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VERBAL PATTERNS OF AN INFORMAL GROUP
WHICH EMPLOYS DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES

by

Towne Charles Bishop

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

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SIGNED: _____

Rowen C. Bishop

DEDICATION

To Clyde Tidwell - democrat;

To William D. Barnes for his continued interest
in and dedication to democracy;

To the writer's committee and all of those who
are so supportive; and

To my wife Suzanne, our boys Darren and Mark,
and our parents.

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ABSTRACT

The writer developed a theory regarding democracy and democratic processes which was used as the basis of this study. The study was descriptive in nature. Its purpose was to describe the verbal behavior of the participants in an informal group consisting of university students who were interested in being teachers and who chose to utilize democratic processes within the group. This theory focused upon the interactive verbal behavior of an informal group utilizing democratic processes. It was divided into eight categories including: Originating and identifying within the informal group through interaction; discovering and sharing interests among members of the informal group; accompanying -- an emerging and receding process in an informal group; locating individual or group problems; selecting certain problems for action; developing approaches to the problems selected; pursuing the study of the selected problems; and examining the results. These categories were then utilized as a code for recording the verbal behavior.

The group was composed of freshmen students who planned to teach and were interested in experimenting with democratic processes in education. In addition, the writer functioned as a participant-observer within the group. The data were collected and coded using the Interaction Process Code devised to conduct the study.

The following summarizes the findings of the study:

Originating behavior, the point of initial interaction, was used most frequently by participants. This behavior tended to occur during the early part of each recorded session and occurred generally throughout the entire study. The participants extended greetings, made preliminary statements, and tended to establish possible reasons for the group. They consulted each other concerning feelings, attitudes, and values.

Discovering behavior, the actions of encountering and exploring occurred as participants interacted to establish personal relationships. Group members attempted to explore each other's statements, ideas, and attitudes.

Accompanying, an emerging and receding behavior, occurred second to originating in frequency. Participants tended, verbally, to show awareness of positions taken by other participants or to consent to the initiator's position (accompanying-emerging). Through the accompanying process any participant could emerge as dominant over the initiator and the group for a time. Accompanying-receding, on the other hand, occurred when a participant who had been supporting a certain idea took another view or direction. Thus, accompanying behavior demonstrated a series of emerging and receding relationships within the group.

Locating behavior, where participants determine and arrange actions, tended to produce common areas of concern and interest. The participants arranged or classified problems in relation to others located earlier.

Selecting behavior, the act of choosing certain problems, provided participants with specific problems or areas upon which to work. They expressed preferences, selected a particular problem for action, and demonstrated their decisions to act.

Developing behavior, where participants design and construct problems, often appeared almost simultaneously with selecting behavior. In developing behavior participants designed approaches to selected problems by exploring certain methods, ways, and arrangements for action.

Pursuing behavior, where participants work upon and solve problems, occurred as participants became actively involved in working upon the particular problems. Pursuing behavior demonstrated the group's working relationships as they worked on the problems.

Examining behavior, where participants consult and inform each other, was an ongoing part of the participants' verbal behavior, tending to ask questions, to distinguish purposeful features, and acquire shared meanings, along with clarifying personal meaning and personal identity.

Pause, silence or confusion, behavior difficult to code, occurred when there was no participant talk due to the occurrence of a pause in an individual's statement, silence, or confusion wherein verbal interaction was incomprehensible.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A continuing problem for educators has been one of providing useful descriptions of informal groups in education. Because of this concern, studies of such groups have been numerous. McIver and Page,¹ for instance, viewed informal groups from the perspectives of size, quality of social interaction, range of interests, duration of interests, and degree of emerging organization. Hartley and Hartley² observed that a group of individuals need common objectives to become an informal group. They stated that motivation, communication and mutual acceptance are necessary for the formation of the group.

The way the members of an informal group choose to organize themselves is, to an important extent, a function of the types of individuals comprising the group. Fromm³ noted, for instance, that persons who behave in an authoritarian manner within a group tend to show a concern for rigid structure and an effective control by a single authoritative leader or source. In contrast, White and Lippitt⁴

1. R. M. McIver and Charles H. Page, Society: An Introductory Analysis (New York: Rinehart and Co., Inc., 1953), p. 214.

2. Eugene L. Hartley and Ruth E. Hartley, Fundamentals of Social Psychology (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), pp. 385-389.

3. Erich Fromm, The Sane Society (New York: Rinehart and Co., Inc., 1960), p. 95.

4. Ralph K. White and Ronald O. Lippitt, Autocracy and Democracy (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1960), p. 282.

reported that informal groups whose members decide to utilize democratic processes tend to produce less rigid structure, more cooperation, and a more open social organization. This study was concerned with a small number of freshmen college students who chose to form a voluntary, informal group around a shared interest in democratic processes as it applies to teaching. The study was focused on the interactive patterns developed within the group.

Statement of the Problem

Among the members of an informal group of college students who are interested in being teachers and who choose to use democratic processes within the group, what interactive verbal patterns develop?

