's interest (420). In order to steer their audience to share their points of view, the Manchester informants told narratives with certain characteristic features. For example, the narratives were about typical rather than unusual events. By using this subject matter the narrators were able to appeal to universal human experiences. As they narrated, they often used structures which allowed them to foreground those aspects of their experience which were not only personally significant but also most persuasive. These same structures enabled them to
control the discourse so they would not have to stop speaking until they were satisfied by
their audience’s responses. In addition, they often delayed telling the main events so that
they could give background that would demonstrate to their listeners that they were
reliable witnesses to those events (432). They thereby created optimum conditions for
their narratives to function as powerful persuasive tools.

5. Cognitive Resource

Harold Rosen contends narrative "...is an explicit resource in all intellectual
activity" as well (1982, 13). In "The Importance of Story," he states that our dreaming in
narrative and speaking to ourselves in narrative point to its profound relationship to
thought (230).

During her studies, Idrenne Lim-Alparaque observed ways oral narrative is related
to thought. She met regularly with eight children in her backyard to listen to their
narratives based on their experiences. She found that their seeming wanderings during the
tellings were a valuable, cognitive resource to them. The meanderings were seen by her
to be "a yielding to that compelling urge to turn over every stone that crosses their path,
to swing from branches of trees that seem to invite swinging from, to poke into things, on
and on in their own exploration of the world’ "(Blakey 1988, 53). She observed that as
she encouraged them to tell about their experiences through oral narratives, she created
opportunities for them to make connections -- to think in a "remembering and
anticipating way’" (54).

When observing students using language in secondary classrooms, Douglas Barnes
found a teacher who provided an environment in which his students could use oral
language as a valuable resource for thinking. Barnes heard the students using language
"to grope for new meanings, to sort out experience for themselves" much in the way the
children in Lim-Alparaque’s backyard did (1971, 64). The teacher respected the warmth
and spontaneous quality of lively everyday speech so his pupils felt that what they could
bring from their own experiences would be relevant to whatever was being discussed.
The children in Lim-Alparaque's backyard, the airline workers with Jack Santino at the patio party, and Gillian Bennett's Manchester informants produced oral narratives that were valuable to them in many different ways, as already described. What they all were actively involved in, moreover, when producing their oral narratives is what Adrian Bennett calls "dialectical play" (1983, 57). That is, they were choosing to use seemingly contradictory elements to reach some kind of understanding. For instance, they moved the past into the present. Then they adjusted their unclear understanding of that past so it could be understandable to their audience. In addition, while needing to meander to explore their past, they had to furnish some structure so their listeners could follow on their path. As meaning evolved, they needed to welcome other viable meanings. Finally, when the narrative was completed and they had moved towards some understanding, they expected to again compare their past in the present. It is this "dialectical play" which is the essence of understanding.

F. Oral Narrative as a Window for the Observer

Teachers who recognize the value of oral narrative to its speaker and communicate to their students that it is a valid language option in the classroom gain another way to observe their students. It is a window affording many views. An observer sees the narrator interacting with an audience s/he considers supportive. The observer hears the events from the past that the narrator wants to tell about. At the same time, the observer can hear how the narrator restates, rewords, and backtracks to make certain the audience, as well as himself/herself, understands the significance of his/her experiences. The observer can also note what in the context might have stimulated the oral narrative as well as how one narrative compares to others told by that speaker. Researchers have tried using this multi-faceted window of children's oral narrative to gain insights into children's thinking processes, to assess children's language development, and to discover how children's use of language relates to their school success (Applebee 1978; Stenning, Mitchell 1985; Klecan-Aker 1985; Nicholson 1984; Richards 1978).
1. Insights into Thought Processes

One reason researchers think children's oral narrative can provide a window to their thinking is because it is a medium through which children play with possibilities. Such language "play", according to Judith Lindfors in Children’s Language and Learning, "enables the child to make his idea into a thing, an object, an entity that he can refine, consider, shape, and act on, much as he might act on clay" (9). As the child is imposing a kind of order on this "clay," he is also revealing to those observing "a complementary process in which some part of that order is made public" (Applebee 1978, 130). "Britton (1973) has called this a decontextualization of experience; it is an abstraction or projection out of our necessarily personal system of construing our personal context into a public arena of shared experience" (Applebee 1978, 130).

Frank Smith calls the child’s personal system of making sense of the world his/her "theory of the world in the head" (1982, 98). It is "a kind of informal, private, unarticulated theory about the nature of events, objects or situations" the child faces (Tattershall, Creaghead 1985, 29). When a child uses oral narrative, s/he is presenting experiences as s/he has ordered them using that personal system. By listening, the observer may be able to glimpse the system s/he has for events, which features of the events determine to which category s/he relates them, and how those events relate to other events in different categories. When understanding or learning occurs during the telling, the speaker must modify or elaborate upon his/her cognitive structure (Smith 1982, 98).

Applebee is one researcher who has listened to the talk of children, who were native speakers of English, to see if their private, unarticulated theory about the nature of stories is reflected in their use of language. In The Child's Concept of Story, Applebee reports what children from the ages of two to seventeen think stories are, why they are told, and how they’re structured as revealed primarily in their own oral narratives (1978, 2). For example, when forty-four six-year-old children (143) were asked "to tell about" their
favorite stories, fifty per cent chose the way that requires the least reorganization of story material. They simply repeated it complete with title, story opening, closing lines, and dialogue. Twenty-seven per cent would not respond at all because they were worried they would not remember it well enough (92).

The length and detail often involved in the six-year-olds’ retellings is evident in the contribution of Eric. The following is the first half of his telling about Little Red Riding Hood:

Once there was the three little pigs. And they asked the man with some straws, "Can we have some straws?" says the first little pig. And he gave them some straws and he built a straw house. In came the wol-, the wolf. He puffed and he puffed and he blew the house down. And he puffed and he puffed. And when the house fell down and so three little, the second three little pig went to the man with some sticks and he said to the man, "Can I have some sticks for to build a house?" And then the man said, "Yes," says the man and he gave him some sticks. And when he builded the house up and he was, and he puffed and he puffed, and he puffed and he puffed. And he blew all the sticks all fell down. And then he went to the man with some bricks. He said, "Can I have some bricks for the house, to build a house?" "Yes," said the man, and he gave him some bricks (92-93).

Applebee concluded that Eric’s and the other children’s narratives were what could be expected from children during that stage of cognitive development which Piaget labels the preoperational period. During this period, a child builds a mental replica of concrete actions and events in an orderly step-by-step manner (Applebee 1978, 93). Applebee had heard one half of his forty-four six-year-olds voice their "mental replicas of their favorite stories" in their retellings. Applebee also concluded that the twenty-seven per cent who refused to tell about their favorite stories had such a replica but considered it too faulty to repeat. Applebee was therefore able to not only use children’s narrative but also children’s refusals to narrate to ascertain their private, unarticulated theory about "story." He had gotten a view of their thinking processes through his study of their oral narrative.

More recently, Stenning and Mitchell tried to see children’s thought processes through their oral narratives. They designed their research project specifically to find what they could infer about a child’s thinking from the stylistic patterns of his/her
narrating. The oral discourse was generated by English-speaking five to ten-year-olds when they were given an edited version of The Snowman, a wordless picturebook by Raymond Briggs. Each child was shown the book and invited to tell the story. Later, the children were asked questions about parts of the story. The research team analyzed the audiotaped narratives by coding each narrative sequence as Confused, Descriptive, Interpretive or Complex. They considered a sequence Confused if there was evidence of the child’s misunderstanding; Descriptive if there was a literal translation of picture into words; Interpretive if there was explanation; and Complex if there was a highly coherent, explicit explanation (1985, 265-266). They also coded the use of pronouns, verb tenses, and connectives as Naive or Sophisticated (269).

The results of their study included the observation that none of the five-year-olds produced an explanatory narrative nor did they use explanations when answering the researchers’ questions. Seventeen per cent of the narratives by seven-year-olds were explanatory. However, in contrast to the five-year-olds, sixty per cent of their responses to questions were explanatory. Forty-five per cent of the ten-year-olds produced explanatory narratives (268-269).

While these researchers did not find evidence of a small number of distinct, stylistic patterns in the narratives that could be linked to particular kinds of thinking, they did cite an interesting correlation. Children who used sophisticated connectives tended to tell explanatory narratives and this was true whatever age the children were (275). Upon completion of their study, Stenning and Mitchell recommended further exploratory studies in this new field (263). They suggested other stylistic features of oral narrative such as direct and indirect speech that might be more closely linked to cognitive variables than those they examined (276). Through their recommendation to other researchers to continue to explore children’s oral narrative, Stenning and Mitchell have communicated their belief in it as a tool of observing children’s thought processes.
It is important to note that Stenning and Mitchell’s definition of "story" is grounded in the Western European tradition of oral narrative structure. In the introduction to their study, they state, without any rationale, that a story explains its end in terms of its beginning. Every detail must be relevant to the story as in the "tightest classical narrative" (262). If a detail is not leading the listener towards the outcome of the story, then the listener has a basis for a complaint. The detail is "mere embellishment" (262). In addition, they view story telling as an experience in monologue language. The audience is not expected to be more than a passive listener during the act of narrating (262).

Although Zev Bar-Lev studied adults’ rather than children’s oral narrative, his research results would be useful to those wishing to follow up on Stenning and Mitchell’s recommendations for learning about children’s thought processes through oral narrative. Bar-Lev designed a cross-cultural study to investigate how thoughts tend to be organized differently in different languages. His hypothesis was that speakers of different languages prefer various types of clause connectors (Bar-Lev 1986, 238-239). The multilanguage research project used retellings of one narrative and one expository text. The English texts had been translated into nine languages -- Spanish, Ukrainian, Japanese, Vietnamese, Chinese, Farsi, Irish, American, Arabic -- and then tape-recorded and played to native speakers of these languages who then retold the texts. None of the subjects were monolingual. (In this article there is no mention of the number of speakers taking part in the study, their age, or gender. The reader could infer subjects were students from San Diego State University) (235).

His research team then analyzed each retelling in terms of clause connectors. They identified only the main clause connector in each clause as performing a coordinating, subordinating, adverbial, or zero function. They identified pronouns as a "zero" connector (232).
After analyzing the data, Zar Bar-Lev concluded that speakers of different languages do prefer various types of clause connectors. The Vietnamese and Chinese speakers showed a preference in their retellings for adverbial or zero connectors which resulted in a parallelism common in Chinese proverbs. One such Chinese proverb is "shang xing xia xiao." It translates directly into "up act down imitate." Though meaningless at first sight, the following meaning can be inferred when a two-part parallel structure is imposed on it: "Those above act, while those below imitate" (239-240).

In contrast, the Spanish, Ukrainian, and Japanese speakers relied on subordinating connectors such as "that" and "because." They showed a striking preference for hierarchical organization that even exceeded that of the original text. An example of such hierarchical organization of clauses is from a sample retelling by a Spanish speaker. It has been translated into English as follows:

...and at entering (he) observes the walls and, according to him, the paintings are very ugly, because he sees them like that natural and the mother gets embarrassed, because we grown-ups always try to do things pretty, even though (they) are ugly, or to lie, and (she) scolds him because the boy says to her that (they) are very ugly, (she) says to him, "No, boy, one should not say that, (they) are pretty (244).

The biggest surprise for the researchers was that American English speakers did not rely on subordinating connectors. They, along with speakers of Farsi, Irish, and Arabic, used primarily coordinating connectors of continuation such as "so" or "and" (237) or zero connectors (239). This resulted in a "fluid" structure. An example of this structure that appeared in an Arabic speaker’s retelling has been translated into English as follows:

...so he entered, and he saw some paintings, so he said, "Who is this who drew these bad paintings?" His mother looked at him and said, "it is not good to say that." So the teacher listened to what Bruce said, and she answered him, because she knew what is in Bruce’s mind, so she told him that here, if the paintings are bad, it doesn’t matter, so Bruce was happy... (245).

Zar Bar-Lev, like Stenning and Mitchell, recommends further study of the relationship of thought to language through the study of oral narratives. "The use of retellings from a verbal original is a viable approach to research, capable of corroborating
or refuting hypotheses, and also of aiding in the initial, intuitive step of formulating hypotheses" (241). He specifically recommends proving the statistical reliability of his results by using a large number of subjects who are monolingual (242).

In 1978 Kintsch suggested that a person’s recall of a story might be based on his/her culturally-based organization of the narrative. When his subjects from the University of Colorado were asked to remember four-part Athabaskan oral narratives, they tended to reduce them to three-part stories. Sometimes they did this by forgetting one part. At other times they collapsed two parts into one to produce a total of three, the grouping pattern of content or motifs in European folklore. Scollon and Scollon inferred from Kintsch’s work, as well as from studies by Toelken and Witherspoon of Navajo narratives, that the organization of memory may be closely related to the way a culture organizes its largest units in a narrative (Scollon, Scollon 1981, 110-111).

2. Assessment of Language Development

More recently, in an address in 1985 to the 12th Annual Meeting of American Speech-Language-Hearing Association Convention, Klecan-Aker supported the study of children’s narrative. She stated, "The narrative is viewed as a fertile data base for the study of child language because children must have a variety of cognitive and linguistic skills to be able to tell or write narratives" (3). She also sees evidence of a link between cognitive variables and children’s narratives, both written and oral. However, in the study she reported at this convention, Klecan-Aker chose to collect oral narratives of children to better understand their language development.

Klecan-Aker collected oral narratives from twenty sixth-grade males between the ages of eleven years, ten months and twelve years, eight months (6). Of the twenty children, ten attended a special class full time because they were diagnosed as learning disabled. The other ten children were in regular education classes and were considered
normal learners. Each child was asked to tell the examiner a story about the plot of his favorite movie or TV program. If neither of these topics resulted in the child’s telling a story, the examiner then encouraged the child to tell about a topic of his choice (7).

After analyzing the narratives, Klecan-Aker found eight out of ten of the normal learners produced either "focused chains" or "true narratives," according to Applebee’s definitions (Applebee 1978, 56-66). That is, the narratives that were "focused chains" resembled adult stories having a central character and logical sequence of events. However, they did not have an ending that was clearly linked to the issues presented at the beginning of the narrative as adult stories have. The "true narratives," on the other hand, had a well-developed plot and an ending related to the issues in the story’s beginning (5).

In contrast, eight out of the ten students in the learning disabled group produced "sequence stories" or "primitive narratives," according to Applebee’s definitions. The "sequence stories" had an apparent time sequence but it was not planned by the teller. They, also, had a macrostructure which involved a central character, setting, or topic. The "primitive narratives" put together characters, objects, or events that were "perceptually associated with each other in some way" (4). "Sequence stories" and "primitive narratives" are considered by Applebee to be two stages of story organization that precede "focused chains" and "true narratives" (Applebee 1978, 58).

Klecan-Aker concluded that the differences in performance between the two groups of children "may be an indication that youngsters with learning disabilities, at least in terms of the children examined in this investigation, may not be able to organize their narratives in a systematic, coherent manner, which is an instrumental skill if the listener is to understand the story" (1985, 9).

It should be noted that Klecan-Aker’s method for analyzing the children’s stories to reach her conclusion was based on Applebee’s system for studying the development of story organization which is not cross-cultural in scope. The children whose stories he
studied came from largely professional families with high socioeconomic status. According to IQ measures, sixty per cent of the sample were of superior ability, thirty-three per cent high average, and seven per cent average. In addition, they were in large part from the Gesell Nursery School in New Haven, Connecticut (Applebee 1978, 138-139). Therefore, the majority of these children have been read to in nursery school and most likely by their parents (DeStefano and Kantor 1988, 108). They have been grounded in the Western European, essayist-literary tradition which includes talking like a book. All the children whom Klecan-Aker studied may not have had the same kind of literacy experiences and therefore may have been producing oral narratives rooted in a very different tradition.

3. Connections to School Success

Nicholson focused his studies on finding connections between the content of children’s talk, including the content of their oral narrative, and their school performance. By interviewing sixty junior high students as they worked in their classes, Nicholson found he could predict whether those same students were going to be academically successful. He based his predictions on how closely the knowledge the students brought to particular reading material or to an assigned activity matched the background knowledge the books or teacher assumed the students possessed. If there was a conflict between the two, then the students would have difficulty achieving success in the classroom (Nicholson 1984, 436-451).

The effect of the students’ background knowledge about notetaking, or lack of knowledge thereof, was evident in the transcripts of interviews conducted while they were taking notes on information found in books. One student just omitted material that she found difficult to understand. Another wrote the parts she understood in her own words but copied the “hard bits” directly from the book. One pupil had particularly effective strategies, which he told about in a narrative as follows:
I just read the whole thing over first,
(Mm.)
and made pencil marks what I thought was good and then went back over it,
tried to put it together on rough paper and once I got some idea...
(Mm.)
And when I got some idea, I put it on this.
(So you used your own words?)
...Yeah, I had to change quite a lot because it was, you know, hard words, hard
to understand, you know.
(Mm.)
I look up in the dictionary and find a simpler meaning for them and wrote
that...I got that down to about three lines and they'd done it in about twenty,
you know, hard to read.
(How did you get it down to three lines?)
Well, they just ramble, you know, they'd be carrying on about everything
(447).

As a result of his talking with students like these three, Nicholson recommended
that teachers spend more time talking with their pupils. That is, they should try to find out
what pupils really think by letting their students do the talking. By listening carefully to
their students, teachers may be able to discern and remedy a potential mismatch between
the students' everyday knowledge and the more specialized knowledge needed in
classrooms (450).

Jill Richards studied children's and teachers' classroom language to discover how
children's language is related to their success in school. In Classroom Language: What
Sort? she reported observing students lost for want of the "right" words. Students "find
themselves in a situation where their language, which may have served them well
hitherto, has broken down" (1978, 133). Ms. Richards found this was particularly true of
students in secondary classrooms because teachers often used a variety of English foreign
to their students.

The language of science teachers, for example, was more complex, formal and
impersonal than everyday English (92). Even when science teachers introduced new
material, they used language greatly influenced by the subject they taught. According to
Richards, the students were overburdened by highly technical vocabulary. She found there were seven times as many new terms introduced in physics classes than in English classes (89-90).

To succeed in these classrooms students needed to learn the variety of English their teacher was using to teach a particular subject. When the students showed the teacher they were picking up features of that language variety, they received positive results. In addition, the teacher often assumed students' correct use of that language variety was equal to the acquisition of the concept being taught (119). What is particularly significant is the teachers often did not support the students in their attempts to verbalize what they understood in their own language style (118-119).

To ensure success of children like those in the classrooms she observed, particularly secondary ones, Richards has recommended that teachers provide a less anxiety-producing language atmosphere. One way is to build upon any language confidence the students bring into the classroom (131-132). Another strategy she suggested is for teachers to use talk sessions in which their students can say in their own words the solution to a problem or a logical sequence in an argument. According to Richards, when students "say in their own words," the teacher can learn how successful their teaching has been (142-143). In other words, the teacher can glimpse their students' "theory of the world in their head."

G. Pedagogical Implications of Valuing Student Narratives

Teachers who value the narratives of their students, whether in or out of the classroom, evidence certain pedagogical practices. These practices include regularly conversing with their students as equals and providing a broad range of social contexts in which their students feel free to experiment with language options. Such practices help to create a language environment where teachers can frequently hear, respond to, and learn from their students' oral narrative.
Paolo Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970, 67) contrasted education based on this kind of human dialogue with a "banking" concept of education in which the teacher "deposits" knowledge. Freire's vision of an educational relationship includes a teacher who "is no longer merely one who teaches, but one who himself is taught in dialog with the students...They become jointly responsible for a process in which they all grow" (Staton 1982, 54).

In 1976 when Roy Nash spoke with students about what they expected from their teachers, he found the "banking" concept of education permeated their responses. They said they should be taught things. They did not demand to be given the opportunity to find things out for themselves (94).

More recently, Aquiles Iglesias studied two kindergarten classes in an aging, urban center in the northeastern United States in which seventy per cent of the families lived below the poverty level and fifty per cent of the population was of "minority" populations. The school population of 19,500 students included 1400 labelled as having limited English proficiency. This limitation was determined by a cursory assessment of a child's use of English (1985, 82). After conducting his study of the kindergartners, Iglesias concluded that "In both classes they have learned that their communication in the classroom should be limited to short answers; one-word responses appear to serve the purpose. They have learned when they are being taught academic skills they should wait until they are called upon to answer" (91). These children have been taught a passive concept of their student role (Nash 1976, 94).

In a report to the National Institute of Education in Washington, D.C., in 1982, Jana Staton described how one Los Angeles teacher was reducing this type of asymmetrical pupil-teacher relationship with early adolescents (90). Through her use of dialogue journals she created an environment in which Freire's vision of education could become a
reality. On a daily basis this teacher shared her power as the initiator in the classroom -- as the person designated to get things done(4) -- and thereby succeeded in establishing a time and place for teacher and student to "talk" as equals.

Although the narrative of this dialogue between the teacher and her students was taking place in written form, Jana Staton and her colleagues discovered it functioned much like oral language. This conclusion followed a close analysis of the twenty-six journals produced over the course of a school year. For example, the rules for social politeness in conversation were followed. The teacher’s questions were "friendly, non-imposing, and offer(ed) options" (90). Some students chose to write entries as long as sixty-nine sentences while others wrote one sentence (65). In addition, the conversational principle of taking turns was evident in two ways. First, both student and teacher had equal and frequent turns to write to each other and receive the other’s response (4). Second, when a topic was introduced that was considered by both dialogue partners to be important, they "conversed" about it across an extended series of turns. That is, they wrote back and forth to each other until one of the writers could no longer add any new information about the topic (97). This "turn taking" was "a meaningful attribute for participants, one to which they paid attention and which they remembered" (94).

Researchers also discovered that during the year-long dialogue with the teacher, each student developed personal themes (96). While there was great variability in the way sampled students related to the teacher and communicated with her, Staton and her colleagues found systematic differences in the students’ personal perspectives on the world (82). That is, their writing reflected an articulation of their "theory of the world in their heads." This occurred because the teacher established a social context in which "telling about" was a language option for the students, as well as the teacher.
In contrast to the classrooms Iglesias studied, students in the Los Angeles classroom which Staton and her colleagues observed have an active concept of their student role. They can initiate topics for "conversation" with their teacher, as well as read and respond to her "talk." In such an interactive environment, like those in which students' oral narrative is valued, pupils are more likely to develop as language users. That is because they are making choices about how to use their language. While children's casual speech contains practically all the language functions necessary for getting things done in their world, they are not mature language strategies (Shuy 1982, 10). For students to expand their language use, they need to do more than imitate the language in a textbook, on the blackboard, or spoken to them by their teacher. They need to grapple with new experiences or reorder old ones and thereby discover whether their old strategies are inadequate in the new situation (Barnes 1971, 61). This is the way students acquire more specialized language uses -- a goal many teachers have for their students (Rosen 1971, 133).

When teachers enable a broad range of meaningful, language activities to take place in their classrooms so that students need to use language in new ways, they also should recognize when a child's "repertoires of discourse events" (Lindfors 1987, 349) do not mesh closely with those in their classroom. Aquiles Iglesias in "Cultural Conflict in the Classroom," presents a strategy that can be used to increase teachers' as well as parents' awareness of how classroom language demands may not mesh with a child's notion of classroom language -- especially those functions we take for granted like giving information and telling stories (Lindfors 1987, 349).

Iglesias designed a training program for parents and teachers of pre-kindergarten and kindergarten children in a community in which there was a large "minority" population. It had been determined earlier that there was not an adequate awareness
among parents or teachers of the communication demands school personnel put on the children and how these demands matched those that children would encounter later in their schooling.

Teachers met for weekly, two-hour sessions over three months’ time. Consultants taught them theoretical language development instruction such as turn-taking rules. Then outside observers monitored the teachers’ classroom lessons and gave them summary evaluations of the student-student and teacher-student communication they saw. In addition, consultant help was available to the teachers as a follow up to the evaluations.

In monthly meetings parents became familiar with academic and communicative skills required in the classroom. They learned techniques to use at home to help the children acquire the academic and discourse skills needed in the classroom (94). They were also encouraged to attend classroom sessions. In these ways parents became actively involved in the education of their children.

The results of this intervention program included progress in the number of children actively participating in classroom language events. The children now were expanding their use of language which could result in greater success in the classroom. So long as programs like this one are based on a deep respect for the differences of the communication systems of everyone involved, then the students can truly use language to learn. Then, and only then, will the students feel free to choose the best language option from their repertoire for their communicative purpose.

Teachers who have respect for their students’ communication systems are sensitive to the fact that they see each student in "a narrow range of social situations in the classroom" (Stubbs 1983, 40). They acknowledge that their students control many uses of language that teachers may never hear in the classroom (40). Labov is one researcher who described some kinds of language which teachers of children from urban ghettos may never hear. As a matter of fact, he found these language varieties were unknown to middle class society in general. The children’s language included a system of hurling
insults known variously as sounding, signifying, or the dozens. These children also used language to display their knowledge of the occult, sometimes referred to as rifting. In addition, they had a large repertoire of oral epic poems known as toasts or jokes. Labov found their language demanded ingenuity, originality, and practice by the children. He hoped that once teachers knew of these students’ competence in verbal activity outside the classroom, they would expect these same students to be competent in language activities in the classroom. Besides expecting competence from their students, the teachers would support growth based on the verbal facility the students already possessed (1975, 38).

When teachers respect their students as competent speakers and provide for them a variety of situations in which to use their oral language, then they are also helping their students as writers. Peter Elbow states in Writing With Power, "...learning to write well is not so much like learning to speak a new language as it is like learning to speak to a new person or in a new situation" (1981, 8). Scollon and Scollon proffer a similar reason for valuing "talk." They say that as we talk we develop ourselves as a character for ourselves and our audience to think about. This continual self-characterization amounts to authorship and is therefore a literate activity. In addition, in dialogue events, there is not only a fictionalization of self as the author but there is also a fictionalization of self as the "audience and character." The ability to take on the audience’s or listener’s perspective is essential to the development of literacy. (1981, 64).

When teachers value their students’ oral language, particularly their narratives, they find some means to talk with their students on a regular basis. They make certain there is a broad range of meaningful language activities in which everyone, regardless of their cultural background, can participate. While teachers and students respect each other’s language facility, they also recognize that maturing means being able to do even more with language. In these ways, teachers and students create classrooms where speakers, as well as writers, feel free to try out more ways to use language to learn.
In conclusion, my exploration of the research literature that focused on children’s oral narrative resulted in my reaffirming my commitment to developing a study of this product of students in the classroom. The literature not only confirmed that the oral narrative of students is a valuable product and therefore worthy of study, but it also highlighted how infrequently researchers have studied this product of middle school students in particular. By completing an ethnographic study of the oral narrative production of selected middle school students, I would be contributing to the current knowledge base on which other researchers could build.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

A. Defining Oral Narrative

Before collecting oral narrative, I needed to determine the essence of what I was trying to gather. After completing my review of the literature and after reflecting on my experiences studying oral narrative in my own classroom, I decided on the following as my working definition of narrative for the ethnographic study described in this chapter. According to my definition, oral narrative is spoken language that takes place in a social interaction (Richards 1978, 16) in which one intent of the speaker is to interpret or make sense of the present by bringing knowledge of the past into the present (Genette 1980, 236). It is event driven. The narrative may tell about one event or a series of events (30). It must contain or reflect personal meaning (Cazden, Hymes 1978, 30). The personal meaning may emerge over time and a series of narratives. Oral narrative can often be found embedded in other forms of discourse (Rosen 1986, 230).

When I began making clear my own assumptions about oral narrative in order to arrive at my definition, I found the definitions of others invaluable. For example, when I was examining my assumption that "oral" always meant "spoken," I reread Klecan-Aker's "A Comparison of the Oral Narrative Abilities Between Normal and Learning-Disabled Middle School Students" (1985). According to her definition, "oral" before "narrative" not only describes the form the narrative is taking -- spoken or written -- but also implies its style. That is, "oral" does mean spoken. However, "oral" before "narrative" connotes to some readers that the language of the narrative differs in varying degrees from the style commonly associated with written language (1985, 2-3). Because I wanted my definition of oral narrative broad enough to encompass a wide variety of styles of narrative, I equated "oral" with spoken language.
Other researchers' definitions helped me again when I tried using the word "story" to mean "narrative." To me, "story" was connoting the form of language I would find in a book or told by a recognized public storyteller. It would have a plot with an introduction, complication, actions leading to a climax, denouement and conclusion. It seemed very tied to my cultural group. My feeling was borne out by studies such as those done by Labov and Bennett. Labov collected oral narratives from black Americans while Gillian Bennett listened to stories told by residents of Manchester, England. After analyzing what they had heard, both researchers arrived at definitions of "story" that were different from mine and from each other's (Bennett 1986). Therefore, "story" norms varied with the norms of the speaker's social group. It was finally Genette's definition of "story" as the content of narrative that I could accept (1980, 27). It was least culture bound.

B. Choosing a Methodology for Collecting, Describing, and Analyzing Oral Narrative

A basic sociolinguistic principle that I as a collector of oral narrative needed to keep utmost in mind is that "everyone is multidialectical or multistylistic, in the sense that they adapt their style of speaking to suit the social situation in which they find themselves" (Stubbs 1983, 39.) According to sociolinguists, social context is the most powerful determinant of verbal behavior (Stubbs 1983, 76).

Because all people do adapt their language to fit the social situation in which they find themselves, as seen specifically in the studies of Santino, Labov, Payne and Sleight, I believe that language can only be studied within the context in which it occurs. I know that to try to transfer specific language use from one social context to another can result in speakers appearing inarticulate (Santino 1988). To design research which focuses on language as a structure existing outside of a social context results in unanswerable questions such as, "Is what I learned from my study of these narratives transferable to narratives produced in more natural settings?" (Sleight 1987) To ignore the effect of social context on language can result in the postulating of such destructive and erroneous theories as the deficit theory of language capabilities of black children which Labov
disproved in his work (1972, 59). Therefore, in my field study, I used ethnographic methodology which would permit me to observe, describe and analyze oral narrative along with its context.

By immersing myself in the culture of the groups that I was studying and by using ethnographic data collection techniques, I did not strip the language events that I observed of their particular contexts. Instead, I took into account the ways in which human meaning and action depend on context (Mishler 1979, 18). If I have been successful, the participants in my research site will recognize themselves in this dissertation. There will not be a discrepancy between their and my understandings (17).

C. Community

1. Town

Relying on ethnographic methodology, I began my research in a central New England, public, middle school, the only middle school in a town of approximately 18,000 people. The town's population had been decreasing steadily since 1980. The median age of that population was 32.6 years. The total number of households was about 7,200. Of those nearly 2,400 were with persons under the age of eighteen.

Out of the total number of households, about 800 received public aid. The median family income was approximately $14,500. Of a work force of about 9000, about 2,500 were technicians, salespeople, or secretaries while about 1,800 were in the professions or managers. Nearly 1,600 workers were laborers, fabricators, or operators while almost 1,400 were in the service occupations. Just over 100 workers were involved in farming, fishing, or forestry occupations.

Over fifty per cent of the work force had a high school education. Fifteen per cent had from zero to eight years of formal education while twenty per cent had at least four years of college (Hornor 1989, 116).
2. School

I chose this middle school and its population for several reasons. First, because administrators, teachers, parents, and students knew me as a teacher and researcher in their community, I was able to obtain permission to conduct a study which necessitated my being an active participant as well as observer in and outside of classrooms in a school. Second, if the "team" of students and staff with which I wanted to work had not given its consent to participate in the research, I would have had nine other teams to approach. Third, the school's principal assigned teachers to teams so that there was a range of teaching styles represented.

According to a written report to me from the school's principal, the number of students attending the middle school was 569. About nine per cent of the resident school population in this community attended non-public schools (Hornor 1989, 116). Ninety-eight per cent of the school's population was Caucasian, one per cent was Black and one per cent was Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, or another ethnic group. Approximately, fifteen per cent of the school population qualified as recipients of the free lunch program.

3. The Team

The particular team with which I worked was particularly suited to my study. From what I had observed directly, from what my colleagues had reported, and from student talk, the teachers on this team had different teaching styles. The math teacher individualized instruction and had experimented with cooperative learning. The science teacher combined large group instruction with students actively involved in concrete experiences in science labs. The language arts teacher relied on large-group instruction and individual conferences. The social studies teacher organized his curriculum according to units which ended in simulations. He often had the students work in pairs or small groups to complete activities which prepared them for the simulations.
Integration of curriculum, cooperative learning, a life-skills curriculum, smaller class sizes and other teaching approaches were used to improve the school experience for the students.

Finally, the consistent grouping of this team’s students for each of the core subjects provided me the opportunity to observe how the talk of a particular class group of students, as well as the talk of individual students, was affected by different teaching styles, by the time of day, by a particular activity, and by membership in that group. Because the students were regrouped for homeroom, study, and skills periods, I also had classroom data for these groups to compare and contrast with that collected during the core class groupings.

This team of students was mixed with students from the other two seventh-grade teams during exploratory classes, such as art, woodworking, and music, as well as during physical education.

In each of this team’s four classrooms, one of the core classes -- language arts, social studies, science, or math -- was taught. The team’s sixty students had been divided into four, heterogeneous, class groups. Each of these class groups, during the course of a school day, moved to each of the four classrooms for their core subjects. Homeroom, skills, and sometimes study also took place in the four classrooms where I was primarily located.

D. Participants

1. Students

I became a participant observer on one of the three seventh-grade "teams" of the school. This team was composed of sixty students, four classroom teachers, and one aide. Fifty-six per cent of the students were males, sixty-three per cent were from a nuclear family, and thirty-three per cent had parents who were in the professions. Seventy per cent of the students’ parents had at least a high school education. Seventy-two per cent of the students had been born in the community in which their school was located.
This particular team of students had smaller class groups than the other grade-level teams because they were part of a pilot project related to the restructuring of the school. Students who were determined to be at risk of dropping out of school, according to criteria established by a grant-writing team, were placed on this team with other students who represented a range of academic and social success.

Most of the students attended the same middle school during the prior school year at which time I was a sixth-grade teacher. Therefore, many of the students knew of me and some of the students had had me as their teacher for one or more subjects.

2. Teaching Staff

The four teachers, who volunteered to be on this team, had all been my colleagues for the prior three or more years. Although I had not worked with them in the classroom, I had done committee work with three of the four.

The science teacher, Mr. T., was born and educated in central New England. He was from an Armenian and English ethnic background. In an end-of-the-year interview with me he recalled growing up hearing his grandfather and father speak Armenian. Mr. T.'s educational background included an undergraduate degree in science with an emphasis on zoology. He taught a few years in a technical school before joining the staff at the middle school. He was at the school three years prior to my being a researcher on his team.

The social studies teacher, Mr. B., was born in the community of this middle school. During my end-of-the-year interview with him, he described how his ancestors had come to Maine from England in the 1600's. He went on to say that his mother's first language had been French. Mr. B.'s educational background included a B.A. He taught thirteen years in western New England before returning to his home town. There he became a member of its middle school staff four years prior to my field work in the school.
The math teacher, Ms.C.H., was born in central New England. Her ancestors were English. After she received her Ed.D. from a New England university, she taught eight years at the college level as well as nine years as a public school elementary/secondary teacher. She had taught four years at the middle school prior to my being on her team.

The language arts teacher, Ms.P., was born in central New England. She was of German and Scotch heritage. Her educational history included a B.Ed. in elementary education with a minor in history. She taught eight years in elementary classrooms in the Midwest and western New England. Then she moved to the community of the middle school where she worked two years as a teacher’s aide in a self-contained classroom for special education students. Prior to my arrival as a researcher at the middle school, she had taught language arts for five years.

The classroom aide, Ms.A., was born in central New England. She was of Irish ancestry. She had a degree from a two-year community college in the area of the middle school. Her past work experiences included being an elementary classroom aide, a school secretary, and a substitute teacher. The year I was a participant observer at the middle school was the first year she was a member of this school community. She was paid with grant monies, which also subsidized some projects of the team.

Because Ms.A. saw her role of teacher’s helper as one that did not include the authority to act independently, I did not consider her to be a "supervising adult" when I analyzed my data. In addition, Ms.A. was not an important factor during my data collection because she usually was not present in a setting when I was collecting data.

3. Participant Observer

I was originally from the Midwest where I grew up in a German ethnic community in which I was immersed in oral narratives. While I heard German spoken by my neighbors, my immediate family did not speak German. My educational background includes undergraduate work in chemistry. After moving to northern New England, I
continued my undergraduate studies but changed my major to English. After a few years, I moved to Central New England where I completed a B.A. in English. I then taught English in a private, residential middle school for boys.

While being a "dorm parent" in this residential school, I decided that I needed to learn more about counseling adolescents. I received my M.Ed. in counseling three years later. By that time I was an elementary sixth-grade teacher in the local public school system. When the middle school was formed, I became a middle school teacher. I taught for over ten years in the same middle school in which I was a participant observer for the study described in this dissertation.

E. Data Collection

1. Schedule

Data collection was done over a six-month time period. I spent at least one day per week at the school from 7:45 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. This afforded me more than 143 on-site hours during which I collected data. The hours spent at the middle school included not only time in core classes, non-core classes and special team activities, but also lunch and snack times for the students and teachers as well as team meeting times for the teachers.

2. Strategies

The primary strategy I used to gain access to data was participant observation. As suggested by Goetz and Lecompte, when in the classroom, I lived as much as possible with and in the same way as the students whom I observed (1984, 109). I watched what people in the classroom did, listened to what they said, and interacted with the participants so that I could become a learner to be socialized into the classroom group I was investigating (112). Specifically, I was a member of the student community in large group, small group, and individual instructional settings, as well as during the times that were called: break time, snack time, lunch time, homeroom, assemblies, field trips and after school. I did not participate in the daily routines that the other adults in the setting were performing such as instructing or disciplining students.
Another strategy that I used to collect data was interviewing. According to researcher Labov, before actually freezing the words of participants in discourse events for later analysis, it is important that minimal demographic data be noted. Labov defines that minimum as including: the speaker's age, sex, ethnic group, parents' occupation, places where the subject has lived between the ages of four and thirteen, "together with an account of the context of the interview and a list of others present" (1975, 64). Delamont and Hamilton state that the context of the interview should include the time and description of the place (1976, 15). Bloome and Knott add that the nature of the adult-child discourse should also be described (Bloome, Knott 1985, 71-72).

I met with all but one student on the team for an interview that incorporated these recommended elements (see Appendix B, Participating Student Interview Form). In addition to gathering data during each interview, I clarified my role on the team and attempted to establish rapport. The one-to-one interviews also provided me with a clear sample of the recorded speech of each student. On occasion, when I was trying to identify speakers in audiotaped conversation, these samples were useful to me. The interview talk was also used for the purpose of triangulation of data during analysis.

I also interviewed the adult participants in my study at the end of the school year. Besides obtaining basic demographic information about each participant, I was able to record their perspectives regarding the oral language of their students in general, of particular core class groupings, and of specific individuals. I needed this information for the purpose of triangulation of the data during my analysis (see Appendix C for a copy of the Participating Adult Interview Form).