Significance of the Study

Democracy has been one of the primary concerns of American educators. Teachers continually refer to it in their talk and in their writing. They do not, however, seem to be particularly informed as to the specific behaviors which they might encounter when they are involved with small groups that are behaving democratically.

The present study was linked with two other completed investigations. One of these described and analyzed the behavior of a teacher attempting to utilize democratic processes.⁵ The other study described and analyzed the student-teacher and teacher-teacher relationships of the above mentioned teacher. It also described certain

5. Clyde D. Tidwell, Teacher Behavior and Democratic Processes (unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Arizona, 1971).

former students and the teacher's relationship with certain faculty members.⁶

Limitations of the Study

The following operated as limitations: (1) the study was limited to an informal group of college students who planned to be teachers; (2) the study was descriptive in nature and was limited to the verbal interactive behavior of the members of the informal group; and (3) the data were derived from selected five minute segments within the informal group sessions.

Assumptions Underlying the Problem

The following were assumed concerning the use of democratic processes in informal groups: (1) informal groups involve interpersonal developments and explorations in which mutual interests and problems are generated; (2) informal groups are pluralistic in character and tend to be microcosms of the larger society; (3) each participant is capable of useful contributions to his own welfare and can suggest, through interaction, worthwhile alternatives for use by other participants; and (4) significant behavioral descriptions can be developed regarding an informal group employing democratic processes as a major objective.

6. Warren B. Franzen, Selected Perceptions Regarding an Instructor's Democratic Methods (unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Arizona, 1970).

Definitions of Terms Used

The following definitions will apply throughout this study:

Democracy: A way of living that stresses social concerns and relationships of individual worth and integrity.⁷ These social concerns occur when each individual considers his actions in relationship to his society and acts accordingly. Respect, cooperation, and tolerance tend to result from such relationships.⁸

Democratic processes in an informal group: An informal group relationship that tends to develop each person's purposes, goals, needs, and actions.

Informal group: A voluntary association of a group of individuals who form a social entity capable of action. Further, it is a social structure within which the members choose to interact or not as their individual interests and desires dictate.⁹

Participant: An individual who interacts with other members of an informal group.

Interactive verbal patterns: Regularities of group member talk.

7. John Dewey, Democracy and Education (New York: The Free Press, 1966), p. 87.

8. White and Lippitt, op. cit., p. 3.

9. George M. Beal, Joe M. Bohlen, and J. Neil Randabaugh, Leadership and Dynamic Group Action (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1962), pp. 22-23.

Audio Recorder: A machine used to record and reproduce sound for future feedback.

Coding instrument: A series of behavioral categories useful in describing and analyzing verbal behavior in an informal group.

Participant-observer: An individual who functions as a member of the informal group while gathering data for the study.¹⁰

Organization of the Study

In Chapter 2 the development of the theoretical base of this study was provided. A series of categories were stipulated indicating the writer's operational beliefs concerning verbal patterns of an informal group which attempts to employ democratic processes. These categories were used to organize the related literature. Chapter 3 explained the situation and direction of the study. Chapter 4 presented a code developed to describe and analyze the informal group's verbal patterns. In Chapter 5, the data derived from the coding instrument were presented. Chapter 6 provided a summary and certain findings concerning verbal patterns of an informal group which employed democratic processes.

10. Clyde Kluckhohn, Mirror for Man (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, 1961), p. 175.

CHAPTER 2

DEVELOPMENT OF THEORY AND RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents three major divisions to organize the related literature. The three divisions are: (1) democracy and democratic processes in group behavior; (2) informal groups as an organizing base for utilizing democratic processes; and (3) interactive verbal behavior by participants of an informal group utilizing democratic processes.

Democracy and Democratic Processes

Democracy, a significant influence in Western civilization,¹ has been a fundamental concern of many educators and other social thinkers. American democracy, Myrdal² pointed out, had its roots in the European epoch of enlightenment. He explained that democracy as a social association upheld the essential dignity and perfectability of man, demonstrated confidence in the value of consent of the governed, and valued the process of decision by common counsel rather than force

1. Max Lerner, America as a Civilization (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), Vol. 1, p. 72.

2. Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1962), Vol. 1, p. 8.

or violence. Democracy as a behavior, explained Dewey,³ inevitably carries with it increased respect for the individual and greater opportunity for freedom and independence.

He further observed:

. . . democracy is more than a form of government. It is primarily a mode of associated living of conjoint communicated experience. Democracy is the extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the actions of others to give point and direction to his own.⁴

According to Russell,⁵ democracy evolved as an influence which threw off religious and secular authority and resorted to counsel and consent from the masses of people. From a slightly different view, de Tocqueville⁶ asserted that democratic actions overthrew established sound institutions which were quite autocratic. Lerner⁷ suggested that American democracy emerged from an irretrievable line that distinguished between the theoretical and the actualities of life.

Democracy or democratic processes can be examined in many ways. White and Lippitt,⁸ for instance, distinguished laissez faire and

3. John Dewey, op. cit., p. 87

4. Ibid., p. 19.

5. Bertrand Russell, A History of Western Philosophy (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967), p. 492.

6. Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (New York, Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969), pp. 16-17.

7. Lerner, op. cit., p. 73.

8. White and Lippitt, op. cit., p. 134.

autocracy from democracy. Laissez faire, they suggested, means "hands off" in almost all relationships with others. Those persons behaving in a laissez faire manner usually have little or no regard for social concerns. Each person operates as though he is isolated and separated from all others which, according to White and Lippitt,⁹ produces frustration and aggression. The aggression, in turn, seems to produce exclusive kinds of relationships among various of the participants. Riesman¹⁰ believed that laissez faire behavior isolates, separates, and abandons humans.

Autocratic and laissez faire behavior seem to include some of the same social ingredients. Fromm¹¹ pointed out that autocratic institutions utilize alienation as a primary basis for organizing relationships between people. He noted that specialized functions tend to isolate people from each other, from the process in which they work, and separates them from the product upon which they work.¹² According to White and Lippitt¹³ autocratic controls tend to lead to increased aggression between participants. Dewey¹⁴ held that autocracy relieves people of the trouble caused by thinking and also relieves them of the responsibility of directing their own activity. Laissez faire and

9. Ibid., p. 124.

10. David Riesman, The Lonely Crowd (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1966), pp. 11-12.

11. Fromm, op. cit., p. 112.

12. Ibid., p. 113.

13. White and Lippitt, op. cit., p. 54.

14. Dewey, op. cit., p. 339.

autocratic behavior tend to create social distance between people while democracy and democratic processes seem to promote a reduction of social distance.

Democracy and democratic processes, suggested Dewey,¹⁵ signify a greater reliance upon shared interests. He continued that relationships developed around shared interests will afford freer interaction between participants. The interaction in democracy produces a need for consultation and consent. Kemp¹⁶ pointed out that in a democratic group, common concerns afford expanded opportunities for the expression of capabilities of the various participants. Each participant makes his own choices.¹⁷ According to Beal,¹⁸ utilizing democratic processes enables individuals not only to determine their expectations and their freedom, but also avoid infringing upon the rights of others.

In democratic processes, isolation tends to be avoided. Isolation, Dewey¹⁹ pointed out, makes for rigid and formal institutions often accompanied by static and selfish concerns within a group. Democracy not only seeks to avoid isolation and exclusiveness but also broadens the shared concerns of individuals and groups.²⁰ Democratic

15. Ibid., p. 86

16. C. Gratton Kemp, Perspectives and the Group Process (Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1964), p. 55.

17. Ibid., p. 224.

18. Beal, Bohler, and Randabaugh, op. cit., p. 20.

19. Dewey, op. cit., p. 81.

20. Ibid., p. 87.

processes tend to liberate personal capacities, and afford opportunity for product creation.²¹

Informal Groups Utilizing Democratic Processes

Informal groups can be viewed from many perspectives. According to Beal, Bohler, and Randabaugh,²² informal groups tend to be voluntary associations of equals moving together into social bodies to perform various functions. Further, they stated that individual participants partake of a pattern of interaction based on the premise that each participant has both the right and the responsibility to contribute to the group's tasks. Hartley and Hartley²³ explained that participants in an informal group must do more than share common interests and goals. Each participant must perceive the other participants as group members capable of genuine contribution. In addition such perceptions provide a basis for engaging in shared activities. Thelen²⁴ held that informal group participants not only have shared interests, purposes, and activities but also that there are identifiable reasons why the participants feel they belong to the group. In addition, the participants in the group have a shared image of the group that sets it off from the other groups in which they may or may not associate.

21. Erich Fromm, Man for Himself (New York: Rinehart Co., Inc., 1957), p. 84.

22. Beal, Bohler, and Randabaugh, op. cit., p. 22.

23. Hartley and Hartley, op. cit., p. 386.

24. Herbert A. Thelen, Dynamics of Groups at Work (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 229.

The activities conducted by informal groups can be accomplished by utilizing one of several concepts of group behavior. Thompson²⁵ suggested that a group using democratic processes tends to improve the human relationships in the working situation. Lifton²⁶ explained that democracy in an informal group tends to allow expression of individual difference and that each participant's values are considered a vital concern for all. Silberman²⁷ pointed out that in an autocratic group opportunity to "thrash out" a variety of ideas, reflect upon possible alternatives, or consider created changes is largely unavailable.

In a democratically oriented informal group, ideas, alternatives, changes, and the process of achieving these is the primary concern. Beal²⁸ defined the essential characteristics of a democratic informal group as providing conditions wherein decisions are made by the participants. He explained that all participants operate on the basis of their own interests, skills, and decisions. An informal group operating democratically utilizes the process of conferring or consulting by and with all participants. One of the basic efforts of an informal group attempting to operate democratically is to inquire into the meaning of democracy and how to apply democracy's principle.²⁹

25. Victor A. Thompson, Modern Organization (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1965), p. 125.

26. Walter M. Lifton, Working with Groups (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1966), p. 6.

27. Charles E. Silberman, Crisis In the Classroom (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 127.

28. Beal, Bohler, and Randabaugh, op. cit., p. 27.

29. Ibid., p. 27.

In this study the writer functioned as a participant-observer within an informal group. Participant-observation, stated Taylor,³⁰ is one of the cardinal methods of studying societies, cultures, or small groups. He noted that such a technique has the advantage of helping the investigator establish good relationships with other participants so that channels of communication open, an inside view is gained, and a multitude of casual conversation tends to supply information that is valuable. Whyte³¹ claimed participant observation helped establish descriptions of patterns of interactions among people. He also maintained that it helped provide reliable data of social organizations.