Along with these interviews, there were frequent, informal discussions with these same adults about phenomena involving students whom they knew. These interviews helped me to gain another perspective regarding what I was observing and to check the validity of my interpretations of those occurrences and the hypotheses that I was generating.
I also had informal discussions with small groups of students. Because I, an adult, was present during these forty-five minute discussions, I needed to utilize Labov's design of such a setting for collecting oral language so that the power could be distributed more equitably among the students and me. I needed to lessen the social distance between them and me.

First, as recommended, I was an adult from the community of the students. I had recently been a teacher in the middle school and I was now a participant observer. Second, prior to the discussion period, I asked one student to choose one to three friends to form the discussion group. Third, we sat in a configuration to decrease the height differences (1972, 61-2). Fourth, we met in a place which was not a part of the usual classroom procedures and was private (1975, 64). In two instances, I talked with a small group while I drove them to the site of a field trip distant from the school.

These discussions enabled me to understand individual students better, to obtain a large sample of their speech, and to check out hypotheses that I was developing regarding their use of oral narrative.

Each data-collecting approach, once used, became part of the language context and thereby affected the narrative under study. Thorough, ongoing documentation of the talk in its context was essential.

3. Documentation

I audiotaped those events in which student talk was likely, was able to be recorded because of the physical setting, and could be transcribed with the aid of available field notes. I videotaped under similar circumstances but less frequently because of the limited access I had to video equipment. Copies of audiotapes were available to participants if I was provided blank cassettes. All transcripts were typed by me with initials for all proper names. At no time was recording equipment hidden from the participants. Videotapes were available for viewing upon request.
During my observations, I used a variety of notetaking methods. I took mental notes when I thought any other form of recording data would be inhibiting to the participants or would interfere with my interacting with them. These mental notes needed to be written out within an hour of the event. Sometimes, I just wrote down brief phrases in an inconspicuous manner when that was most fitting to the situation. These "jotted notes" I elaborated upon within an hour of the observation time. At other times, I kept chronological logs of what was happening in a particular setting and inside me as the observer. These field notes consisted of descriptions of events, places, people, and talk. Because of the nature of the phenomenon that I was studying -- oral narrative -- I most frequently relied on chronological logs written in the setting.

As soon after the observations as possible, I added what I just remembered but didn't write down at the time. I then took my first step in processing the collected data by typing up my notes. I included the date, time, and place of each observation, as well as the time when I typed my notes. There were three columns on each page. The first column contained a thick, concrete narrative description of what I observed. Transcriptions of the soundtracks of over thirty, ninety-minute audiotapes and segments from eight, two-hour videotapes were set within this column where they fit chronologically. A second column contained my interpretations, impressions, opinions, and questions regarding the observations. In a third column, I recorded my feelings related to the research process itself (see Appendix D, Sample Chronological Log Pages). By recording the data in this manner, I was more able to avoid what Bloome and Knott refer to as "glossing over important differences in communicative contexts" (1985, 63).

These field notes were kept in a three-ring binder along with pertinent materials from each observation period such as test pages, meeting agendas, teacher handouts, seating charts, and class lists. In addition, these notes were typed onto my computer's hard disk so that in the future I could readily access specific information through code words like "narrative," "J.P.," and "science."
I maintained a file for each of the forty student participants in the research project who returned a written consent form indicating that both the parent and the student wished to participate. In the file, I kept products of the students, such as writing projects, along with teachers' anecdotes and interview information. I also maintained a file for all adult participants.

Because I was collecting different kinds of data, I was able to compare data systematically to check the validity of my conclusions. According to researchers such as Hammersley and Atkinson, by triangulating with data gathered from different sources and through a variety of methods, I could avoid the risks that stem from reliance on a single kind of data (1983, 24). Triangulation helped to prevent me from accepting my initial impressions as reality. I noticed, as Goetz and Lecompte did, that it assisted me in correcting biases that occurred when I was the only observer of a particular event (1984, 11). I had worked with data in this way at a summer institute at the Prospect Hill School in Bennington, Vermont -- an institute that was then directed by Pat Carini who had developed a process of data collection and analysis known as documenting (Mishler 1979, 10). Because schedules did not permit, I did not also have a peer reader of the data I'd collected.

F. Initial Procedures

During the first four visits to the middle school, I clarified my role as a participant observer to the adults in the setting, began to establish rapport with the students, and communicated to the students that I wanted to see the school day from their point of view. I began to know the world of each core group of students by traveling with them through much of their daily schedule. When I was not with the students, I was available to talk with the adults in the setting. I made mental notes and jotted notes during this initial observation period so that I could achieve my primary objectives for this first set of visits. At the end of this period of time, I and the adults on this particular team determined that I could continue to work with them as a researcher using ethnographic

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methods and they each completed an adapted version of the Written Consent Form (see Appendix A). I then met with each core group of students to describe what my role would be on the team for the rest of the school year, to distribute and explain the written consent form and to answer their questions.

Over the course of the next four visits to the setting, I collected basic demographic data of the student population of the school and detailed information regarding the team’s student population from the school’s principal. In addition, each day I stationed myself primarily in one core teacher’s classroom in order to gain insights as to how the different student groups’ language use varied given approximately the same instructional lesson/classroom structure during about the same time period. I took the most complete notes possible given the circumstances and used recording equipment when appropriate. I noted the effects of my presence, notetaking, and recording equipment upon the participants.

By the beginning of the second month on site I was audiotaping in most settings in which I was collecting data. In my own attempts at studying oral narrative, I found audio recording essential. Because I knew the spoken words were being made permanent, I was able to concentrate on being truly present in the social situation in which the students might produce narrative. From my own experiences as teacher-researcher over the prior six years, from talking with the participants themselves, and from the reports of researchers like Richards I knew that even though students were aware they were being recorded, they appeared to forget about it and responded normally after their initial reaction (1978, 75)

I used video equipment just twice during these first eight visits to the school. It was done when the adults, students, and I agreed it would be least threatening and most appropriate given the activity planned. After the first two months on site, I began to videotape more frequently. The resulting tapes permitted me ready access to detailed nonverbal communication behaviors as part of a total verbal event for later analysis.
As my guide while using recording equipment, I kept in mind the following words of Martyn Hammersley: "While (recording devices) provide data of great concreteness and detail, precisely because of this they may obscure longer term patterns; detailed pictures of individual trees are provided but no sense gained of the shape of the forest (1983, 161).

G. Illumination Through Ethnography

As Hammersley predicted, the aspect of ethnography which I experienced as being particularly useful in my study of oral narrative is its approach for analyzing data. It was not a separate stage in my research. Instead, I began my analysis when I began formulating and clarifying my research problem, and it continued through the writing of Chapter V of this dissertation (1983, 174). The analysis process worked in this way for me and for other researchers because of the nature of its basic design.

Ethnographic research has a characteristic "funnel" structure; it becomes increasingly focused over time (175). While I as an ethnographer was initially concerned with describing all the social events and processes I was observing in the first few weeks at the middle school, I gradually narrowed the focus of my observations to the social events and processes involving one particular core grouping of students. While my initial research problem did not become quite remote from my final one during this "progressive focusing," (175), I did eventually narrow my focus on two aspects of that problem rather than five. Throughout this process of focusing I became increasingly concerned with developing and testing explanations of what I was observing (175).

During this process of continually interpreting my data, I did not need to limit myself to one theory as a framework within which to analyze the data. Instead, I was free to use a wide variety of theoretical perspectives in order to better understand my data. For example, at one point in the ongoing analysis, I was looking at the immediately prior, verbal contexts of emerging narratives to see if a pattern existed regarding these contexts and the emergence of narrative in the classroom. As I analyzed the demographic
interview data collected from the students, I was noticing patterns. However, when I moved to the analysis of student narrative that was embedded in conversation, I discovered that I often couldn’t mark off the beginning instant of a narration. I, therefore, had to abandon that particular theoretical approach because I could not use it to explain much of my data. This is what Bensman and Vidich, as well as other researchers like myself, have seen as a strength of this multi-theoretical approach (Hammersley 1983, 181).

After completing the data collection, I embarked on a series of rereadings of the data. I first immersed myself in the whole of my data in order to find instances of oral narrative. As I continually read and reread the data, I found it necessary to narrow my working definition of oral narrative and to make specific the elements of a minimal narrative. I will present my refined definition and my narrative coding system in Chapter IV with the presentation and analysis of the data.

During my next rereading of my data, I looked for contexts in which oral narrative emerged. As described earlier, I examined immediately prior verbal contexts first. This proved fruitful only for a small portion of my data. I then read the data again, particularly that which I recorded when I first entered the research site. I was looking for clues as to how I learned the norms of the group(s) in which I was a participant observer. Since language is a social behavior that is rule governed, it occurred to me that I needed to uncover the discourse rules that had governed my own talk, including narrative, in order to better understand the rules that governed the talk of the students. After examining the data to regain the perspective of one participant, me, I determined that I needed to reread the data to uncover the discourse rules that were in operation when a particular adult was supervising students. I will present the specifics of each of my rereadings that are relevant to my problem as stated in Chapter I, along with strategies that I developed for coding and charting the data, with the presentation and analysis of data in Chapter IV.
This process of analyzing the data through the rereading of the whole of the data, hypothesizing, and testing out hypotheses resulted in a condensing of data over time until large trends emerged that were related to the discourse rule contexts in which student oral narrative is more likely or less likely to occur.

At the beginning of this process of analyzing my data, when I was trekking about in the "squishy field" of discourse, I didn’t think I would ever find my way through the wooded wilderness of words to a clearing from which I might see paths to the forest I was trying to reach. I didn’t think I would find firm ground from which I could step forth to continue my study of oral narrative. By way of my many journeys through the whole of my data, through the reconstructed world of the participants, I had kept student oral narrative in its contexts. By so doing, I had found one forest with its individual trees intact. In addition, I had caught glimpses of other forests I would like to explore in like manner in the future.
CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

A. Introduction

As described in Chapter III, the data were collected in each of the following settings: participating core teachers' homerooms, core classes, skills classes, study periods and special events which the core teachers oversaw such as team assemblies and guest speaker presentations; and researcher's discussions with small groups of students, demographic interviews of students, and other places where the researcher was with students such as an outdoor bazaar and in the school corridors. Throughout the data analysis I continually focused on the students' oral narrative as a form of social behavior. Keeping their talk in context made it less likely that I would lose meaning while attempting to find answers to my questions about this social phenomenon. I, therefore, read and reread my field notes which included not only the words of my participants but the social contexts in which those words were spoken.

In my analysis which follows, I first describe and illustrate the coding system that I used when determining the prevalence of student oral narrative in the settings in which I collected data. Then I present my findings regarding the incidence of student oral narrative in those settings. In the second section of this chapter, I define and give examples of one context of oral language -- discourse rules. I then present the discourse rules which I determined were operative just prior to the emergence of student oral narrative. In conjunction with the presentation of those discourse rules, I discuss trends in the incidence of student oral narrative in the discourse rule contexts which immediately precede its occurrence.

B. Incidence of Student Oral Narrative

During one of my first rereadings of the field notes, I began to code all student talk as "definitely narrative," "perhaps narrative," or "definitely not narrative." This coding
process included indicating where each narrative seemed to begin and end. I started with
the coding of the demographic interviews which I conducted with all but one of the sixty
middle-school students assigned to the team on which I was located. Because these interviews involved only two speakers -- the student and me -- in a
private space, finding the narrative was less difficult than it might have been in other
contexts with more people and overlapping talk. While coding the interview data, I
refined my definition of narrative and then moved onto the rest of the data and coded
them. In further refining my analysis, I came to the conclusion that oral narrative, as
defined in Chapter II, may include description and commentary (Prince 1987, 57) but
must include at least one clause which is an "event clause" (Polanyi 1985, 10).

An event clause contains one event. An event equals a change of state (Prince 1987,
28). It marks an interruption against a static background as in, "The owl stepped out of
her tree home." There is a definite starting point (indicating change) and ending point
(indicating change). The starting point in "The owl stepped out of her tree home" is when
the narrator first caught a glimpse of the owl which was moving from inside to outside its
tree home. The ending of the event is when the narrator saw the owl physically outside its
tree home. Because of an event's discontinuity with the static background, it is dynamic
rather than static in nature (Descles 1989, 172-173). It, therefore, cannot be talk about
that which is ongoing or habitually recurring (Potts 1989, 9). For example, "Owls move
around in their tree homes," describes an ongoing, static condition of owls. There is not a
distinct starting or ending point for the owls' movement. There is no marked interruption
in the status quo.

Coding the oral narrative included placing a colored dot to the right of a student's
talk where the narrative seemed to begin and a colored dot to the left of all subsequent
talk which seemed to be part of that same narrative. The event clause(s) could be located
anywhere within a coded narrative.
In the examples that follow, I am replacing the coding dots with asterisks. One asterisk marks talk which is "definitely narrative," two asterisks mark "perhaps narrative," and three asterisks mark what is "definitely not narrative." Asterisk(s) are placed to the right of the apparent beginning of an episode of student talk and to the left of all subsequent talk that seems to be in that episode.

1. Examples of Data Coded as Narrative

A female student K.H. told this narrative to me, J.P., during a demographic interview. K.H. told about a happening from her past in which there was a change of state, in this case, of her place in space which she called home. This change is an "event," the key element to this talk’s being coded as narrative.

J.P. : Have you ever moved from, from one home to another?
K.H. : Yeah...Just recently, I moved from 15 Rose St. to 70 Coventry Lane.* (EVENT CLAUSE)
J.P. : O.K., if you could just talk a little louder.
K.H. : Well, sort of, yeah.
J.P. : O.K. All right.
*K.H. : I used to live on 15 Rose St.
    * until I was nine years old.
    * Well, just before I turned ten,
    * and then I moved to 70 Coventry Lane. (EVENT CLAUSE)
    * And I’ve lived there si- ever since.

A male student C.P. tried to get the attention of his social studies teacher and class twice. The third time he did get their attention with a narrative about a movie that he had seen which was related to the topic being discussed. In each event clause the "scientific people" are change agents. They cause the "frozen guy" to go from an unfound to a found condition, from a frozen to an unfrozen state, and from without life to being alive.

C.P. : There’s some movie...*
    * there’s some movie...
    * there’s some movie called Ice Man.
    * It’s about something like
    * scientific people find this frozen guy (EVENT CLAUSE)
    * and he’s like in this snow and ice and everything
    * and they thawed him out (EVENT CLAUSE)
    * and got him back to life. (EVENT CLAUSE)
2. Examples of Data Coded as Perhaps Narrative

A female student K.H. said the following to me, J.P., during a demographic interview. It is possibly narrative because it does contain a clause which could indicate a dynamic process -- trying to learn French. However, I need to know if K.H. did act and acquire some knowledge of French -- thereby changing. Her talk is possibly not narrative because it could be viewed as her stating intention without a subsequent action resulting in a change. Without change there is not an event and without an event there is not narrative.

J.P.: Not, not too much.
K.H.: Not too much.
** We, we usually try to stay away**
** from that**
** because, none of my, none of my siblings,**
** any other members of my siblings**
** know how to speak French.
J.P.: Ah-hah, o.k.
**K.H.: So I tried to learn (POSSIBLE EVENT CLAUSE)**
** so I could speak to my great-grandmother.

3. Examples of Data Coded as Definitely Not Narrative

A male student Ch.Si. spoke to me, J.P., during his demographic interview. Although he sounded as though he were telling about a happening, what he actually told about is static. He began with a static statement of his preferring old cars which is followed by another statement of preference regarding his liking to work on them. Then he told about what always occurs when he sees an old car go by. There is nothing dynamic or changing in this talk. Some researchers describe this kind of non narrative as a generic (Polanyi 1985, 10-11) or a pseudo narrative (Coste 1989, 60-61).

J.P.: And that's the kind of thing you do, making models?
Ch.S.: Yeah. I like, I like, I'm especially fond of,***
*** um, old cars, not antiques, but like from about
*** nineteen thirties to nineteen sixty-something.
J.P.: Yeah.
***Ch.S.: Old cars, yeah I like working on,
*** like every time I see one go by (HABITUALLY OCCURS)
*** I'll just run to the window and stuff,
*** you know?
A female student A.W. spoke to a non-team teacher Mr.H. as they both returned to a classroom from break. She got Mr.H.'s attention through a shouted question on his topic. Then she described her friend as a golf course worker. It is her friend's being a worker that is important, not the action of working itself on which an event clause might have been built. A.W. ended with the important information that her friend is a wicked-close friend, more descriptive talk.

Mr.H. (was talking about golf balls to someone nearby)
A.W.: (shouting) Do you know a ball from a ground?
   You know what, Mr.H.,
   one of my wicked good friends***
   *** works at a golf course.(DESCRIPTIVE, NOT EVENT)
Mr.H. : I didn't know you had a good friend. (He smiles.)
***A.W. : I do; he's wicked close to me, too.

A male student N.T. told Ms.C.H. at the end of a math class that another student was chewing gum. When she seemed to be unresponsive to his implied request that she discipline the gum chewer, N.T. produced a predictive (Prince 1987, 76) or plan narrative (Polanyi 1985, 10-11). That is, his narrative is about an event which has not yet happened and may never happen.

N.T. : I'm going to start bringing packs of gum ***(PLAN)
   *** and stuffing them down. (PLAN)
   C.H. (was warning students to be doing their own work)
   ***N.T. : I'm going to start chewing gum.(PLAN)
   *** He's got gum.
   *** I'm going to start chewing gum.(PLAN REPEATED)

4. Determining the Incidence of Student Oral Narrative

After all the student talk in the data was thus coded, I reread my field notes to determine the incidence of student oral narrative in a particular setting, such as a participating teacher's core classes. What follows in Table 4.1 is the number of narratives that I found evidence of in my field notes of Mr.T.'s science classes. The numbers do not necessarily represent all narrative that occurred during that class time but rather all narrative which I was able to record through notes which I wrote as a participant observer.
in the class and/or through audio or video tapes of the class which were later transcribed and integrated into my field notes as described in Chapter III (see Appendix D, Sample Chronological Log Pages).

Table 4.1
The Incidence of Oral Narrative in Mr. T.'s Science Classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation Date</th>
<th>Core Group</th>
<th>No. of Narratives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-29-90</td>
<td>(undetermined)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5-90</td>
<td>Bl.1 S.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5-90</td>
<td>Bl.1 M.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5-90</td>
<td>Bl.1 Ss.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-5-90</td>
<td>Bl.1 L.</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-20-90</td>
<td>Bl.1 L.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-27-90</td>
<td>Bl.1 L.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-30-90</td>
<td>Bl.1 L.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-1-90</td>
<td>Bl.1 L.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-7-90</td>
<td>Bl.1 L.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, I used tables similar to 4.1 to determine for each setting the average number, the median number, and the high and low number of student oral narratives. Then I rank ordered the settings from those which appeared to have the highest incidence of narrative to those with the lowest incidence as shown in Table 4.2. In this table the column heading "Time" refers to the approximate number of minutes of transcribed, coded-for-narrative data which were supported by extensive field notes. It does not include time in a setting when a recording device could not be used and/or field notes could not be written. While I found Table 4.2 useful to see large trends, the differences in the time spent in each setting made it unreliable for other types of analysis.

The setting in which the greatest number of narratives was observed was the small group discussions with the researcher. However, when the researcher was with each student individually in a private, demographic interview setting, fewer narratives were
recorded than in any of the four core classes. Science was the core class in which there was observed to be the greatest incidence of oral narrative. In most of the settings, there were times when no student oral narrative was recorded.

Table 4.2
Rank Ordering of Settings According to Incidence of Student Oral Narrative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Time in Minutes</th>
<th>Incidence of Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Groups with Researcher</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous with Researcher</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.T.'s Science Classes</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms.C.H.'s Special Events</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. C.H.'s Skills Class</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.B.'s Social Studies Classes</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms.P.P.'s Homerooms (Earth Day)</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms.C.H.'s Math Classes</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms.P.P.'s LA Classes</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Interviews Bl.1 L</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Interviews Bl.1 M</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.T.'s Special Events</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.B.'s Homeroom</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Interviews Bl.1 Sc</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Interviews Bl.1 Ss</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.B.'s Study</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.T.'s Homerooms</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.T.'s Skills Class</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.B.'s Skills Class</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms.P.'s Skills Classes</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Discourse Rule Contexts of Student Oral Narrative

I next asked myself, "What is going on in each class, small-group discussion, interview, or special activity at the time of the students' oral narrative productions? What is in the contexts of these productions that makes it possible for the narratives to be told? What supports narrative?" Then I thought about what it had been like for me as a user of
language when I was a participant-observer. "When was I able to talk? When was I able to tell about one of my past experiences?" I remembered that in each classroom, I had needed to observe the behaviors of the participants to find out the answers to those questions. It was the students and teachers who had implicitly and explicitly taught me the rules for discourse which directed, influenced, and controlled their and my oral language use. I decided to analyze the data to see if there was a connection between student oral narrative production and particular discourse rules.

My first step towards that end was to reread the field notes and concurrently write the discourse rules that I observed to be in operation during each class, small-group discussion, interview, or special activity. I focused on those language-related behaviors of the participants which helped me to answer the questions, "When could students talk, to whom, about what, for what purpose and in what manner?" Then I recorded the rules that seemed to be related to those behaviors. As I wrote more and more rules, I realized that I was writing them from the point of view of the supervising adult of the moment. It became evident to me that the discourse rules were determined primarily by the adult who was supervising the class, small-group discussion, interview, or special activity in which the language took place.

Examples of my "teasing out" the discourse rules from the field note text during this rereading are shown in the excerpts that follow. In each excerpt I have underlined the key statements which led me to the articulation of a discourse rule. I have continued using one asterisk to mark talk which is "definitely narrative," two asterisks to mark "perhaps narrative," and three asterisks to mark what is "definitely not" narrative. I have also continued to place the asterisk(s) to the right of the apparent beginning of an episode of student talk and to the left of all subsequent talk that seems to be in that episode.

The excerpts are from the field notes of the beginnings of three, different, site observations. There was a high incidence of narrative production in the first site observation, a moderate incidence of narrative in the second and a low incidence in the
third. These particular excerpts were chosen on the basis of their being "typical" examples of interactions in their respective sites. (The complete field notes of these beginnings, along with my articulation of the discourse rules in evidence, are available in Appendices E,F,G.) There are three excerpts from each site observation. Analysis follows each excerpt as well as each group of excerpts from any one observation.

1. Rules of Discourse During One High-Incidence-of-Narrative Observation

This field note text is from the beginning of a small-group discussion with me, the researcher. (Heretofore, in field note text, J.P. will always refer to me, the participant-observer researcher.) The team had just returned from a field trip at a nearby park to pick up trash as one of the team's Earth Week activities. The teachers in charge had nothing in particular planned for the last half hour of the day and said it would be fine if I took a group of students with me to the library conference room until the end of the school day. I asked Ca.S., a student whom I was observing in depth, to choose three other students to join us for a discussion that would be audiotaped. All four students were females and had given their permission to participate in the research project (see Appendix A, Written Consent Form).

We seated ourselves around a rectangular table with the tape recorder in the center of the table. Seated clockwise from me were Ta.C., Me.M., Em.K., Ca.S. Although one wall of the room was glass, those passing by in the library could not easily see through the panels because they were covered with posters. It was possible for students in the library to hear talk from within this conference room if that talk was loud. Students were aware of this feature of the space.

The discourse rules presented in Tables 4.3 through 4.5 are those which I observed in the behaviors of the participants prior to a lengthy, multi-party conversational narrative.
In excerpt 1H, I am the supervising adult who is controlling the topic for talk at this point in the discussion by "giving" the students their limited options. The balance of power between the students and me is asymmetrical in that I am making clear what language is to be used for and am controlling the time for talk -- the "airtime". I do seem to be wanting to decrease the asymmetrical power distribution when I say the topics are "to start off" the discussion and that the students may go off in their own talk directions provided the talk is in some way still "with" the topics.

In excerpt 2H, the students are in charge of "airtime." They talk spontaneously without formal turn taking to reach a decision which is mutually agreeable to them and me.
Table 4.5
Excerpt 3H of Field Note Text and Discourse Rules From One High-Incidence-of-Narrative Observation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Note Text:</th>
<th>Discourse Rule(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>During my talking to them, the four girls were reacting verbally and nonverbally with me and each other in various ways, some of which were barely audible on the tape.</td>
<td>Students may use verbal and nonverbal language to communicate with each other and with the adult while the adult is talking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The symbol {} heretofore will stand for a summary of the raw data which I as a participant-observer wrote in my on-site field notes and/or when I was reconstructing site observations through integrating transcriptions of mechanically-recorded observation sessions with my written field notes into a chronological log. An example of a chronological log page, which includes raw data as well as filtered data of this type, is in Appendix D.

In the excerpt 3H the students test the turn-taking rules during the discussion and can see that the adult is not requiring they raise their hands to gain permission to speak. In addition, they can interrupt the adult’s talk without any negative consequences. At this point, therefore, the adult has shown that discourse rules that provide the students with easy access to "airtime" are in place. Shortly hereafter Me.M. begins a conversational narrative which could be entitled "When Mr.B. Went Overboard."

When I analyzed the complete field notes of the beginning of this discussion with me, the researcher (see Appendix E), I found implicit and explicit rules for the students’ use of language. A student could talk with a chosen group of peers in the presence of the researcher and a tape recorder. They could talk together when seated around a table in a semi-private space. The students had a limited choice of topics initially but later in the discussion could introduce a related topic. During the discussion the students could talk with each other and the adult without getting formal permission to speak. They could interrupt each other’s and the adult’s talk in order to piece together an understanding of
an event. Language could be used for a variety of purposes including making a decision, responding to the adult’s questions, offering an opinion, and telling a narrative together. Narratives could include the words of others, including those of other teachers.

2. Rules of Discourse During One Moderate-Incidence-of-Narrative Observation

This field note text is from the beginning of a social studies class with Mr.B. during the first period of the school day. It takes place in his classroom and is a simulation of a past time in the history of Japan. I was at the back of the classroom getting the video camera set up as Mr.B. had his students line up outside the classroom door. A few students entered the room, left their bookbags near a row of desks parallel to the window opposite the door, got their ceremonial paper hats and returned to the hall.

The discourse rules in Tables 4.6 through 4.8 are those which I observed in the behaviors of the participants during this role-playing activity.

Table 4.6

Excerpt 1M of Field Note Text and Discourse Rules From One Moderate-Incidence-of-Narrative Observation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Note Text Excerpt:</th>
<th>Discourse Rules:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the hall, Ta.C. began to address Mr.B. in a voice that had the quality of a whine. Ta.C.: I don’t want to!</td>
<td>A student may spontaneously use voice quality and words to express a strong dislike for what she is being asked to do.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In excerpt 1M, Ta.C. shows that Mr.B.’s discourse rules include students using language to express their strong feelings. This particular female student, Ta.C., uses voice pitch and volume to emphasize her unhappiness -- to dramatize it. Mr.B.’s reaction is that of a person in an audience enjoying her performance.
Table 4.7
Excerpt 2H of Field Note Text and Discourse Rules From One Moderate-Incidence-of-Narrative Observation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Note Text Excerpt:</th>
<th>Discourse Rule(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ta.C.: (on a rug to the right of a large castle made of cardboard boxes) O.K. I took my shoes off.* (She then climbed through an opening in the front of the castle.)</td>
<td>A student may spontaneously use language to show compliance with an imperative by a teacher.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In excerpt 2M, Ta.C. uses her normal speaking voice to inform Mr.B. that she has decided to assume her designated role in the class activity. She informs him through a narrative which she can say without getting his formal permission to speak.

Table 4.8
Excerpt 3M of Field Note Text and Discourse Rules From One Moderate-Incidence-of-Narrative Observation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Note Text Excerpt:</th>
<th>Discourse Rule(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.K.: Tsetse(?) B., Tsetse B., shogun told me J.T.'s finger touched the rice.*</td>
<td>A student may spontaneously in a narrative inform the teacher about a fellow student who broke a rule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*J.T.: (said forcefully) I didn't touch the rice. My fingers did not touch the rice.</td>
<td>A student may spontaneously build the narrative by arguing his position without raising his hand to get permission to speak.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Several: Shogun did.</td>
<td>Students may spontaneously answer a student's question to add information to a narrative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*J.T.: The Shogun's a liar!</td>
<td>A student may spontaneously accuse others of wrongdoing without raising his hand to get permission to speak out.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout excerpt 3M the discourse rule in evidence in the behaviors of the male participants is that they do not need to get formal permission of Mr.B. in order to speak out. However, they are using language in terms of discourse rules Mr.B. is enforcing -- the ones that he created for use during the simulation. These rules included M.K.'s having permission to call out messages to Mr.B. from the female shogun Ta.C. The resulting talk in this episode is a multi-party narrative.
When I analyzed the complete field notes of the beginning of this social studies class supervised by Mr. B. (see Appendix F), I found implicit and explicit rules for the students’ use of language. A student could talk without having to get formal permission from Mr. B. While students did have access to "airtime," generally they spoke quietly among themselves while they were seated together and engaged in some designated task. Mr. B. was enforcing the discourse rules appropriate to the simulation activity. Language was used for a variety of purposes including commanding others, showing compliance to commands, asking and answering questions, reading aloud to inform, and producing oral narratives. Narratives informed others of strong feelings ranging from delight to unhappiness, included reasons for failure, and served as a tool to persuade others of a peer’s innocence or guilt.

3. **Rules of Discourse During One Low-Incidence-of-Narrative Observation**

This field note text is from the beginning of a skills class with Ms. P. during the third period of the school day. As the students entered the classroom, the tape recorder was visible on a desk close to the front of the classroom. Ms. P. was not yet in the room. There was a hum of talk throughout the classroom. Suddenly, quiet descended upon the room. Students had noticed that Ms. P. had just entered the classroom. Standing at the front of the room, she began talking to the quiet group of students. They soon learned that her objective for this class was to have students articulate a personal commitment to decreasing their use of "put downs" with their peers.

The discourse rules in Tables 4.9 through 4.11 are those of Ms. P. which I observed in the behaviors of the participants.
Table 4.9
Excerpt 1L of Field Note Text and Discourse Rules From One Low-Incidence-of-Narrative Observation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Note Text Excerpt:</th>
<th>Discourse Rules:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms.P.: I’d like you to get...C.S., would you get settled?</td>
<td>A student is to be physically and verbally quiet when the teacher speaks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In excerpt 1L, Ms.P. does not need to complete her request for the entire class to follow the discourse rule. They have quieted and gotten settled. Instead, she focuses her attention on just one student and reinforces the rule through a polite request.

Table 4.10
Excerpt 2L of Field Note Text and Discourse Rules From One Low-Incidence-of-Narrative Observation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Note Text Excerpt:</th>
<th>Discourse Rule(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’d like to just take a few minutes...and B.J.P. (male student), please turn around...take a few minutes to review what we’ve done.</td>
<td>A student is to face the person who is speaking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although B.J.P. may be quiet and settled at this point in excerpt 2L, he is not following another discourse rule of Ms.P. She wants people communicating with each other to face one another. She interrupts her task-setting talk to the class in order to reinforce this particular discourse rule.

Table 4.11
Excerpt 3L of Field Note Text and Discourse Rules From One Low-Incidence-of-Narrative Observation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Note Text Excerpt:</th>
<th>Discourse Rule(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>And last week we were headed towards deciding what we could do about it on a personal level and what we could do about it in a larger sense. And one of the things you came up with, or we discussed as a group, was perhaps starting with just a poster campaign and an awareness, a visual awareness, during the day.</td>
<td>Large group discussions are for coming up with possible solutions to problems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In excerpt 3L, Ms.P. is reestablishing that there is a goal to be reached when student and teacher have a discussion. She also decides for the group what the function of their talk is to be -- to come up with possible solutions to a problem on their team. At this point in the discussion the balance of power between Ms.P. and the students is asymmetrical -- she is in control of the "airtime," the topic of talk, and its purpose.

When I analyzed the complete field notes of the beginning of this skills class supervised by Ms.P. (see Appendix G), I found implicit and explicit rules for the students' use of language. A student usually could not talk without having formal permission from Ms.P. in this audiotaped skills class. Once Ms.P. entered the classroom, all were to be quiet both physically and verbally. When Ms.P. posed a question, students were not required to respond but did have to raise their hands to do so. When speaking with permission, students were to face the person(s) listening and take the time necessary to complete their thoughts. By spending time talking, teacher and student could come up with solutions to problems. During discussions, Ms.P. might quote the student's words publicly. Sometimes this was done for the purpose of clarification.

After I looked at the discourse rules that I had teased out from my entire field note text during this rereading, I found that the greatest body of discourse rules had occurred without the production of any student narrative. Since my focus was to discover if there were incidences of discourse rules conducive to the students' production of oral narrative, I turned my attention to this small body of discourse rules.

4. *Student Oral Narrative Production and Its Discourse Rule Context*

Once I completed the rereading of my field notes to find and record the discourse rules that were in evidence when the participating adults were supervising each class, small-group discussion, interview or special event in which I was a participant-observer, I read the field notes and discourse rules again. This time I was looking for only those discourse rules which were in evidence just before a student or students produced a
particular oral narrative. This was my next step to finding out if there was a connection between student oral narrative production and its context of discourse rules as well as what the nature of that connection might be.

An example of my "teasing out" the relevant discourse rules from the field note text during this rereading is in Table 4.12. In the field note excerpt in Table 4.12, I have underlined with one line the key statement(s) within the field note text which led me to the articulation of the discourse rules in the right column. Then I have underlined with two lines the elements of each rule that are "episode specific." "Episode specific" describes a discourse rule which was operative just prior to a student's beginning a specific episode of talk which contained narrative. That same discourse rule could be operative again within the same observation session and would still be an episode-specific discourse rule. In contrast, an "underlying" discourse rule is operative throughout an observation session and therefore will normally be evident each time narrative emerges. I have placed parentheses around the elements of a rule that are "underlying."

It is possible for an episode-specific discourse rule to override an underlying discourse rule during an observation session. This occurred during the beginning of my site observation of Mr. B.'s social studies class which is described in Appendix F. The operative discourse rules, as written next to the field notes of this observation, indicate to students again and again that they do not need to obtain the teacher's permission to talk to teacher or peers. The discourse rules include such phrases as "may spontaneously express," "may talk quietly without raising hand," and "may call out." There is apparently an underlying rule in effect during this session. That rule is "Students may talk spontaneously to teacher and peers."

Then, at one point in the field note text, Mr. B. tells a student to read aloud to the class. At this time, an episode-specific rule becomes operative as is shown by the student A.N.'s behaviors at this time. She accepts the material given to her and does read aloud
as directed. The episode-specific rule is "Students may be ordered to read aloud from
printed material." It contradicts the underlying rule that students may speak
spontaneously. If students have to read aloud, they are not in a position to choose to
speak spontaneously. As the observation session continued beyond that segment which is
included in Appendix F, it was evident that the underlying rule was in effect throughout
this session but had been overridden by an episode-specific rule in this instance. This is
one example of how an episode-specific rule overrides an underlying rule with which it
cannot coexist.

What follows is the example of my selecting from the field note text those discourse
rules which were operative just prior to the emergence of student narrative. My analysis
follows. The field note excerpt in this example is also from the site observation described
in the field notes in Appendix F. The activity for most of the class session is a simulation
of a past time in the history of Japan. Mr.B., through a unit of study, had prepared the
students for their participation in this role-play.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Note Text Excerpt:</th>
<th>(Underlying) and/or Episode-Specific Discourse Rules:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the hall, Ta.C. began to address Mr.B. in a voice that had the quality of a whine. Ta.C.: I don’t want to!***</td>
<td>(A student may spontaneously use voice quality and words to express a strong dislike for what she is being asked to do.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.B. told her to take her bookbag inside the classroom to get it out of the way. She did so and went back into the hall.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.B.: O.K. Shogun’s going to enter the country. (referring to Ta.C. who enters the classroom and steps onto a rug to the right of the door.) The Shogun enters!</td>
<td>(A student may spontaneously use language) to show compliance with imperative by teacher.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.B.: (to all in hall) Get ready to take your shoes off.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ta.C.: (on a rug to the right of a large castle made of cardboard boxes) O.K., I took my shoes off.* (She then climbed through an opening in the front of the castle.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.B.: Where’s the merchant?...Enter the merchant. (Mr.B. directs M.K., the merchant, to untie his shoes.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of those discourse rules that were operative just prior to the emergence of Ta.C.’s narrative during this excerpt, one is underlying. The underlying discourse rule is "Students may talk spontaneously to the teacher." Ta.C. does not need permission to speak to Mr.B. As the class session progressed, this underlying rule needed to be rewritten as "Students may talk spontaneously to teachers and peers," in order to encompass the behaviors in evidence throughout the class session.

Just prior to the emergence of narrative there is one episode-specific discourse rule in evidence. It is "A student may express strong dislike." Mr.B. calmly accepted Ta.C.’s whiny expression of a deep feeling and told her to put her bookbag in the room on her way to the hall. Perhaps his acceptance of her feelings and her dramatic presentation of
those feelings, along with his encouragement of her speaking out spontaneously in the presence of a recording device, encouraged her to produce the narrative that followed: "O.K. I took my shoes off."

The discourse rule in Table 4.12, "A student may show compliance with an imperative by a teacher," is known by the community after the narrative occurs. It would be relevant to my analysis if it were an articulation of an episode-specific rule in the talk just prior to the emergence of a student narrative or was an underlying discourse rule. It is not an underlying rule according to my definition. It was not normally evident in the talk context each time narrative emerged. Because this discourse rule is neither an underlying rule nor an episode-discourse rule which occurred just before narrative emerged, it is irrelevant to my analysis.

5. Trends in Student Oral Narrative Production and Its Discourse Rule Context

After "teasing out" the discourse rules which were operative just prior to the emergence of student oral narrative, I arranged and rearranged them to see if there were any patterns developing. At this point in the process, the discourse rules were still written in their original form which was not necessarily parallel form because I had written each rule to describe a specific situation, not to fit a predetermined category. As I grouped and regrouped the rules, I eventually discovered four significant categories of rules. Once the categories or patterns were evident, I rewrote the rules so that they were in parallel form. Sometimes, I discovered that I had written a set of rules as one. In that case, I separated the original rule into its components and placed each into the appropriate category.


I named the four large groupings of discourse rules, which were based on emerging patterns, as follows: "Access to Airtime," "Topics for Talk," "Exploring the Limits," and "Where and When." "Access to Airtime" includes those rules which state what students need to do in order to get time to talk. "Topics for Talk" includes those rules which
delineate what may be talked about. "Exploring the Limits" refers to those rules which
describe how language may be used -- not just its lexicon. "Where and When" contains
those rules that tell where talk may occur and when.

**b. Definition of Subgroups of Discourse Rule Categories**

Within each large grouping are subgroups. Subgroup (1), for instance, has a quality
that distinguishes it from Subgroup (2). I noted each distinguishing quality next to the
number of the subgroup. For example, the quality for Subgroup (1) in Table 4.17 is
"Speaking Spontaneously" while the quality for Subgroup (2) in the same table is
"Speaking Briefly."