Interactive Verbal Behavior of an Informal Group Utilizing Democratic Processes

The following series of eight categories is presented indicating the theory of democratic processes utilized in informal groups. The organization of these categories was specifically designed for this study. In the informal group the various categories did not necessarily appear in this sequence.

Originating and Identifying Within the Informal Group Through Interaction

At the outset of any group behavior, originating tends to be initiated by a series of events peculiar to the reasons and purposes

30. Robert B. Taylor, Cultural Ways (Boston, Mass.: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1969), p. 25.

31. William F. Whyte, Street Corner Society (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 299.

for the formation of an informal group. An informal group often has one or several reasons and purposes for originating. When the group first meets, a sequence of initiatory social greetings usually occurs.³² Originating and interacting occur simultaneously. Interaction springs into being because the participants have met to solve some kind of social problem. Strauss³³ pointed out that initial contacts have to do with names, greetings, and originating statements of identification.

The human power of speech appears to be primary to an originating process. Kluckhohn³⁴ explained that the value of speech in informal groups lies in getting individuals to work together and in easing social tensions. Strauss³⁵ claimed that the proper theoretical account of man's identity and action puts linguistics into the heart of the human process. Barnett³⁶ pointed out that human language depends on an interplay between a speaker and a listener. Human society, group life, continued Barnett³⁷ could not exist without language. Using language, the participants in an informal group establish awareness of each other and make a series of personal contacts.

32. William Graham Sumner, Folkways (New York: Mentor Books, 1960), p. 33.

33. Anselm L. Strauss, Mirrors and Masks (Glencoe, Ill., The Free Press of Glencoe, 1959), pp. 16-17.

34. Kluckhohn, op. cit., p. 115.

35. Strauss, op. cit., p. 15.

36. Lincoln Barnett, Treasures of Our Tongue (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1954), p. 3.

37. Ibid., p. 4.

A continuing part of the originating aspects of informal groups seems to be introducing each participant to the other persons in the group. The ingredients of this stage of the process tend to be made up of preliminary statements made to each other.³⁸ These statements aid in establishing common reasons and purposes for the group's existence. This stage of the process can provide certain information about each participant.³⁹

Using verbal behavior, the participants consult⁴⁰ each other concerning feelings, attitudes, and values. This identification of others has a socializing impact. Identification appears to result from interaction between individuals, stated Erikson.⁴¹ As members of an informal group move through a series of satisfying personal relationships, identity for each individual emerges.⁴² Identification of the participants of an informal group occurs around special events, ideas, or interests.⁴³ Hartley and Hartley⁴⁴ explained that this

38. Carl R. Rogers, Freedom to Learn (Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill Publishing Co, 1969), p. 106.

39. Erich Fromm, Man For Himself (New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1957), p. 301.

40. Steward Hiltner, Pastoral Counseling (New York: Abingdon Press, 1959), p. 47.

41. Erik H. Erikson, Identity: Youth in Crisis (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1968), p. 159.

42. Arthur W. Combs (ed.), Perceiving-Behaving-Becoming (Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1962), p. 53.

43. Kimball Young (ed.), Sociology (New York: American Book Company, 1942), p. 23.

44. Hartley and Hartley, op. cit., p. 386.

personal identity has to do with shared concerns. Additionally each person needs to recognize other participants as members of the group with whom he shares common concerns.⁴⁵

Discovering and Sharing Interests Among
Members of the Informal Group

As an informal group evolves, certain common concerns are discovered.⁴⁶ Participants position themselves. As different participants assert themselves and dialogue develops, shared interests are discovered. Thelen⁴⁷ pointed out that a small group's interests become more visible and become immediately available for use. The interests and experiences shared by participants constitute the basis for the informal group working together. Rogers⁴⁸ explained that as each person encounters the interests of others it enables him to move beyond his own experiences. It also affords a basis for establishing personal relationships with certain individuals in the informal group.

Discovery of interests and working with the shared interests are most apt to occur where openness of the group is maintained.⁴⁹ Hiltner⁵⁰ contended that openness in informal relations and group processes demands that each member of the group must be free to

45. Ruel L. Howe, The Miracle of Dialogue (New York: The Seabury Press, 1963), p. 3.

46. Ibid., p. 3.

47. Thelen, op. cit., p. 229.

48. Rogers, op. cit., p. 75.

49. Jerome Bruner, "The Act of Discovery," Ronald Gross and Judith Murphy (eds.), The Revolution In the Schools (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1964), p. 145.

50. Hiltner, op. cit., p. 51.

express, or withhold, any statement of his values or feelings. The encounter by each participant with another, if the process is open, will provide an adequate opportunity to respond to comments or movements.⁵¹ Each participant can freely confirm reception of any communication.