**c. Description of Table Format for Presentation of Discourse Rules**

The discourse rules presented in Tables 4.13 through 4.32 are those that were
operative when a particular adult was supervising the students. This method of
presentation is not to imply the discourse rules are the supervising adult's. Rather the
discourse rules are those which were operative when student narrative emerged and when
that particular adult was supervising the students. I organized the discourse rules
according to the four categories and per supervising adult: Group A-"Access to Airtime,"
Group B-"Topics for Talk," Group C-"Exploring the Limits," and Group D-"Where and
When."

In column one of Tables 4.13 through 4.32, I have differentiated underlying rules
from those that are episode-specific by placing parentheses around the underlying ones.
Those rules that are not marked are episode-specific.

In each table, I arranged the subgroups of discourse rules in descending order based
on the number of its members. For example, a subgroup with (1) at its beginning contains
discourse rules which preceded a greater or equal number of oral narratives than a
subgroup identified with a (2).
In column two of the same tables, I have noted the setting, the type of observation site, in which the discourse rules were operative. For example, "Core Class" in column two means the rule in column one was in effect in a Core Class. It does not necessarily mean the rule was in effect during just one Core Class nor does it imply the rule was in effect in all Core Classes. "Other" in column two in Tables 4.29 through 4.32 means other places where the researcher was with students such as an outdoor bazaar and in the school corridors.

In column three I have entered the number of oral narratives which emerged just after a specific rule was in effect. A narrative may be represented more than once in the tables for Groups A through D for a particular supervising adult since more than one discourse rule may have been operative just prior to the production of that narrative. For example, this happens in Tables 4.13 and 4.16. In Subgroup (2) of Table 4.16, there is the underlying rule: "Students may talk when in laboratory work groups." Fourteen narratives surfaced while this was the underlying rule. One of those fourteen surfaced just after the following episode-specific rule, found in Subgroup (1) of Table 4.13, was operative: "Students may interrupt the teacher’s talk." Following each table is my analysis.
d. Discourse Rule Tables Followed by Analysis

Table 4.13

Group A: Access to Airtime.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Mr. T. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;Speaking Spontaneously&quot;</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may shout out spontaneously on the given topic.)</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may interrupt the teacher’s talk.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk spontaneously to teacher.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk spontaneously to peers.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk simultaneously.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may converse quietly with peers.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Getting Teacher’s Permission&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students must raise their hands to gain access to &quot;airtime.&quot;</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are to raise and then lower their hands to gain access to &quot;airtime.&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students need the teacher’s permission to talk about the academic topic.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;Giving Peers Permission&quot;</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student chairpersons may distribute &quot;airtime&quot; among peers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) &quot;Uninterrupted Time&quot;</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may have uninterrupted &quot;airtime.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) &quot;Speaking Briefly&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may speak only if they do so briefly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group A of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Mr. T. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread the students’ access to airtime. Subgroup (1) contains discourse rules which permit students easy access to being heard. Students may speak spontaneously. The rules in Subgroup (2) were evident less than one-third the time those in Subgroup (1) were. Therefore, it was more likely students would narrate in a context in which they could speak spontaneously than in a context in which they needed to gain permission to speak through a procedure such as raising their hands to be recognized. Rarely did oral
narrative surface when the discourse rules permitted students a length of time to speak, either briefly or at length. Two settings, Mr. T.'s Core Classes and Homeroom Period, are represented in Subgroup (1).

Table 4.14
Group B: Topics for Talk.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Mr. T. Was the Supervising Adult.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;Student's Topic&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate the topic of talk.</td>
<td>Study Period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about a fight among peers.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Choice of Teacher's Topic&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk on the teacher's topic.</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;Required Teacher's Topic&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students must talk on the teacher's topic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group B of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Mr. T. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread what students could talk about. Just before narrative emerged in his presence, what students could talk about does not appear to be of much importance. Few narratives emerged with these discourse rules forming part of the prior context. Subgroup (1) contains discourse rules which encourage student talk about the teacher's topic. Just once narrative emerged just after students were pressed to respond to the teacher's topic. Two settings, Mr. T.'s Core Classes and Study Period, are represented in the Subgroup (1).
Group C of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Mr. T. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread what students can do with language. Subgroup (1) contains discourse rules which permit students to express their feelings. There are then several subgroups, (2) through (6), which contain discourse rules which are relatively equal in their appearance in the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;Expressing Emotions&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express awe appropriately.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express frustration.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express anger.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express other strong emotions.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Playing with Language&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may engage in word play.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may speak scatologically.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may use similes.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may make sound effects.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;Joking Around&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may tease the teacher.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may joke.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) &quot;Answering Teacher's Questions&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may respond to the teacher's questions.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) &quot;Narrating&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may narrate.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may narrate changes in screen images in a computer game.</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) &quot;Performing&quot;</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may role play an event.</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may &quot;perform&quot; with language.</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) &quot;Opining&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express their opinions.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) &quot;Challenging the Teacher&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may contradict the teacher.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may question the teacher's words.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) &quot;Quoting the Teacher&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may quote the teacher.</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) &quot;Explaining&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may explain.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
context just prior to the emerging narrative. The rules in these subgroups together
describe a wide variety of permitted uses of language that range from exploring the
possibilities of words to performing with language. Just once, as indicated in Subgroup
(10), did oral narrative surface just after the discourse rules permitted students to explain
to Mr.T. One setting, Mr.T.'s Core Classes, is represented in Subgroup (1).

Table 4.16

Group D: Where and When.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Mr.T. Was
the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;By the Recorder&quot;</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk in the vicinity of a mechanical or human recorder.)</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;In Small Groups&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk when in laboratory work groups.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;In Humorous Atmosphere&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk in a humorous atmosphere.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) &quot;After Job Done&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk after they have completed their work.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) &quot;When Playing a Game&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk while in a whole-class configuration playing a computer game.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) &quot;In Transition Times&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk when the bell rings to signal the end of class.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk when returning lab equipment to storage areas.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk just after the bell rings signalling the beginning of class.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk just after morning snack break ends.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group D of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence
of some student oral narrative when Mr.T. was the supervising adult, has as its common
thread where and when students can talk. Subgroup (1) contains an underlying discourse
rule which was in evidence throughout the time I was a participant observer. "Students
may talk where that talk will be recorded so that it can be studied at a later time." The
entire team of students and teachers agreed upon my recording of their talk for the purposes of research when I originally presented myself to the team. "May" is the correct verb form because students could choose to verbally participate in a class only when they were out of the range of the recorder. Mr. T. was particularly active in his support of the taping of their talk. Publicly to the students and privately to me, he articulated how exciting it was that I was doing research just as they were doing research in his science classes.

In contrast to Groups A through C, Group D includes no subgroup which contains discourse rules that preceded the emergence of just one or two narratives. Finally, three settings, Homeroom, Core Class, and Special Event, are represented in Subgroup (1).

In summary, when Mr. T. was the supervising adult and student oral narrative emerged, the operative discourse rules fell into four categories: students' access to airtime (in Group A), topics for talk (in Group B), language uses (in Group C), and settings for talk (in Group D). The top subgroups within each of the four major categories represent the most frequent of individual conditions which were present just prior to oral narrative's surfacing. Those conditions were as follow: students' speaking spontaneously, talking about student-initiated topics, using talk to express emotions, and talking when it was being recorded.

In contrast, the bottom subgroups within each of the four major categories, represent the least frequent of individual conditions which were present just prior to oral narrative's surfacing. Those conditions were as follow: students' having a brief period of time to speak, talking only about the teacher's topic, using talk to explain, and talking during transition times.
Table 4.17

Group A: Access to Airtime.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Mr.B. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| (1) "Speaking Spontaneously"  
(Students may call out spontaneously.)  
(Students may talk spontaneously to teacher and peers.)  
Students are encouraged not to raise their hands to gain "airtime." | Core Class  
Core Class  
Homeroom  
Study  
Core Class | 16  
6  
5  
2  
1 |
| (2) "Speaking Briefly"  
Students may pursue getting a brief amount of "airtime." | Core Class | 1 |

Group A of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Mr.B. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread the students’ access to airtime. Subgroup (1) contains discourse rules which permit students easy access to being heard. Students may speak spontaneously. Subgroup (2), the bottom subgroup, indicates oral narrative emerged just once after students had to pursue getting access to the "airwaves." Three types of settings are represented in Subgroup (1): Core Class, Homeroom, and Study.

Table 4.18

Group B: Topics for Talk.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Mr.B. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| (1) "Student’s Topic"  
Students may initiate talk about success.  
Students may initiate talk about a tape recorder’s presence.  
Students may initiate talk about a last year's school happening.  
Students may initiate talk about cameras. | Core Class  
Core Class  
Homeroom  
Homeroom | 2  
2  
1  
1 |
| (2) "Choice of Teacher’s Topic"  
Students may talk on the teacher’s topic. | Core Class | 5 |
Group B of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Mr. B. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread what students could talk about. Just before narrative emerged in his presence, what students could talk about appears to be of minor importance. Few narratives emerged with these discourse rules forming part of their prior context. Both Subgroup (1) and Subgroup (2) contain rules which preceded about an equal number of narratives. Narrative followed student-initiated talk about as often as it followed talk restricted to the teacher's topic. Two settings, Mr. B.'s Core Classes and Homeroom Period, are represented in the first subgroup while just Core Classes are represented in the second.

Table 4.19
Group C: Exploring the Limits.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Mr. B. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;Expressing Emotions&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may express joy.)</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may express pride.)</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express pride.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express failure.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express unhappiness.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express strong dislike.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express admiration for peers.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Betting&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may wager.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;Answering Teacher's/Peer's Questions&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may respond to the teacher's question.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may respond to peers' questions.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) &quot;Joking Around&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may joke.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may tease peers.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) &quot;Narrating&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may narrate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may tell multi-party narratives.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) &quot;Opining&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may present their opinions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) &quot;Challenging the Teacher&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may question/contradict the teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group C of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Mr. B. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread what students can do with language. Subgroup (1) contains discourse rules which permit students to express their feelings, including joy and pride. Subgroup (2) consists of one underlying rule which permits students to use language to wager. It preceded the production of sixteen narratives. I observed this use of language in one of Mr. B.’s activities to teach natural resources of the countries of Africa. Just once, as seen in Subgroup (7) oral narrative surfaced just after the discourse rule permitted students to contradict the teacher. One setting, Mr. B.’s Core Classes, are represented in the first subgroup.

Table 4.20

Group D: Where and When.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Mr. B. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;By the Recorder&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk in the vicinity of a mechanical or human recorder.)</td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk to the tape recorder while working.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk to the video camera.</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;In Small Groups&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk when in small groups engaged in competitive activity.)</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk when in small groups engaged in competitive activity.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;While with Concrete Objects to Explore&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk when exploring a concrete object.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk when a concrete object is available for their exploration.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk when working on an art activity.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) &quot;In Transition Times&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk just after the bell rings signalling the beginning of class.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk just after the bell rings signalling the end of class.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) &quot;When on Task&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk if working on assigned task.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group D of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Mr. B. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread where and when students can talk. The first subgroup contains an underlying discourse rule which was in evidence throughout the time I was participant observer. "Students may talk where that talk will be recorded so it can be studied at a later time." In addition, when Mr. B. was in charge an episode-specific rule supported students' talking to the recording devices as reflected in the data in Subgroup (1). The underlying discourse rule which comprises Subgroup (2) preceded sixteen narratives. It supported student talk when the students were in small groups engaged in competitive simulation games.

Once narrative emerged just after the discourse rule supported talk while working on an assigned task. All settings are represented in Subgroup (1) while just Mr. B.'s Core Classes are represented in Subgroup (2).

In summary, when Mr. B. was the supervising adult and student oral narrative emerged, the operative discourse rules fell into four categories: students' access to airtime (in Group A), topics for talk (in Group B), language uses (in Group C), and settings for talk (in Group D). The top subgroups within each of the four major categories represent the most frequent of individual conditions which were present just prior to oral narrative's surfacing. Those conditions were as follow: students' speaking spontaneously, talking about student-initiated or teacher topics, using talk to express emotions, and talking when it was being recorded.

In contrast, the bottom subgroups within three of the four major categories, (There was no clear bottom subgroup for the topics for talk.), represent the least frequent of individual conditions which were present just prior to oral narrative's surfacing. Those conditions were as follow: students' pursuing a brief time to speak, using talk to question or contradict the teacher, and talking while working on an assigned task.
Table 4.21

Group A: Access to Airtime.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Ms.C.H. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;Speaking Spontaneously&quot; (Students may talk spontaneously to peers.) Students may shout out spontaneously. Some students may talk spontaneously. Students may interrupt the teacher’s talk. Students may interrupt peers’ talk.</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Getting Teacher’s Permission&quot; (Students must raise their hands to gain access to “airtime.”)</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;Uninterrupted Airtime&quot; Students may have enough &quot;airtime.&quot;</td>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) &quot;Procedures for Peer Talk&quot; Students must follow an orderly procedure in order to talk with peers.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group A of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Ms.C.H. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread the students’ access to airtime. The first subgroup contains discourse rules which permit students easy access to being heard. Students may speak spontaneously. Thirteen narratives followed not only their spontaneous talk, talk without explicit permission, but spontaneous talk which interrupted the speech act of another person. Oral narrative emerged just once after students had to follow an orderly procedure to talk with peers. Two types of settings are represented in the first subgroup, Ms.C.H.’s Core Classes and Special Event.
Table 4.22

Group B: Topics for Talk.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Ms.C.H. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;Choice of Teacher’s Topic&quot; Students may talk on the teacher’s topic.</td>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Student’s Topic&quot; Students may initiate the topic of talk. Students may initiate talk about daring peer behaviors in school. Students may initiate talk about social activities outside of school. Students may initiate talk about movies.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group B of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Ms.C.H. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread what students could talk about. Just before narrative emerged in his presence, what students could talk about appears to be of minor importance. Few narratives emerged with these discourse rules forming part of their prior context. The first and second subgroup have about equal members. Six narratives followed the rule which supported talk on the teacher’s topic while five followed talk on a student-initiated topic. One setting, Ms.C.H.’s Skills Class, is represented in the first subgroup while Core Class and Special Event are two types of settings represented in the second.
### Table 4.23

**Group C: Exploring the Limits.**
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Ms.C.H. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;Narrating&quot; Students may narrate. Students may tell multi-party narratives.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Expressing Emotions&quot; Students may express happiness. Students may express surprise. Students may express anger.</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;Playing with Language&quot; Students may make sound effects. Students may chant.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) &quot;Answering Adult’s/Peer’s Questions&quot; Students may respond to peers’ questions. Students may respond to teacher’s questions. Students may respond to adult’s questions.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) &quot;Opining/Arguing&quot; Students may express their opinions/argue.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) &quot;Correcting Teacher&quot; Students may correct the teacher.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) &quot;Asking Questions of Peers&quot; Students may ask peers questions.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) &quot;Swearing&quot; Students may swear.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) &quot;Joking Around&quot; Students may joke.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) &quot;Accusing&quot; Students may accuse peers of wrongdoing.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group C of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Ms.C.H. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread what students can do with language. While there are ten subgroups, no single subgroup stands out as far as number of narratives produced just after its rules were in evidence. Together they contain discourse rules which support a wide variety in student uses of language ranging from narrating to exploring the sounds of language to
asking peers questions. Rarely, did oral narrative surface just after the discourse rules permitted using language to swear, joke, or accuse peers of wrongdoing. Two settings, Ms.C.H.'s Core Classes and Special Event, are represented in Subgroups (1) through (7).

Table 4.24

Group D: Where and When.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Ms.C.H. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;By the Recorder&quot;</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk in the vicinity of a mechanical or human recorder.)</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk to the tape recorder.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;In Small Groups&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk when in small, instructional groups.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk when others are in small, instructional groups.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may converse with the teacher.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;When with Adult/Teacher&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk to non-teaching adult if working on assigned task.</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may converse with the teacher.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) &quot;In Transition Times&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk just after the bell rings signalling the beginning of class.</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk during passing time, after the bell rings signalling the end of class.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) &quot;When Walking in Room&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk when not seated.</td>
<td>Special Event</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group D of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Ms.C.H. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread where and when students can talk. The first subgroup contains an underlying discourse rule which was in evidence throughout the time I was participant observer. "Students may talk where that talk will be recorded so it can be studied at a later time." In addition, when Ms.C.H. was in charge an episode-specific rule supported students’ talking to the recording devices. The discourse rule in the bottom Subgroup (5)
supported student talk when students were not seated but rather physically moving about the room. This rule was in place prior to the production of three narratives. All settings are represented in the first subgroup while Ms.C.H.’s Core Classes and Special Event are represented in two of the next three subgroups.

In summary, when Ms.C.H. was the supervising adult and student oral narrative emerged, the operative discourse rules fell into four categories: students’ access to airtime (in Group A), topics for talk (in Group B), language uses (in Group C), and settings for talk (in Group D). The top subgroups within each of the four major categories represent the most frequent of individual conditions which were present just prior to oral narrative’s surfacing. Those conditions were as follow: students’ speaking spontaneously, talking about student-initiated or teacher topics, using talk to explore their language repertoire from expressing feelings to making sound effects to responding to questions, and talking when it was being recorded.

In contrast, the bottom subgroups within two of the four major categories, (There was no clear bottom subgroup for the topic or setting category.), represent the least frequent of individual conditions which were present just prior to oral narrative’s surfacing. Those conditions were as follow: students’ following an orderly procedure to gain access to "airtime" to speak with a peer and using talk to accuse a peer of wrongdoing.
Group A: Access to Airtime.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Ms.P. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;Speaking Spontaneously&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk spontaneously.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may shout out spontaneously.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may interrupt the teacher's talk.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Getting Teacher's/Peer's Permission&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students must raise their hands to gain access to &quot;airtime.&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students must raise their hands to gain access to &quot;airtime&quot; when there is a peer chairperson.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;Uninterrupted Time&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may be tentative when responding.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group A of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Ms.P. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread the students' access to airtime. Subgroup (1) contains discourse rules which support students' speaking without explicit permission. Students may speak spontaneously. Oral narrative emerged just once after students responded in talk but did so tentatively. One type of setting is represented in the first subgroup, Ms.P.'s Core Class.
Table 4.26

Group B: Topics for Talk.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Ms.P. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;Student’s Topic&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate the topic of talk.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about an art project.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about a tape recorder’s presence.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about the ancestry of peers’.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Choice of Adult’s Topic&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk on the teacher’s topic.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk on non-teaching adult’s topic.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;Required Teacher’s Topic&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are to talk about a book they selected but read for an assignment.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group B of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Ms.P. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread what students could talk about. The first and second subgroup have about equal members. Six narratives followed evidence of the rules of Subgroup (1) being operative. These rules supported student-initiated talk. Four narratives followed evidence of the rules of Subgroup (2) being in effect. These rules supported talk on either a teacher’s or other adult’s topic. The third subgroup has one rule which was in the context prior to the emergence of one narrative. The rule in Subgroup (3) required talk on an assigned topic. Two settings, Ms.P.’s Homeroom and Core Class, are represented in these three subgroups. Ten of the eleven narratives occurred in the Homeroom setting rather than in the Core Class setting.
Group C of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Ms.P. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread what students can do with language. Subgroup (1) contains discourse rules which preceded the production of eighteen narratives. Those discourse rules support the students’ responding to questions, whether of the teacher, another adult, or a peer. Just once oral narrative surfaced just after the discourse rules supported the students’ giving an opinion or teaching peers about a book they had all read. Two settings, Ms.P.’s Core Class and Homeroom, are represented in Subgroup (1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;Answering Adult’s/Peer’s Questions&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may respond to the teacher’s questions.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may respond to non-teaching adult’s questions.</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may respond to peers’ questions.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Expressing Emotions&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express strong feeling.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;Joking Around&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may joke.</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) &quot;Opining&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may give an opinion.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) &quot;Tutoring&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may tutor peers about a common book.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.28

Group D: Where and When.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While Ms.P. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;By the Recorder&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk in the vicinity of a mechanical or human recorder.)</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;In Small Groups&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk when in small, assigned groups.)</td>
<td>Homeroom</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;In a Circle&quot;</td>
<td>Core Class</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk when seated in a circle.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group D of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when Ms.P. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread where and when students can talk. The first subgroup contains an underlying discourse rule which was in evidence throughout the time I was participant observer. "Students may talk where that talk will be recorded so it can be studied at a later time."

Subgroups (2) and (3) are also comprised of underlying rules. The discourse rule in Subgroup (2) supports student talk when students are in assigned, small groups. This rule was in effect prior to the production of twenty-nine narratives. Subgroup (3) also contains an underlying rule. While it was in evidence, nine narratives surfaced. There is, therefore, no subgroup containing rules which are in evidence prior to the emergence of just one narrative. The Core Class, Homeroom, and Special Event settings are represented in the Subgroup (1).

In summary, when Ms.P. was the supervising adult and student oral narrative emerged, the operative discourse rules fell into four categories: students’ access to airtime (in Group A), topics for talk (in Group B), language uses (in Group C), and settings for talk (in Group D). The top subgroups within each of the four categories
represent the most frequent of individual conditions which were present just prior to oral narrative's surfacing. Those conditions were as follow: students' speaking spontaneously, talking about student-initiated or adult topics, using talk to respond to questions, and talking when it was being recorded.

In contrast, the bottom subgroups within three of the four major categories, (There was no clear bottom subgroup for the setting category.), represent the least frequent of individual conditions which were present just prior to oral narrative's surfacing. Those conditions were as follow: students' having uninterrupted "airtime," talking about a required teacher topic, and using talk to tutor peers.

Table 4.29

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;Speaking Spontaneously&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk spontaneously.)</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may interrupt the adult's talk.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may shout out spontaneously.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Uninterrupted Time&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may have enough airtime.)</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may have enough airtime.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may have uninterrupted airtime.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;Turn-taking&quot;</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students and adults take turns speaking.)</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) &quot;Speaking Briefly&quot;</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk briefly.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) &quot;Talking Louder/Over&quot;</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may dominate the &quot;airwaves.&quot;</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk louder to gain access to &quot;airwaves.&quot;</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) &quot;Interruptable Student Time&quot;</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student's access to &quot;airtime&quot; may be interrupted by the adult.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group A of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when J.P. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread the students' access to airtime. Subgroup (1) contains both underlying and episode-specific discourse rules which support students' speaking without explicit permission. Students may speak spontaneously. In addition, within the Small Group Setting students' talk could occur simultaneously. A student did not have to wait his/her conversational turn to begin speaking. As indicated in Subgroup (6) oral narrative emerged just five times after I, the adult, interrupted the students' access to "airtime."

Two types of setting are represented in the first subgroup, Small Group and Interview.
Table 4.30

Group B: Topics for Talk.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While J.P. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1a) &quot;Student's Topics about Peers/Other&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate the topic of talk.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about peers.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about a peer's wrongdoing.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1b) &quot;Student's Topics about Specific Adults&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about teachers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about experiences with teachers.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about adults.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1c) &quot;Student's Personal Experience Topics&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about pranks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about a party.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about family.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about a success.</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about school experiences.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about a rumor.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may initiate talk about a secret.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1d) &quot;Building on Student's Topic&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may &quot;piggyback&quot; on a peer's initiated topic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1e) &quot;Returning to Student's Topic&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may reestablish initiated topic of talk.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Required Adult's Topic&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are to talk about the adult's topic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;Choice of Adult's Topic&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk about a topic related to the adult's topic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk about the adult's topic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group B of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when J.P. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread what students could talk about. Subgroup (1) is comprised of episode-specific rules which supported talk about student-initiated topics. Within Subgroup (1) there are further subdivisions of rules which describe a particular aspect of the topic for talk. Subdivision (1a) includes topics about peers, (1b) includes talk about teachers and other adults, (1c) includes social experiences both in and out of school. Student control of the
topic for talk can be seen as an element of the rules in (1d) and (1e). Subgroup (1) discourse rules were rarely found in evidence prior to oral narrative production in the Interview setting. In contrast, the Interview setting is more often represented in Subgroup (2) in which the discourse rules require talk about the adult’s topic and in Subgroup (3) in which the rules support talk about the adult’s topic.
Table 4.31

Group C: Exploring the Limits.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While J.P. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;Narrating&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may narrate.)</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may narrate.</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;Answering Adult’s Questions&quot;</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students are to respond to adult’s questions.)</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may respond to adult’s questions.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may respond to peer’s questions.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;Clarifying&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may give examples.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may elaborate.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may show expertise.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may explain.</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may repeat.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) &quot;Expressing Emotions&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express strong emotions.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express surprise.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express dislike.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express pride.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express happiness.</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express anger.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) &quot;Asking Questions&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may ask adult questions.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may ask peers questions.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) &quot;Performing&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk with characters’ &quot;voices.&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk in &quot;whisper voice.&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may &quot;perform.&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) &quot;Opining/Arguing&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express their opinions.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may argue with peer.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) &quot;Playing with Language&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may engage in word play.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may use similes.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may cheer softly.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may make sound effects.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) &quot;Talking Scatologically&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may shock adult.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) &quot;Joking Around&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may tease.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may joke.</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) &quot;Wondering&quot;</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may voice uncertainty.</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may express wonderings</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) &quot;Correcting the Adult&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may correct adults.</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) &quot;Threatening Peers&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may threaten peers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group C of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when J.P. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread what students can do with language. Subgroup (1) contains discourse rules which support the students' use of narrative when speaking while Subgroup (2) rules support/require the students' using language to respond to questions. Both Subgroup (1) and (2) rules were in place preceding the production of many narratives, over one hundred. Subgroups (3) through (10), containing only episode-specific rules, represent a range of language uses from elaboration to expressing emotions to teasing. Rarely did oral narrative surface just after the discourse rules supported the students' correcting the supervising adult or threatening peers. Three settings, J.P.'s Interview, Small Group, and Other are represented in Subgroup (1).

Table 4.32

Group D: Where and When.
Operative Discourse Rules Preceding the Emergence of Oral Narrative While J.P. Was the Supervising Adult

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Operative Discourse Rules</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th># of Times Rule Precedes Narrative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) &quot;By the Recorder&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk in the vicinity of a mechanical or human recorder.)</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) &quot;In Less Public Space&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk when in a private space.)</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk when in a semi-private space.)</td>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) &quot;With Friends&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk with a small group chosen by a peer.)</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk with a partner chosen by peer.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) &quot;In a Circle&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk when seated in a circle.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) &quot;In Humorous Atmosphere&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students may talk in a humurous atmosphere.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) &quot;When Walking Outdoors&quot;</td>
<td>Small Group</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Students may talk when not seated and outdoors.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Group D of the discourse rules, which were in evidence just prior to the emergence of some student oral narrative when J.P. was the supervising adult, has as its common thread where and when students can talk. Four of the six subgroups are comprised of underlying rules. Subgroup (1) contains an underlying discourse rule which was in evidence throughout the time I was participant observer. "Students may talk where that talk will be recorded so it can be studied at a later time." However, it also includes an underlying discourse rule which was in evidence only during the demographic interviews with the students. During those interviews, I explained that I needed to have the tape recorder recording their speech. I did not give them the option of being recorded. Because the student was sitting at a table with me, s/he could not move out of recording range. Five of the six subgroups focused on where talk might take place rather than when it might. Subgroup (6), an underlying rule, was operative prior to the emergence of just nine narratives. It addressed a place students might talk -- outdoors when standing or moving about physically.

In summary, when J.P. was the supervising adult and student oral narrative emerged, the operative discourse rules fell into four categories: students' access to airtime (in Group A), topics for talk (in Group B), language uses (in Group C), and settings for talk (in Group D). The top subgroups within each of the four categories represent the most frequent of individual conditions which were present just prior to oral narrative's surfacing. Those conditions were as follow: students' speaking spontaneously, talking about student-initiated topics ranging from peers to adults to family, using talk to narrate, and talking when it was being recorded.

In contrast, the bottom subgroups within the four major categories represent the least frequent of individual conditions which were present just prior to oral narrative's surfacing. Those conditions were as follow: students' being able to be interrupted by an adult, talking about an adult topic, using language to threaten peers, and talking when physically moving about outdoors.
In conclusion, through the process of analyzing and reflecting on the data presented in this chapter, I have found trends in the incidence of student oral narrative and in the discourse rule context which immediately precedes its occurrence. My conclusions based on those patterns, their pedagogical implications, and my recommendations for further research will follow in Chapter V.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSIONS, PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

A. Introduction

Since the conclusions rely so heavily upon my final working definition of oral narrative, I will redefine oral narrative to help the reader have a quick and ready reference. Oral narrative is spoken language which takes place in a social interaction (Richards 1978, 16) in which one intent of the speaker is to interpret or make sense of the present by bringing knowledge of the past into the present (Genette 1980, 234). It is event driven. The narrative may tell about one event or a series of events (30). It may include description and commentary (Prince, 1987, 57) but it must include at least one event clause. For the purposes of this dissertation, the event is not one which habitually recurs or is ongoing (Potts 1989, 9) nor is it primarily predictive in nature. It does contain or reflect personal meaning (Cazu, Hymes 1978, 30).

Chapter IV emphasizes how very much a form of social behavior oral narrative is and as with most social behaviors is rule driven, which is one of the reasons I focused on uncovering the discourse rules in operation immediately prior to the production of oral narrative. What follow are my conclusions, pedagogical implications, and recommendations for further research.

In general, in the middle school classrooms in which I was a participant observer, student oral narrative was most likely to occur when student talk was encouraged and supported rather than restricted and evaluated. Students were most likely to narrate once they knew that their talk was considered worthy of study. The place where their talk was most likely to occur was in a small group with their peers. There they were more likely to be able to spontaneously explore their language repertoire. There the stage was set for middle school students to bring their past into the present -- to make connections.
B. The Prevalence of Student Oral Narrative

Student oral narrative was most likely to occur in those settings in which student talk was encouraged and supported rather than restricted and evaluated.

1. Settings Where Talk Is "On Track"

Narrative was produced consistently in the following settings: Small Groups with Researcher, Ms.C.H.'s Special Events, Ms.C.H.'s Skills Class, Mr.B.'s Homeroom, and Mr.B.'s Study (see Table 4.2). One of the reasons for the production of oral narrative in these four settings was that no constraints were made upon the students to direct their language specifically to curricular matters. (Some other reasons will be explicated in the next section of this chapter.) In Small Group discussions with me, students were invited to "just talk" with me and some of their friends. During Special Events the teachers, like Ms.C.H., planned activities to enrich the curricula in Core Class. For instance, with Ms.C.H. the students visited a computer center to increase their awareness of careers. Skills Class was a time available to staff to meet with students as a group or individually to address observed needs. Homeroom was a place students had to be after a bell rang each morning to signal when students were to move out of the hall. A school discourse rule was in place during homeroom: "Students are to listen to announcements when they are made over the intercom." During Study Periods, I was able to pull out students to conduct demographic interviews. Therefore, in any of these settings talking together was not labeled as "off the track." Whatever students said could be judged as "on track."

2. The Core Class Setting Most Supportive of Narrative Production

Of the four Core Class settings (science, social studies, math, and language arts), students were most likely to produce oral narrative in the science classroom (see Table 4.2). In an end-of-the-year interview with me, the science teacher, Mr.T., indicated one reason why this was the case. In answer to my question, "What about your students' language that deals with their past experiences? What can you tell me about that?" he responded as follows: "That only happens when kids are relaxed with me. At the end of
the year kids talked about family. They’d be doing the talking. I wouldn’t need to do much." Therefore, when Mr.T. felt less pressure to "do," to teach, he relaxed the constraints made upon the students to learn from his talk, their access to "airtime" increased, and student narrative surfaced.

3. The Core Class Setting Least Supportive of Narrative Production

The Core Class setting in which students were least likely to produce oral narrative was Language Arts (see Table 4.2). During my end-of-the-year interview with Ms.P., the Language Arts teacher, she not only answered my question regarding her perceptions of her students’ oral language but also in her response are indications as to why her Core Class was not a high-incidence-of-narrative setting.

She first stated that she didn’t think that she was "really, really tuned in" to her students’ oral language. Then she went on to characterize her students’ oral language generally as containing "more cutting and cruel remarks" this year than in past years. While she did try to deal with their insensitive use of language through problem-solving meetings in the Skills setting, she "did not see that those meetings made a difference in their remarks to each other." Then Ms.P. volunteered information about dialogue journals that she had begun using in Language Arts. "I saw much more expression (about books they had read) than I did in class participation. While some kids never got further than summarizing, a little off the track, it’s something I want to do more frequently next year. I learned more about what the good readers had learned in their books from their journals and less from class discussions. I’m sure part of that is my inexperience with dealing with the idea of booktalks and things."

Oral narrative was less likely to occur in Ms.P.’s Core Class because the students’ exploration of the limits of oral language was restricted. Ms.P. placed constraints on her students’ language. They were to speak sensitively to peers. They were to talk about books and thereby show knowledge of books. The students’ “dialogue" with her was to take place outside Core Class or in written language.
4. The Setting Most Supportive of Narrative Production

Oral narrative was most likely to occur in that setting in which the supervising adult used current knowledge about oral narrative to actively encourage its production by students. Of all the settings where I collected data, it was in the Small Group setting where students were most likely to produce oral narrative (see Table 4.2). In contrast to any of the settings with their core teachers, in Small Group the students were in a private or semi-private space with peers with whom they chose to talk. My stated purpose to the students for our being together was "just to talk." My unstated purpose was to collect more of their narratives. I used the knowledge I currently had regarding the collecting of oral narratives, as described in Chapter III, to create conditions that would help me reach my goal.

C. The Contexts Most Often Preceding Student Production of Oral Narrative

There were patterns to the presence of particular categories of discourse rules, of subgroups of discourse rules within these categories, and/or of specific discourse rules in the talk context just before students chose to produce oral narrative, one form of language from their repertoire. I will now present my conclusions based on those patterns as reflected in the data in Tables 4.13 and 4.32 in which discourse rules have been placed into four major categories: Access to Airtime, Topics for Talk, Exploring the Limits, and Where and When.

In general, student oral narrative was most likely to occur just after the discourse rule context made clear that language could be recorded for further study. Students were more likely to narrate just after they were supported in their using language for a variety of purposes including answering questions and expressing emotions. When students could initiate the topic of talk, speak spontaneously, and talk in small group configurations, oral narrative was also more likely to occur.
1. Discourse Rule Category Most Frequently Preceding Narrative

Student oral narrative was most likely to occur when the discourse rules that clarified where and when students could talk were in place. Of all the instances when underlying and episode-specific discourse rules were operative in all settings just prior to the emergence of student narrative, the greatest number were in the category Where and When. This was true when any of the participating adults was supervising students. Forty-two per cent of all these instances were in the Where and When category.

Even when looking at the data that were collected when a particular adult was supervising the students, a similar pattern was in evidence. When Mr.T. and Ms.P. were supervising students, fifty-four per cent of the instances of discourse rules’ preceding the production of oral narrative were in the Where and When category. When Ms.C.H. was supervising, the percentage was forty-eight. When Mr.B. and J.P. were in charge, forty per cent were in evidence.

2. Discourse Rule Subgroups Most Frequently Preceding Narrative

Student oral narrative was likely to occur in an environment where language was being recorded for further study. The subgroup within the Where and When category which represented the greatest number of student narratives was the one containing the underlying discourse rule: "Students may talk in the vicinity of a mechanical or human recorder." This was true when any of the five participating adults was supervising students. After combining all instances when discourse rules in the Where and When category in the tables in Chapter IV were operative, I found that forty-one per cent of these instances were in the subgroup "By the Recorder."

Because students could verbally participate in a setting when they were audible to a recorder or could wait until they were inaudible, the underlying rule contained within this subgroup had particular significance. It was more than a given condition of all talk which was collected and later analyzed for this study. A recorder appeared to function like an embodied invitation to talk. As indicated in Tables 4.20 and 4.24, students even spoke
directly to a mechanical recording device because they knew I was listening to all their recorded talk. By talking to a mechanical recorder they were talking to me. They had an available listener who valued their talk. Because a recorder could be anywhere at any time, every person knew s/he had an available listener.

Because the presence of a recorder was ubiquitous when all the data were collected, I will also examine the implications of the subgroup within the Where and When category which contained the discourse rules preceding the next greatest number of student narratives. When we do this, we find that in the majority of cases, student oral narrative was likely to occur after students were in small-group configurations. "Students may talk when in small groups" is a generalization which represents that subgroup. This was true when four out of the five participating adults were supervising students. (The exception was when I was supervising students. In my case, the subgroup represented by the discourse rule, "Students may talk when in a private/semi-private space," preceded more narratives than the subgroup of rules related to talk in a small group.) Seventeen per cent of the instances when the discourse rules in all the tables categorized as "Where and When" in Chapter IV were in effect were in this subgroup.

3. Discourse Rule Category, Minus Underlying Rules, Most Frequently Preceding Narrative

If I extrapolate underlying rules from all four major categories of discourse rules operative in the adult-supervised settings and look only at the instances when episode-specific rules were in place, then the category representing the greatest number of these instances was Exploring the Limits. In the majority of cases, oral narrative was more likely to occur just after students had been exploring the limits of their oral language repertoire. It was true when four out of the five participating adults supervised students. (For the fourth classroom teacher, Ms.C.H., this category was third.)
categorized forty-five per cent of all instances when episode-specific discourse rules were operative just prior to oral narrative production as Exploring the Limits. This per cent is equal to three hundred eight incidences out of a possible six hundred eighty-nine.

Even when looking at the data that were collected when a particular adult was supervising the students, a similar pattern of episode-specific discourse rule frequency was in evidence. When Ms.P. and J.P. were with students, fifty per cent of the instances of episode-specific discourse rules’ preceding the production of oral narrative were in the Exploring the Limits category. When Mr.B. was supervising, the percentage was forty-two. When Mr.T. was in charge, forty-one per cent were in evidence. Even though this category was third when Ms.C.H. was supervising adult, the percentage was still relatively high at twenty-six per cent.

4. Discourse Rule Subgroups, Minus Underlying Rules, Most Frequently Preceding Narrative

If I consider only the instances when episode-specific rules in the subgroups within the Exploring the Limits category throughout the tables in Chapter IV were in effect, then the discourse rule subgroups representing the greatest number of student narratives were those entitled "Answering Questions" and "Expressing Emotions." Student oral narrative was more likely to occur just after students had been answering questions, whether of teachers, other adults, or peers. Twenty-seven per cent of the instances of operative episode-specific rules in the Exploring the Limits category were related to the answering of questions. Sixteen per cent of the instances had to do with the expressing of emotion. The two subgroups together accounted for forty-three per cent of the instances of operative episode-specific discourse rules in the Exploring the Limits category.

5. The Episode-Specific Discourse Rules Most Often Preceding Narrative

Student oral narrative was more likely to occur just after particular episode-specific discourse rules were operative. Students were more likely to produce oral narrative just after they could initiate their own talk topic. This initiation could include "piggybacking"
on another student's topic. Students were almost equally likely to narrate just after they knew they did not need to have formal permission to speak but rather could talk spontaneously as well as when they could use language to respond to a question whether it was from a teacher, another adult, or a peer.

One of the episode-specific discourse rules that often preceded student narrative was in the subgroup "Student’s Topic" in the Topic of Talk category. It would be represented by "Students may initiate the topic of talk." There were eighty-five instances when this rule, or a version thereof, preceded a student narrative, which was equal to twelve per cent of all instances in which episode-specific discourse rules were a factor.