The openness can be seen as each participant explores the verbal expressions of other participants.⁵² Additionally, each person can analyze the interests or experiences of the informal group members. This exploration conceivably will extend the personal encounter by eliciting further statements from participants. The extended personal relationship tends to develop meaning from the verbal interaction.⁵³ The developed meaning is usually obtained from a series of verbal exchanges where questions are asked or illustrations are given. From these explorations, the participants tend to classify the communication.⁵⁴

Throughout this process the identity and effort of the individual tends to be free from being submissive to any group process, asserted Whyte.⁵⁵ The whole act of discovery, the use of personal interests, the choices to share these interests, along with any

51. Ibid., p. 48.

52. Rogers, op. cit., p. 73.

53. Thelen, op. cit., p. 236.

54. Silberman, op. cit., p. 304-5.

55. William H. Whyte, Jr., The Organization Man (New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1957), p. 57.

productive and creative effort tend to aid the thinking or participation of any individual.⁵⁶ According to Riesman⁵⁷ the interests of an individual or a group are not held in isolation from societal structure, but social character and individual interests are interrelated. He continued that an informal group becomes, in fact, an extension of the individual participants, not a restriction.

Accompanying -- An Emerging and Receding Process in an Informal Group

Accompaniment, suggested Combs,⁵⁸ deals with certain relationships developed with others in a given group. He noted that each person learns to identify with others. Accompaniment, Eriksen⁵⁹ pointed out, implies companionship and usually equality of situation. He continued that equality, companionship, and accompaniment are derived from significant others in informal groups.⁶⁰

During the inception of an informal group, individual participants frequently bring prior personal associations with other participants.⁶¹ Participants may also arrive with no prior social identification with other participants.⁶² Associations in informal groups,

56. Ibid., p. 58.

57. Riesman, op. cit., p. 4.

58. Combs, op. cit., p. 164.

59. Erikson, op. cit., p. 44.

60. Ibid., p. 50.

61. William F. Whyte, Street Corner Society (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 255.

62. Ibid., p. 272.

stated Strauss,⁶³ generally remain open and mobile while control factors appear to be absent. However, the main interest which brought the group together or into existence, and the accompanying associations definitely take on specific forms. There tends to be a relationship of accompaniment which occurs in informal groups.

Accompaniment emerges and recedes (that is, moves with or moves away) as certain functions take place. It appears to evolve out of the interaction which may have occurred prior to the formation of the group, or during the interaction of the group. As the group process continues to evolve, individuals express interests which may attract others in the group.

Dewey⁶⁴ explained that participants choose to escort (to go with) others of shared interests. This accompanying action, he continued, tends to be focused on shared interests and participation.⁶⁵ One person may function by volunteering an action, e.g., "I'll go see the mayor, I know his secretary." While another person may position himself to perform another functional aspect, e.g., "I'll keep the records of what we're doing." Still another accompanies the first two by offering himself in another functional aspect, e.g., "I'd like to drive when we go to the mayor's office." Each of these are accompaniment to the others. Their focus tends to be their shared interests

63. Strauss, op. cit., p. 86.

64. Dewey, op. cit., p. 174.

65. Ibid., p. 175.

and they emerge out of the informal group while others in the group appear to recede from them.

The emerging accompaniment is focused on a specific project or interest. The receding part of the process finds other informal group participants moving away from the smaller interest group. As they recede from this group, however, the receding participants may emerge into an alternate interest group.⁶⁶ The emerging and receding apparently occurs simultaneously depending upon the specific interests and concerns of the various individual participants.

An informal group tends to offer no center of authority to assign tasks or interests. Instead, it employs interaction and a certain kind of common agreement.⁶⁷

Locating Individual or Group Problems

As shared interests evolve and certain accompanying relationships develop, participants often derive problems. A problem, stated Horton and Leslie,⁶⁸ results when a condition affecting a significant number of people causes those concerned to act collectively. They noted that participants in an informal group concerned with a problem generally suggest that something can be done about the conditions. The identification of a problem occurs as a consequence of continuing interaction by various participants in the informal group.⁶⁹ Each

66. McIver and Page, op. cit., p. 33.

67. Young, op. cit., p. 32.

68. Paul B. Horton and Gerald R. Leslie, The Sociology of Social Problems (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1960), p. 4.

69. Young, op. cit., pp. 136-37.

person responds with his own perceptions within this interactive situation.

To engage in the process of locating a problem, the participants of an informal group verbally express interests. Verbal interaction is a necessity in isolating problems for consideration.⁷⁰ An additional aspect of locating problems is the necessity for arranging and classifying the problems being considered. This arranging suggests classification of the problems.⁷¹ The intent in arranging is to afford each participant an opportunity to view the problems in relationship with the other problems identified and afford opportunity for the addition of other problems.