A second episode-specific discourse rule which frequently appeared in the context just prior to the emergence of student oral narrative made possible students' speaking spontaneously. This rule, which is worded in various ways within the "Student’s Topic" subgroup in the Access to Airtime category, was functioning in eighty-one talk contexts prior to student narrative. That was equal to twelve per cent of such contexts when episode-specific rules were a factor.

A third episode-specific discourse rule was evident in twelve per cent of those talk contexts in which episode-specific rules were in effect. It was in effect in eighty such instances. That rule is found in the Exploring the Limits category and within the subgroup addressing the student's using language to answer questions.

D. The Contexts Least Often Preceding Student Oral Narrative Production

In general, oral narrative infrequently emerged just after the discourse rules in place restricted language use. For example, few narratives were produced just after the context made clear to students that they were required to speak on the teacher's topic. They were not to initiate their own topic. Narrative also rarely surfaced just after the operative discourse rules communicated that students could talk with each other only when working on an assigned task or when following an orderly procedure. Surprisingly, very
few students narrated just after the discourse rule context supported the exploration of the limits of a language repertoire in ways that might be judged as inappropriate in a school environment.

1. Discourse Rule Category Least Frequently Preceding Narrative

Of all the instances when underlying and episode-specific discourse rules were operative in all settings just prior to the emergence of student narrative, the fewest number were in the category Topics for Talk. This was true when any of the participating adults was supervising students. Just five per cent of all these instances were in the Topics for Talk category.

Even when looking at the data that were collected when a particular adult was supervising the students, a similar pattern was in evidence. When Mr. T. and J.P. were supervising students, just four per cent of the instances of discourse rules preceding the production of oral narrative were in the Topics for Talk category. When Mr. B. was supervising, the percentage was six. When Ms. C.H. and Ms. P. were in charge, seven and eight per cent respectively were in evidence.

2. Discourse Rule Subgroup Least Frequently Preceding Narrative

Student oral narrative was least likely to occur just after it was evident that the teacher’s topic had to be the focus of talk. The subgroup within the Topics for Talk category which represented the fewest number of student narratives was the one titled “Required Adult/Teacher’s Topic.” After combining all instances when discourse rules in the Topics for Talk category in the tables in Chapter IV were operative, I found just eleven per cent of these instances were in this subgroup. That was equal to fourteen out of a possible one hundred twenty-seven instances.

3. Discourse Rule Category, Minus Underlying Rules, Least Frequently Preceding Oral Narrative

If I extrapolate underlying rules from all four major categories of discourse rules operative in the adult-supervised settings and look only at the instances when
episode-specific rules were in place, there is one category which includes just eleven per cent of the six hundred eighty-nine instances when these rules preceded narrative. That category is Where and When.

When looking at the data that were collected when a particular adult was supervising the students, a similar pattern of low episode-specific discourse rule frequency was not in evidence. For example, when Ms.P. and J.P. were with students, just zero and three per cent, respectively, of the instances of episode-specific discourse rules' preceding the production of oral narrative were in the Where and When category. However, in contrast, the percentages when Mr.T., Mr.B., and Ms.C.H. were in charge were fifteen, twenty-eight, and twenty-eight.

4. Discourse Rule Subgroups, Minus Underlying Rules. Least Frequently Preceding Narrative

If I consider only the instances when episode-specific rules in the subgroups within the Where and When category throughout the tables in Chapter IV were in effect, then the discourse rule subgroups representing the fewest number of student narratives were those entitled "When on Task." As a matter of fact, just one of the three hundred eight instances of episode-specific rules in this category was in this subgroup.

5. The Episode-Specific Discourse Rules Least Often Preceding Narrative

There were eight individual, episode-specific discourse rules which preceded just one student oral narrative. Six were from the Exploring the Limits category, one was from Access to Airt ime, and one was from Where and When. Four of the six from Exploring the Limits were rules that showed students that they could try out a variety of language forms and functions in school. Those included challenging the adult, swearing, accusing peers of wrongdoing, and threatening peers. All four of these accounted for less than one per cent of all instances when episode-specific discourse rules were operative in talk contexts just before student narrative emerged. The remaining two rules from this category were "Students may explain," and "Students may tutor peers about a common
book." The episode-specific rule from the Where and When category addressed talking when being on task and the rule from Access to Airtime focused on following an orderly procedure to talk with peers.

E. Pedagogical Implications

1. Encouraging Being "On Track"

Recently, I participated in an early stage of a school system's developing a language arts curriculum for grades k-12. As I skimmed the broad goal statements that were to guide our planning over several years, I noticed that nowhere was oral language mentioned. Even though the goal statements had been prepared by a steering committee after several months of reading current research regarding what an excellent language arts program should be, the "vision" statements omitted the goal of developing students as speakers. When I asked fellow participants representing elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school about this omission, their reaction was, "Oh, you're right! We'll have to do something about that."

If student oral narrative is going to emerge in a middle school classroom, educators need to make oral communication more than an afterthought. Unless those charged with the responsibility of leadership value the middle school student as a speaker, the classroom teacher will feel "off track" when students begin to bring their past into the classroom.

2. Communicating the Value of "Just Talk"

One way the valuing of middle school students as speakers could be communicated to the educational community would be through the addition of undergraduate and graduate courses designed to look at students' oral language development beyond the primary grade years. These courses, however, need to go further than merely studying the meaning of lexical items such as "you know" or "yeah." In addition, they should not
encourage the development of evaluation tools which would rank order students on the basis of their ability to generate a particular type of narrative. Both these approaches would fail to focus on narrative’s value to the speaker as well as to the listener/observer.

Another way would be through supporting middle school classroom research projects which focus on oral language as a social phenomenon. In-service education programs for middle school teachers could be designed to familiarize current practitioners with a research base for decision making in the area of developing students as oral communicators and thereby as narrators.

3. Setting the Stage

Current middle school teaching practices which include having students talking to each other while in a small group setting "set the stage" on which student speakers may interact with their audience and emerge as narrators. It is in such settings, particularly when students choose their potential peer audience, that they are likely to have easy access to a classroom stage. There they may speak without raising their hands. The formal, classroom turn-taking rule does not need to be in place when students are in their small group. Teachers may feel more relaxed with their students when they are not assuming the role of a director who has only a few parts available to a room filled with hopeful actors.

4. Exploring the Limits

Within a small group of peers, middle school students are also more likely to explore the limits of their language repertoire, which includes narrating, when the teacher-in-charge actively supports such exploration. Teachers who plan a range of meaningful, discovery activities that require different forms of language expression are providing such active support. For example, a science teacher who makes possible students’ playing a weather game via use of a computer is in a position to actively encourage the students’ using language to hypothesize, answer questions, ask questions, and express emotions as well as narrate simultaneously with the images appearing on the
screen. A teacher’s setting up microscopes through which students can see the cells of a piece of cork is able to support not only the students’ use of similes to describe that new world but also their wonderings about cells and living things. These wonderings may then evoke memories from the past such as when their parent gave blood at the local blood mobile.

Going on a class trip is another type of activity which supports students’ using their language in a variety of ways. By incorporating a field trip to whale watch into the school year, for example, a teacher makes possible a day in which students may converse spontaneously with each other to entertain, persuade, inform, express strong emotions, give directions, wonder, and much more. Later, when students are back in the classroom, that common world of past experiences may then emerge in the form of student oral narrative.

F. Recommendations for Further Study

When I originally began this ethnographic study of middle school students’ oral narrative, I was endeavoring to explore five questions. I collected and analyzed my data not only to find out more about the prevalence of middle school students’ oral narrative in the classroom and the contexts out of which it emerges, as presented in this dissertation. I also wanted to learn more about how oral narrative functioned for the speaker and the audience as well as what classroom teachers could learn about individual, middle school students through their classroom narratives. Therefore, my recommendations for further research, which follow, will include questions generated by that which I formally presented in this dissertation as well as those stimulated by work I have done in exploring my remaining three questions.

1. Expanding to Other Populations

I closely examined the discourse rules that were operative just prior to the emergence of oral narrative in the four middle school classrooms of one team of
seventh-grade teachers. This study could be expanded to the study of several teams of seventh graders, each of which has a population which differs demographically from mine and from each other in terms of cultural background.

In this dissertation I did not present any trends that I observed regarding oral narrative production and the gender of the speaker. My study could be replicated to discover the trends in discourse rule contexts that are operative just prior to the emergence of narratives produced by female middle school students as compared to male students.

A third population that could be the focus of a study similar to mine would be middle school students who are described as "at risk." For example, what might the relationship be between the discourse contexts that precede their narrative production and those which precede the production of students not characterized as "at risk?" Also, how prevalent is their oral narrative production in a middle school classroom compared to the rest of the population?

2. Small Group Setting

I recommend the further study of middle school students' oral narrative production while in a Small Group setting, as I define Small Group in Chapter III. Data would be collected in discussions with a group of students whose members are all female, with a group whose members are all male, and with a third group of males and females combined. I suggest that the same students be reconfigured into these three types of groups. Once data were collected, they could be analyzed in terms of length of narratives produced, functions the narratives serve in each group, and discourse rules in the context prior to the emergence of student narrative. Then effects of gender on each of those elements could be examined.

This recommendation is the result not only of extensive reading of literature in the field of gender and language production but also of an experience that I had while conducting a small group discussion with four males. Midway through the session, a
female student knocked on the door of the room in which we were talking. When one of the group answered the door, she asked if she could join the group. They agreed that she could participate. Once she became a member of the group, I observed a dramatic change in the narrative production of the individual members. Prior to her arrival, the function of the male members’ narratives was primarily to inform. After she entered the group, the male members of the group used narrative primarily to entertain.

Another perspective to explore regarding the Small Group setting and middle school student oral narrative production is the effect of the facilitator/chairperson. The same group of students could be studied when they have no designated facilitator, when they have a designated peer facilitator, and when they have a familiar adult facilitator.

3. **Oral Narrative Defined**

This study could be replicated using a working definition of oral narrative that differs from mine. I chose to narrow my focus in this study because I was interested in looking at certain aspects of oral narrative production. Data could be collected as I did and then analyzed according to one or more of the following categories: predictive narrative, fictive narrative, simultaneous narrative, iterative or generic narrative, as well as personal experience narrative.

4. **Discourse Rules**

I looked at discourse rule contexts just prior to the emergence of oral narrative. Another investigator could examine the contexts just after the emergence of oral narrative and/or after a narrative has been completed.

Although it wasn’t within the scope of this dissertation and I therefore did not demonstrate the following finding here, my analysis of data that I collected from end-of-year interviews with the participating adults revealed that the teacher whose own stated discourse rules allowed for the least spontaneous speech happened to be that teacher whose core subject was language arts. The discourse rules of other language arts instructors could be examined to see if there is a trend suggestive of a kind of
“basalizing” of oral language. That is, do language arts instructors focus so much on teaching students how to use oral language effectively that little time is left for students to actually develop as oral communicators?

5. **Narrative Length**

During the analysis of my data, I looked at the incidence of narrative as described in Chapter IV. I did not look at the patterns in discourse rule contexts prior to the emergence of narrative and the length of the narrative that emerged. This could be done using a research design similar to the one that I used.

6. **Language Arts Curricula**

Current k-12 language arts curricula at the state level or local level could be gathered and examined in terms of how they address students as speaker/narrator through the grades. This recommendation is based on my personal experience in k-12 curriculum work as discussed earlier in this chapter as well as in the introduction to Chapter II of this dissertation.

In general, in the middle school classrooms in which I was a participant observer, student oral narrative was most likely to occur when student talk was encouraged and supported rather than restricted and evaluated. Students were most likely to narrate once they knew that their talk was considered worthy of study. The place where their talk was most likely to occur was in a small group with their peers. There they were more likely to be able to spontaneously explore their language repertoire. There the stage was set for middle school students to bring the past into the present -- to make connections.

**G. Reflections**

Throughout my experience as a university student, I never had an academic course which focused on secondary students’ oral language development. Once I had decided to focus on such a study myself, I found that I continually needed to extrapolate information and insights from lectures, texts, and research reports that were about the language development of the very young or the use of language by adults. This study is meant to
become part of that body of research focused on middle school students which a small
group of researchers have already built. It is my hope that other researchers will also
choose to step into the students’ world, listen to their narratives, and learn more about
one way we all make connections.

The process of developing and implementing this ethnographic study of the
narrative production of selected middle school students has been richly rewarding to me.
I have been introduced to the work of researchers like Harold Rosen and Courtney
Cazden whose enthusiasm for nurturing student narrative has not only stimulated my
interest but has supported its deepening. I have learned ways to study language in a
middle school setting from the studies of Barnes, Stubbs, Schuman and others. I have
been able to hear narrative upon narrative when I have talked with small groups of
students according to William Labov’s design for such discussions. And most
importantly, I have been moved by the power of the narratives of middle school students.
APPENDIX A

WRITTEN CONSENT FORM

"A Study of the Oral Language of Middle School Students"

I.

I, Jane Percival, am a graduate student at the School of Education, University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Massachusetts. I am currently enrolled in the Integrated Day doctoral program. As a doctoral student, I have chosen to study the oral language of middle school students in a research project using observation and description as the methodology.

II.

You are being asked as the parent/guardian of _, a student at the _ Middle School, to give permission for him/her to participate in this research project. Such permission does not guarantee participation.

During this research project, I will be audiotaping interviews with your son/daughter, his/her talk during various on-going classroom activities, and some out-of-classroom talk. In addition, I will be videotaping classroom activities in which your son/daughter may be participating. I will also be writing field notes during my observations of classrooms in which your son/daughter is a student. On occasion I will need samples of your son’s/daughter’s other classroom productions such as drafts of his/her writing.

III.

Portions of the audiotapes and sound track of the videotapes will be transcribed by me. My goal is to describe the oral language of middle school students for:

a. sharing with the University of Massachusetts faculty committee that is advising me in my research.

b. publishing in the form of a dissertation, one of the requirements of my doctoral program.
c. establishing a firm base for further research in this area of study by others as well as by me.

d. informing those interested in learning more about this topic through oral presentations, journal articles, and other publications.

The visual portion of the videotapes and the field notes will be used to describe the context of the oral language produced by the students. The samples of other products of the students, such as their writings, will be used to gain perspective on their oral language.

IV.

In all written material and oral presentations in which I will use materials from this research project, I will not use your son’s/daughter’s name, names of real people mentioned during the taping, or the name of places that would identify your son or daughter. Transcripts will be typed with initials for all proper names.

V.

While consenting at this time to have your son/daughter participate in this research project, you may at any time withdraw him/her from the actual process.

VI.

Furthermore, while having consented to your son’s/daughter’s participation in this research project and his/her having so done, you may withdraw your consent to have specific excerpts from the tapes, field notes, or other products used in any printed materials or oral presentations if you notify me when your concern arises and within two weeks of the taping or observation.

VII.

In signing this form you are agreeing to the use of the materials from this research project as stated in III. If I were to want to use the materials in any ways not consistent with what is stated in III, I would contact you to get your additional written consent.
VIII. In signing this form, you are also assuring me that you will make no financial claims on me for the use of materials generated by your son/daughter in this research project.

IX. Finally, at your request, I will be happy to supply you with audiotape copies of your son's/daughter's taped oral language generated as part of this project. However, I will need to have you supply the blank tapes.

If you have any questions about this research project as it pertains to your son's or daughter's role as participant in it, please call me as soon as possible.

I would appreciate the return of the attached form as soon as possible so that I can begin this study.
I, ______________________________, have read the Written Consent Form and agree/do not agree (Circle your choice.) to have my son/daughter participate under the conditions stated therein.

______________________________ (signature of parent/guardian)

______________________________ (signature of student)

______________________________ (date)

______________________________ (signature of observer)

(Please return this completed form to your son's/daughter's homeroom teacher within the coming week.)

*************************

Because it might be helpful for me to talk with you as parent/guardian of the above student at some time during this research project, would you please complete the following:

I would/would not (Please circle one.) be able to participate in an interview with you during this research project.

************

If you are able to participate, I will need the following information:

During the day I can be reached at the following number: ______________________

During the evening I can be reached at: ______________________

THANK YOU.
APPENDIX B

PARTICIPATING STUDENT INTERVIEW FORM

Demographic Data for Student Participant

Date: Place: Time:

Relevant Context Notes:

Participant’s Full Name:

Male  Female (Circle one.)

Birthdate:

Place Born:

Geographic Homes in Past:

Brothers/Ages:

Sisters/Ages:

Immediate Family at This Time:

Current Jobs of Family Members:

Educational History of Family Members:

Ethnic Background/Racial Identity:
APPENDIX C
PARTICIPATING ADULT INTERVIEW FORM

Demographic Data for Adult Participant

Date:  
Place:  
Time:  

Relevant Context Notes:

Participant’s Full Name: 
Male  Female (Circle one.)

Birthdate: 
Place Born: 
Geographic Homes in Past: 

Ethnic Background/Racial Identity: 

Past Work Experiences: 

How did you happen to come to this middle school to teach? 
How did you happen to become a member of this team? 
Will your team be functioning next year as it did this year? 
Looking back over the school year what do you feel good about? 
Looking back over the school year what wouldn’t you want to repeat?

As you already know I have been here to study the oral language development of middle school students. Would you tell me about your perceptions regarding their oral language?
What about students' language that deals with their past experiences? What can you tell me about that?

Would you tell me about the oral language of each of your core groupings?

As you know I have been focusing recently on the oral language of specific students in one of those groups. What can you tell me about the oral language of each of those students?

How have you seen my presence affecting classroom language/other behaviors of you or your students.

If you posted class rules about talking, what would you definitely include and enforce? Why?

Would you tell me about memorable student talk over this past school year?
Field Note Text:

Ca.S. chose the members of this small group discussion with me, J.P. We had all just returned from a team field trip at a nearby park to pick up trash as one of the team’s Earth Week activities.

The teachers in charge had nothing in particular planned for the last half hour of the day and said it would be fine if I took a group of students with me to the library conference room until the end of the school day. I asked Ca.S., a student whom I was observing in depth, to choose four other students to join us for a discussion that would be audiotaped. All four students were females and had given their permission to participate in the research project. (see Appendix A for copy of Written Consent Form.) We seated ourselves around a rectangular table with the tape recorder in the center of the table. Seated clockwise from me were Ta.C., Me.M., Em.K., Ca.S. Although one wall of the room was glass, those passing by in the library could not easily see through the panels because they were covered with posters. It was possible for students in the library to hear talk from within this conference room if that talk was loud. Students were aware of this feature of the space.

The only notetaking that I did during this session was at the beginning to write down the date, time, seating arrangement of the participants, beginning topic and at the end to write down their suggested discussion topics for me to use with groups in the future.

Ongoing Interpretations:

My feelings regarding the process itself

I was surprised throughout this session with this group’s openness with me and the amount of narrative Ca.S. produced in such a brief time.

My not taking notes might have contributed to the amount of oral narrative produced as well as the amount of talk in general.
I began by stating where we were seated in relationship to each other. However, I confused right and left as I was doing it. I said I would correct it later on in my drawing. Ta.C. laughed aloud and the others smiled as I did.

J.P. : Um, I'm going to give you two topics to start off with and I don't care where you go with them. I'll let you make the choice because I came in with one idea at the beginning of the day and then I heard something else so. Um, one is the way, the one I started out with was let's just talk about your life here at the school before I joined you. I need to piece that together. That is one. You may not want to talk about that.

(Someone said she had forgotten and the others laughed.) You may have to go back and remember together. The other is uh, someone said to me, "This has been a very rough week here on your team." And I'd like to be filled in on that because I don't know what that means. So, do you have any idea of which of those two you feel would be easier to talk about?

They quickly and unanimously decided to do the second one.