Selecting Certain Problems for Action

Selecting a given problem tends to involve the act of choice. Ginott⁷² pointed out that choosing is an act of responsibility. He contended that choosing and responsibility are integral parts of individual welfare. He went on to explain that the process of choosing a problem is, in effect, immediate responsibility. The responsibility continues, suggested Remmers and Radler,⁷³ as participants locate a shared problem and focus upon it for action. Selecting certain problems becomes a common project for a significant number of

70. Horton and Leslie, op. cit., p. 7.

71. Ibid., p. 8.

72. Haim G. Ginott, Between Parent and Child (New York: An Avon Book, 1965), p. 87.

73. Herman H. Remmers and D. H. Radler, The American Teenager (New York: Charter Books, 1962), p. 125.

participants. By acting, the participants suggest that something can be done about the problem.⁷⁴

The process of selection involves the participants in expressing preference by specific choices. The intent may be to verbally specify which problem each participant has selected to work on. Another intent may be the desire to interact with others concerning their chosen problems. Sharing viewpoints appears to be of primary importance; it permits the participants to avoid isolation or abandonment.⁷⁵

Another part of the selecting process is deciding. Within the selecting process each participant decides which aspect of the problem he will work on. He takes a position with those who choose to work with it. The intent may be to afford participants a chance to check with others who select a similar position. The act of freely selecting tends to aid individuals in developing personal autonomy.⁷⁶

Developing Approaches to Selected Problems

When the participants have selected problems and have decided which aspect they will become involved with, they usually move to develop approaches to the problems. In dealing with these problems, Bruner⁷⁷ pointed out that individuals generally develop a variety of

74. Horton and Leslie, op. cit., p. 6.

75. Ginott, op. cit., p. 161.

76. Ibid., p. 167.

77. Bruner, op. cit., p. 149.

approaches as they proceed. The participants in an informal group may organize and construct various approaches for pursuing problems.⁷⁸ In developing these approaches, the group members utilize many types of participant behavior. Initially they tend to listen, discuss, argue, explain, challenge, joke, agree, relate personal experiences, or demonstrate other related behavior.⁷⁹ In such an informal group setting, White and Lippitt⁸⁰ found participation to be an act of satisfaction. Active participation by members of the informal group appears to be at the center of decision-making where democratic processes are utilized.

Ginott⁸¹ stated that the response by the participants will tend to be related and useful if the process is open. The most adequate results can be obtained, said Henderson,⁸² where procedures are democratic.

Developing approaches to selected problems results from continued interaction from which a design may emerge.⁸³ This design appears to provide certain methods or techniques for acting upon the

78. Ibid.

79. Kluckhohn, op. cit., p. 115.

80. White and Lippitt, op. cit., p. 260.

81. Ginott, op. cit., p. 22.

82. Stella Van Petten Henderson, Introduction to the Philosophy of Education (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 155.

83. William Glasser, Schools Without Failure (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1969), p. 153.

selected problems.⁸⁴ The methods or techniques provide a way for participants to continue interaction and the development of new approaches, Glasser⁸⁵ maintained. Using the methods and techniques which they develop, the participants formulate procedures in order to act upon certain aspects of the problem. The specific procedures involve organized relationships for attacking the problem.

Pursuing the Study of Selected Problems

From the design and construct of the approaches developed, the process of pursuing the study of the problem emerges. To pursue the problem, a series of agreements or plans for action develop. Whyte⁸⁶ explained that such agreements or plans are functional for the group members so long as personal benefits occur. While attempting to work by means of democratic processes, informal groups seem more effective if the actions are inclusive rather than exclusive.⁸⁷

As long as working relationships established by participants for studying problems are maintained, the informal group tends to continue working.⁸⁸ Pursuing the study of selected problems occurs as an integral part of the working aspect of the informal group. Pursuing appears to be the act of operating and the act of accomplishing.

84. Ibid., p. 157.

85. Ibid., p. 158.

86. William F. Whyte, op. cit., pp. 122-23.

87. Sterling M. McMurrin, The Patterns of Our Religious Faiths (Salt Lake City: University Press, University of Utah, 1954), p. 35.

88. White and Lippitt, op. cit., p. 266.

Pursuing has to do with that stage of the process when participants engage in solving the problem by actual involvement in the task. The intent in this behavior may be to continue a working relationship using the problem as a primary focus and may be an attempt to resolve the problem bringing it to some state of satisfaction for the participants.

Examining the Results

As the participants of an informal group continue to investigate their various problems, certain opportunities arise wherein examination of personal relationships and data derived occurs. Consulting a fellow participant requires self-examination along with inquiry into the other person's ideas and behavior.⁸⁹ Inquiry, suggested Russell,⁹⁰ is a primary basis for acquiring personal and social meaning. Hullfish and Smith⁹¹ added that inquiry, or examination, have the elements of analysis and/or synthesis which often occur at unscheduled moments. Effective thinking occurs by examining in a social context.⁹² The interaction of an informal group provides the ingredients for continual examination.

When examining and using a consulting behavior the participants find out about themselves and each other. Participants ask questions concerning statements or actions made. The intent in this behavior

89. Combs, op. cit., pp. 165-66.

90. Russell, op. cit., p. 823.

91. H. Gordon Hullfish and Philip G. Smith, Reflective Thinking: The Method of Education (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1968), p. 198.

92. Ibid., p. 81.

may be to distinguish purposeful features in the actions or statements of the participants. Another intent of the participants in the examining process may be to inform and to share information, to recognize viable ideas and actions held by others, to recognize the knowledge and experience of each participant as useful in solving problems, to establish personal and social relationships, or to examine meaning.⁹³

There were times in the verbal interaction when there was no participant talk. These intervals appeared as pause, silence, or confusion.

Summary

In this chapter the theoretical base for the study was presented. The theory was divided into three major sections. These were: Democracy and Democratic Processes, Informal Groups Utilizing Democratic Processes, and Interactive Verbal Behavior of an Informal Group Utilizing Democratic Processes. The last section was divided into eight categories which presented the writer's operational beliefs. These categories were: originating, discovering, accompanying, locating, selecting, developing, pursuing, and examining.

93. Combs, op. cit., p. 166.

CHAPTER 3

SITUATION AND DIRECTION OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this chapter is to present the general situation out of which the study occurred and the direction taken by the participants.

Informal Group Setting

During registration at the University several students who planned to become teachers indicated an interest in becoming members of an informal group. In the initial session, the writer explained the study and his position as a participant-observer. He received permission from the participants to conduct his study with them. Audio taping began at the original session and continued throughout the study.

Twenty-two participants of varied backgrounds were involved. Two common interests apparently brought the group together and helped to maintain continuity: (1) an interest in utilizing democratic processes in the group relationships, and (2) an interest in teaching and utilizing democratic processes in their classrooms.

Problems and Projects

The organizing focus of the participants centered around the discussion of issues, ideas, problems and participation in various

related projects. These emerged from the dialogue generated by the participants and are presented below as an overview of the entire study.

Social and Political Problems

The participants tended to be concerned with a variety of social and political problems. At times the group failed to discuss problems which were introduced. However, over the course of the semester, most of the following social and political issues were re-introduced and discussed at length.

Government. Dialogue concerning local, city, state, national, and international government and their functions appeared frequently throughout the continuing dialogue.

Politics. Partisan and non-partisan politics were discussed utilizing issues, ideas, and personalities. Politics and social institutions also seemed to be major focuses of the participant's dialogue.

Human Rights. Freedom and control as they pertain to individuals and institutions were discussed constantly. A society offering equal opportunity compared to a stratified privileged society appeared as a continuing concern.

Social Justice. The general welfare and the status of individuals in society occupied a substantial amount of participant dialogue. They tended to be concerned with problems of crime, drugs, family life, sex, social life, and others.

Educational Problems

Along with the social and political problems, the participants tended to consider various problems in education. The first session developed with the participants showing concern for the problems of teachers, schools, and education in general. The educational problems fell into an assortment of areas.

Democracy and Autocracy in the Schools. Throughout the existence of the group the participants discussed specific incidents, experiences, school procedures, and school relationships. They expressed numerous views of school functions as they related to their perceptions of democracy and autocracy. No problem area was discussed more than democracy and autocracy.

School Requirements vs. Freedom of Choice. The group participants demonstrated a concern for the general problem area of school requirements vs. the freedom to choose such things as curriculum, materials, and texts.

Equality and Caste. The question of equality and caste became a topic of concern for the participants. They felt that while democracy was an educational objective, the educational society utilized a caste system.

Freedom and Restriction. Freedom and restriction plus the process of discipline were concerns during the study. From this category emerged such issues as respect for teachers and students. Is respect contagious, learned, or assigned? Why are students restricted and teachers free?

Consultation. Consultation as a process in the classroom was quite thoroughly considered. The group members talked about how teachers ordered assignments, tests, projects, and other class work and how they failed to consult with the students concerning these matters.

Political and Community Relationships. Group participants believed that political and community relationships tended to be avoided by professional educators. Additionally, they felt that the official school body avoided consulting parents, political leaders, or students, but they pretended it was unnecessary.

Sharing Information. Sharing information and knowledge along with making both of them relevant to contemporary life was considered an important function by the participants.

Projects

An outgrowth of the various discussions were several projects which were created and worked upon by the participants. Interest developed and work was begun on several projects which persisted throughout the study and continued for several months after the study was completed. Several of the projects will be briefly described.

Language Requirement. The University language requirement for freshmen and sophomores became a deep concern for several of the participants. The members organized and circulated a petition, interviewed college students and instructors, and investigated several alternative approaches to the language requirement of other universities and colleges. They consulted with various university officials.

established substantial support from selected groups in the university community, and reported their results to the informal group sessions.

Classroom Visitation. Classroom visitation and observation was an early interest of the group members. During various dialogues, the participants chose classes to observe and arranged the details necessary to such. The visitations and observations provided further content for the dialogues in the regular sessions. Additionally, several smaller informal groups comprised of members from the original group met separately to consult concerning this project.

Interviews. Interviews with teachers, administrators, students, and parents developed from several conversations concerning certain of the educational problems which were discussed. The participants developed a questionnaire and organized those interested in completing the task. Again, feedback from this project provided continual subject matter for the group.

Evaluation of Materials. Another school-related project was an evaluation of school texts, teaching aides, and resource materials. The participants working on this project made arrangements with principals and teachers to evaluate the materials.