J.P. : The second one? O.K. let's make that our topic then and I'm just going to write that down. Uh, "Tell me about the rough week at the middle school." All right and I'm just going to ask you and you can talk to each other, to me, this is a discussion. That's what it is and so we can ask questions of each other. We can do whatever we need to uh to make sure we understand and I understand what this is all about.

During my talking to them, the four girls were reacting verbally and nonverbally with me and each other in various ways, some of which were barely audible on the tape.

Being a vulnerable adult may have decreased the balance of power between the students and me, thereby positively affecting the generation of oral narrative by these students.

The second topic was definitely more attractive to them than the first topic. It was the topic I could only have known as a participant observer.

I have emphasized our communicating with each other.
J.P. : All right, so, what about it? What does this mean: It's a rough week?

Me.M. : This week was supposed to* be fun. And like our teachers, they have been doing grades probably, all week they've been like acting different, and like, and Mr.B. went overboard with Earth Week. Like today at the town council meeting, he, he like, there was only supposed to be eight minutes, and he knew there was only supposed to be eight minutes, and he still didn't like shorten his thing"

Em.K. : I know.***
*Ca.S. : Cause like J.R. was doing a * job telling him not to. I mean she was like
Me.M. : (began to say something) * of grouchy with her
?

When students talk about the participating teachers in a critical way I always feel uncomfortable. However, I need to interfere in their talk as little as possible and resist reacting the way I would if I were a teacher on the team.

Me.M. had strong opinions about the experiences of the week as expressed in the narrative she begins about Mr.B.'s "going overboard."
Ca.S. contributed to the narrative during this time by showing the effects of the adult's action on a student. Me.M. uses words of the speaker and acts out the saying with her voice in the manner of an oral storyteller. Ta.C. supports the speaker. She gives evidence that she has to develop the conversational narrative.

Earlier I had tried to bring Ta.C. into the discussion and failed. I was happy to see she was becoming an active participant in a role other than observer-listener.

I've been frustrated trying to keep my class lists up to date because of frequent reshufflings of students who cause disciplinary difficulties.

As students were talking I was wondering if it's being the last period before a school vacation period was freeing the talk as well as it's being right after a field trip experience.

Ca.S.: because she was telling him
  (Ca.S.'s voice gets softer.)

Me.M.: And he then he told them to
  ask him, or her. He goes,
  "Ask them a question 'cause
  they want to show you
  something." (spoken with
  petulant voice) And we had
  to ask them a question.
Ta.C.: I know. And we didn’t even
  have any more left
Me.M.: I know. (said with
  empathy)***
Ta.C.: so we had to make up the
  questions.

J.P.: So you, are you both in
  Mr.B.'s homeroom? Because I
  still don’t have homerooms
together
All: No,*** (Then they each
  announced which homeroom
  they were in.)
J.P.: Oh. So you (to Ta.C.) had to
  make up the questions so
  that his kids could talk. Is
  that
Ta.C.: Me and J.R. were trying to
  (The rest is inaudible
  because her voice became
  very soft.)
J.P.: Oh, I see.

Me.M.: And like they didn’t have to
  ask for that so they could
  answer. And he could’ve
  like, he could’ve made
  things shorter so that

Ca.S.: Theirs was like boring. It wasn’t
Me.M.: I know.***

Tellers are using this narrative to persuade the audience that Mr.B. and his group were not responsible in this action.
APPENDIX E
RULES OF DISCOURSE DURING ONE HIGH-INCIDENCE-OF-NARRATIVE OBSERVATION

This field note text is of the beginning of a small-group discussion with the researcher. It takes place in the conference room of the school library during the last period of the class day. The annotations in the right column are discourse rules as evidenced in the behaviors of the participants. J.P. will stand for the participant observer researcher henceforth.

Field Note Text:
Ca.S. chose the members of this small group discussion with me, J.P. We had all just returned from a team field trip at a nearby park to pick up trash as one of the team’s Earth Week activities. The teachers in charge had nothing in particular planned for the last half hour of the day and said it would be fine if I took a group of students with me to the library conference room until the end of the school day. I asked Ca.S., a student whom I was observing in depth, to choose four other students to join us for a discussion that would be audiotaped. All four students were females and had given their permission to participate in the research project. (see Appendix A for copy of Written Consent Form.)

We seated ourselves around a rectangular table with the tape recorder in the center of the table. Seated clockwise from me were Ta.C., Me.M., Em.K., Ca.S. Although one wall of the room was glass, those passing by in the library could not easily see through the panels because they were covered with posters. It was possible for students in the library to hear talk from within this conference room if that talk was loud. Students were aware of this feature of the space.

The only notetaking that I did during this session was at the beginning to write down the date, time, seating arrangement of the participants, beginning topic and at the end

Discourse Rules:
A student may choose a group of peers to talk with in the presence of this adult.

Student language may be audiotaped.

A discussion can take place when students and adult sit in a circular arrangement.

A discussion can take place when the physical space is not completely private.
to write down their suggested discussion topics for me to use with groups in the future.

I began by stating where we were seated in relationship to each other. However, I confused right and left as I was doing it. I said I would correct it later on in my drawing. Ta.C. laughed aloud and the others smiled as I did.

J.P. : Um, I'm going to give you two topics to start off with and I don't care where you go with them. I'll let you make the choice because I came in with one idea at the beginning of the day and then I heard something else so. Um, one is the way, the one I started out with was let's just talk about your life here at the school before I joined you. I need to piece that together. That is one. You may not want to talk about that. (Someone said she had forgotten and the others laughed.) You may have to go back and remember together. The other is uh, someone said to me, "This has been a very rough week here on your team." And I'd like to be filled in on that because I don't know what that means. So, do you have any idea of which of those two you feel would be easier to talk about?

They quickly and unanimously decided to do the second one.

J.P. : The second one? O.K. let's make that our topic then and I'm just going to write that down. Uh, "Tell me about the rough week at the middle school." All right and I'm just going to ask you and you can talk to each other, to me, this is a discussion. That's what it is and so we can ask questions of each other. We can do whatever we need to uh to make sure we understand and I understand what this is all about.

During my talking to them, the four girls were reacting verbally and nonverbally with me and each other in various ways, some of which were barely audible on the tape.

J.P. : All right, so, what about it? What does this mean: It's a rough week?

Students may laugh at adult error.

Students are given a limited choice of topics initially during a discussion.

Students may talk out without waiting for a turn.

Students may piece together their memories through talk.

The words of others may be quoted.

Student language is to inform this adult.

Students may use language to formulate a decision.

Student language is to respond to this adult's question.

A discussion is to talk with each other.

Talk is for reaching understandings.

Students may talk spontaneously while this adult talks.

Student language is to answer the adult's question.
Me.M. : This week was supposed to be* fun. And like our teachers, they have been doing grades probably, all week they've been like acting different, and like, and Mr.B. went overboard with Earth Week. Like today at the town council meeting, he, he like, there was only supposed to be eight minutes, and he knew there was only supposed to be eight minutes, and he still didn't like shorten his thing"

Em.K. : I know.***
*Ca.S. : Cause like J.R. was doing a

? : I know.***

J.P. : So you think he was deliberately making it longer?

All : Yeah, yeah.***

J.P. : making it longer?

*Me.M. : J.R. goes

*Ca.S. : J.R. was doing a really good job telling him not to. I mean she was like

Me.M. : (began to say something)

*Ca.S. : he was, he was getting kind of grouchy with her

? : I know.***

*Ca.S. : because she was telling him (Ca.S.’s voice gets softer.)

*Me.M. : And he then he told them to ask him, or her. He goes, "Ask them a question 'cause they want to show you something." (spoken with petulant voice) And we had to ask them a question.

*Ta.C. : I know. And we didn’t even have any more left

Students may talk about other adults on the team with this adult.

A student may interrupt another student’s talk.

Students may interrupt the adult’s talk.

Students may give opinions to this adult.

A student may interrupt another student’s talk.

A student may interrupt another student’s talk.

A student may keep the floor when another student wants it.

A student may interrupt another student’s talk.

A student may use the words of an adult who is not present.

A student may use a character’s voice.
Me.M. : I know. (said with empathy)***

*Ta.C. : so we had to make up the
* questions.

J.P. : So you, are you both in Mr.B.'s homeroom? Because I still don't have homerooms together.

All : No.*** (Then they each announced which homeroom they were in.)

J.P. : Oh. So you (to Ta.C.) had to make up the questions so that his kids could talk. Is that?

*Ta.C. : Me and J.R. were trying to (The rest is inaudible because her voice became very soft.)

J.P. : Oh, I see.

*Me.M. : And like they didn't have to ask
* for that so they could answer.
* And he could've like, he
* could've made things shorter so
* that

*Ca.S. : Theirs was like boring. It wasn't

Me.M. : I know.***

*Ca.S. : They didn't, they didn't tell any
* points.

*Me.M. : They didn't practice.

*Ca.S. : I don't think they did anyway.

Talk continues on with Me.M. introducing the next topic related to the one above.
Field Note Text:
I was at the back of the classroom getting the video camera set up as Mr. B. had his students line up outside the classroom door. A few students entered the room, left their bookbags near a row of desks parallel to the window opposite the door, got their ceremonial paper hats and returned to the hall.

I reminded students through questions, "Are you shoeless, merchant? Remember no shoes?" to have their shoes off before entering the classroom.

Mr. B. was hurrying the students into the hall. He was also commenting positively about the hats they had made for homework.

In the hall, Ta.C. began to address Mr. B. in a voice that had the quality of a whine.

Ta.C.: I don't want to!***

Mr. B. told her to take her bookbag inside the classroom to get it out of the way. She did so and went back into the hall.

Mr. B.: O.K. Shogun's going to enter the, the country. (referring to Ta.C. who enters the classroom and steps onto a rug to the right of the door.) The Shogun enters!

Mr. B.: (to all in hall) Get ready to take your shoes off.

Discourse Rules:
Students may talk in the vicinity of a mechanical recorder.

A student may spontaneously use voice quality and words to express a strong dislike for what she is being asked to do.
Ta.C.: (on a rug to the right of a large castle made of cardboard boxes)
O.K. I took my shoes off.* (She then climbed through an opening in the front of the castle.)

Mr.B.: Where’s the merchant?...Enter the merchant. (Mr.B. directs M.K., the merchant, to untie his shoes.)

The merchant, M.K., then entered the classroom and sat to the side of the castle at a small table from which he could and did look at the video camera frequently. He had on a paper sailor’s hat.

Mr.B. went to the castle and opened the door more so Ta.C. could be seen. Then he hurried back to the doorway to direct students to enter the classroom in a ceremonial manner.

As each student entered the room, Mr.B. reminded that person to take off his/her shoes, bow to the Shogun and leave a gift with the merchant for the Shogun. The merchant recorded who gave each gift. As I saw him do this, I realized that I had forgotten to put my name on the gift that I had placed near the castle earlier.

The merchant, M.K., looked at the camera as a student coming to give gifts looked at Ta.C. Mr.B. told A.N. to mark down the looking at Ta.C. as a breaking of the rules.

After students gave their gifts to the merchant, they took a seat in one of two rows of desks which were in a line along the walls and facing the center of the classroom.

Ch.B., a female student, said at the doorway: Oh, It’s embarrassing!***

Then after she entered according to the rules and was bowing to each person in the row of desks nearer the doorway, another student J.T. told her to bow lower.

Mr.B.: Very good, Ch.B., Great bower!

Then Mr.B. asked for the Number 4 rice picker to enter the classroom.
J.W. then entered the room and did all parts of the ritual except bowing to a line of desks. Mr.B. told her to go back and bow. As she did so she self-consciously laughed.

J.W.: I hate this. It’s so embarrassing.*** (She said this as she was bowing. Then she took her seat.)

Students were quietly talking to Mr.B. as he gave out chopsticks to those who were role playing rice pickers.

?: Can we hold these any way we want?***

The students then practiced how to hold the chopsticks for a while as they sat at their desks. They quietly talked as they shared strategies.

Then Mr.B. put some rice grains into chalked circles on the floor which he called rice paddies. He had A.N. read the rules for picking up rice from these paddies. Then he demonstrated how to pick up the rice off the floor with chopsticks and drop the rice into a cup. The designated rice pickers were then given five minutes to practice picking up the rice with chopsticks.

Mr.B. also set up a game for the two dominos(?) to play while their rice pickers worked in the paddies.

J.T.: (in one of the two rice picking groups) I got one!*

?: Oh, yeah, I got one!* (There was more student talk as the practice session continued.)

J.T.: Gee, the rice is going everywhere...*

An office announcement was coming over the intercom. There was talk between J.W. and J.T. but I couldn’t hear it. They were about five feet from the microphone but talking very quietly.

?: This is practice! This is* practice! Can they mark you down in practice? I got marked A student may spontaneously express a strong feeling.

Students may talk quietly without raising hand.

A student may ask a procedural question without raising hand.

Students may talk quietly among themselves while on task.

Students may be ordered to read aloud from printed materials.

Students may talk quietly while playing game.

Students may spontaneously express delight through a narrative.

Students may talk quietly as they work on a task.

A student may communicate an observation through a narrative spontaneously without raising his hand.

Students may talk quietly on task.

A student may use a narrative to express unhappiness to a large audience without raising hand.
Students were quietly concentrating on picking up the rice.

J.T. then told something about his having difficulty because he pulled a muscle in his hand. C.B. called out to Mr. B. by name and was reminded that that was breaking the rules. He was to be called Tsetse.

The students were putting the picked up rice into cups. Mr. B. took a flash picture for the yearbook. Someone called Mr. B. by his name.

Mr. B.: Did anyone hear that?

K.P.: I heard it! (She looked at Mr. B. Others joined in chorus with her.)

The phone rang.

Mr. B.: (humorously) Whoops, the Emperor’s calling.

Students continued picking up rice.

Mr. B.: A few more minutes.

M.K.: Tsetse(?) B., Tsetse B., shogun told me J.T.’s finger touched the rice.*

*J.T.: (said forcefully) I didn’t touch the rice. My fingers did not touch the rice.


Several: Shogun did.

*J.T.: The Shogun’s a liar!"

J.T. was written up for breaking the rules of this simulation and showing disrespect. The simulation continued through the rest of the period.

A student may spontaneously in a narrative give a reason for failure.

A student may call out to teacher according to simulation rules.

A student may call out to teacher without raising hand.

A student may answer teacher’s question without raising hand first.

A student may spontaneously in a narrative inform the teacher about a fellow student who broke a rule.

A student may spontaneously build the narrative by arguing his position without raising his hand to get permission to speak.

A student may spontaneously ask a peer a question.

Students may spontaneously answer a student’s question to add information to a narrative.

A student may spontaneously accuse others of wrongdoing without raising his hand to get permission to speak out.

A student will be penalized for breaking language use rules during a simulation.
APPENDIX G
RULES OF DISCOURSE DURING ONE LOW-INCIDENCE-OF-NARRATIVE OBSERVATION

This field note text is from the beginning of a skills class with Ms.P. during the third period of the school day. The objective for this class is to have students articulate a personal commitment to decreasing their use of "put downs" with their peers. The annotations in the right column are discourse rules as evidenced in the behaviors of the participants.

Field Note Text:
As the students entered the classroom, the tape recorder was visible on a desk close to the front of the classroom. Ms.P. was not yet in the room.

J.D. : What are we doing today?***

***? : What?

***J.D. : What are we doing today?

***? : (inaudible response)

Students were talking with each other but the topic that the recorder picked up was about "him again" and the speakers were females.

? : That was a major put down."***

***C.B.: He's ugly.

C.B. and J.D. then began to physically push each other playfully. Then many students began to congregate just inside the classroom doorway. C.B. and J.D. were at the outer edge of this group. There were little screams in reaction to something that resulted in exclamations.

? : That hurts!***

***? : You're mean!

There was a hum of talk throughout the classroom. Then one boy talked into the tape recorder.

? : Hi there, tape recorder.***

Another student spoke loudly in response.

Discourse Rules:
Students may talk in this classroom during passing time.
***?: You can't talk to it.

This generated some talk about the recorder's being on.

***?: Testing 1, 2, 3 near the tape recorder.

While two girls C.B. and H.W. exchanged talk about grades that they had received recently, others were tapping rulers on desks and talking animatedly to each other.

Suddenly, quiet descended upon the room. Students had noticed that Ms.P. had just entered the classroom. Standing at the front of the room, she began talking to the quiet group of students.

Ms.P.: I'd like you to get...C.S., would you get settled?

(Female C.S. responded but I could not understand what she said because the volume of her voice lessened.) I'd like to just take a few minutes...and B.J.P. (male student), please turn around...take a few minutes to review what we've done. We've spent a lot of time this month talking about put downs and what form they take...um...when we put down other people.

And last week we were headed towards deciding what we could do about it on a personal level and what we could do about it in a larger sense. And one of the things...you came up with, or we discussed as a group, was perhaps starting with just a poster campaign and an awareness, a visual awareness, during the day. Uh...not putting other people down, encouraging people to being more sensitive to one another. And as the other skill classes come through they will be cycling through with the same kind of experiences and things that you've done...um...with me, although yours has certainly been more lengthy because you've been with me for a month and the others will be just for two-week periods. And perhaps our poster campaign can spread throughout the team.

Right now it's just here and perhaps further into the building. Where could we go with that? But many of you came up with suggestions about what we could do personally. And we really haven't dealt with it and come up with a personal commitment

Students are to be quiet when the teacher enters the room.

Students are to be quiet when the teacher speaks to them.

A student is to be physically and verbally quiet when the teacher speaks.

A student may respond to the teacher's rhetorical question.

A student is to face the person who is speaking.

Students and teacher spend a lot of time talking.

Large group discussions are for coming up with possible solutions to problems.

Students are not expected to answer the teacher's question.
about what we can do about it. Suggestions that you came up with (reading from a list in front of her) were simply to ignore the person if they put you down, put them down was a suggestion by another student, set personal goals about put downs, stay away from the person, tell an adult, speak to individual who made the remark and not to pick on anyone yourself. Those are the suggestions that you came up with on your idea sheets about what you could do on a personal level. One of them that was repeated several times was number 3 set personal goal about put downs. Come up with a statement, a philosophy of your own that you would, in fact, try to live up to. It's almost like a resolution you could be making. How many of you (interruption by vice principal over the intercom)

I lost my thought. Well, getting back to number three. Um, what personal goals or resolutions could we make as individuals? Many of you have discussed with me, "Whatever I do here it's not going to change out there. People are still going to speak at me in the halls. I'm going to be going to other classes. I'm going to be hearing it a lot."

And you may be right that you might not be able to alleviate all of the put downs that you hear in the course of a day but what we're trying to do is find a different way of responding to them other than the usual which might be to come right back with the same someone says something to you, you're trying to one up them. What are other alternatives for dealing with that? And that's really what we're talking about. J.M.? (J.M. has raised his hand.)

Students do not have to answer the teacher's question. Student's words will be quoted by the teacher publicly.

J.M.: That may lead to more put down's. If you put them down, it may something you know, if they put you down to something you're not really sensitive to but boy if they put you, I mean, if you put them down (intercom interruption) and then it's something like they you know you know it might lead up to a fight.

Student does not have to answer the teacher's question to group.

Student needs to raise hand to get "airtime."

A student may take the time needed to complete a thought.

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Ms. P.: You're saying that if you respond by putting them down
J.M.: That's right.***

Ms. P.: someone says something offensive to you and you respond back by saying something equally offensive to them you might be creating what? a larger problem?
J.M.: Yeah.***

Ms. P. goes on to acknowledge the problem J.M. voiced and then focuses the class once again on "something we could do personally."

A student's words may be clarified by the teacher.
A student may interrupt the teacher's talk to evaluate the teacher's clarification of the student talk.

Student does not have to answer the teacher's question but may with permission.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