Vietnam War Moratorium. At the time the study was in progress, a national moratorium relating to the Vietnam War was conducted. The group organized and participated in the moratorium. The moratorium and the Vietnam War provided substance for some of the most intense discussions.

City Government Visitation. Early in the session several participants expressed an interest in visiting the offices of the city government. They organized themselves and the appointments were made. They also interviewed several city officials concerning a variety of topics.

Democracy and Democratic Processes. Probably the most persistent and continued area of concern was the discussion of democracy and democratic processes. In small groups, the whole group, groups across campus, in homes, during travel, and many other places, the participants reported a continuing effort to work with and understand democracy and democratic processes.

Reading. Some reading related to the topics and projects was done, however this activity was not the most intense.

Summary

Chapter 3 presented the situation and direction of the study. It began with the informal group setting which included how the group formed and listed the interests which caused the participants to continue meeting.

Many of the problems which concerned the participants were outlined. These were divided into social and political problems and educational problems. A series of projects was also presented showing the active participation by group members over the period of the study. These projects evolved out of the discussions by the participants.

CHAPTER 4

INSTRUMENT FOR EXAMINING AND ANALYZING INFORMAL GROUP BEHAVIOR

Introduction

An instrument for examining and analyzing nine categories of verbal group behavior was developed and titled "Interaction Process Code -- Verbal Patterns in an Informal Group." The Interaction Process Code was designed to permit individuals to listen to and record their observations of certain aspects of an informal group's behavior. This code includes nine main categories: Originating, Discovering, Accompanying, Locating, Selecting, Developing, Pursuing, Examining, and Pause, Silence, or Confusion.

Interaction Process Code Verbal Patterns in an Informal Group

- I. ORIGINATING This behavior occurs at the outset of an informal group process. It is the point at which the first interaction comes into being.
 - A. Initiate Participants extend greetings and begin communicating with other participants. The intent may be to (1) act out awareness of other persons, and (2) make personal contact.
 - B. Introduce Participants make preliminary statements to each other. The intent may be to (1) establish possible reasons and purposes for the group's existence, and (2) provide certain information about himself.

- C. Identify Participants consult each other concerning feelings, attitudes, and values. The intent may be to recognize similarities or dissimilarities of ideas expressed.
- II. DISCOVERING This behavior occurs as an ongoing and continuing part of the informal group process.
- A. Encounter Participants indicate a willingness to interact with each other. The intent of each participant in this interaction may be to (1) establish personal relationships with other individuals in the group, (2) respond to comments, and (3) confirm reception of communications.
- B. Explore Each participant analyzes the statements of the other participants. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) extend encounter, (2) elicit further statements from participants concerning meaning of verbal activities, and (3) obtain clarification of communications received.
- III. ACCOMPANYING This behavior occurs as both an emerging and receding process in an informal group. In this action a participant moves with (emerges) or moves away from (recedes) the position taken by another participant(s).
- A. Emerge A participant verbally takes a position. He may suggest ways in which the informal group could develop. Other participants verbally express interest and demonstrate consent to move with the first participant. The intent may be to (1) show awareness, (2) consent to the initiating participant's position, and/or (3) commit themselves to the initiator's position.
- B. Recede A participant verbally takes a complementary or alternate position to a preceding position. This participant suggests possible ways which he feels the group may develop. At this point the prior (emerging) accompaniment tends to move away from (recede) and to shift to a new position. The prior relationships recede and

dissolve into new relationships. The intent in the response may be to (1) move away from previous relationships, and (2) offer openness and permission for additional alternatives.

IV. LOCATING

This behavior occurs as a consequence of accompanying interaction. Specific problems are located when, as a result of an individual's comments, participants find common areas of concern.

A. Determine

A participant verbally expresses an interest in a particular problem. Other participants verbally agree to the problem. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) verbally interact and isolate a problem for consideration, and (2) verbally place the problem alongside other problems to be considered.

B. Arrange

A participant verbally suggests classification of problems being considered. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) see the problems in relationship to each other, and (2) maintain opportunity for more problems being provided.

V. SELECTING

This behavior usually occurs as a direct consequence of locating. It involves the process of choosing certain of the problems for action.

A. Prefer

Participants verbally express specific choices concerning the problems located by interaction in the informal group. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) verbally specify a particular problem to work upon, and (2) express a desire to interact with others concerning the problem.

B. Decide

Participants verbally elect a problem for action. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) make clear each participant's position, and (2) check with the other participants to ascertain if they have taken similar positions.

VI. DEVELOPING

This behavior occurs as a result of the interaction concerning the selected problems. During this process, approaches to the problem are developed.

- A. Design Participants verbally interact concerning possible means by which the selected problems may be designed. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) provide certain methods for acting upon selected problems, and (2) provide ways for the participants to continue interaction upon the selected problems.
- B. Construct Participants formulate procedures concerning the conditions surrounding and creating the selected problem. The intent in this behavior may be for the participants to (1) arrange specific ways of acting upon certain aspects of the problem, and (2) formulate organized relationships for attacking the problem.
- VII. PURSUING This behavior occurs as an integral part of the working aspect of the group. It involves pursuing the study of the selected problems.
- A. Engage Participants are actively involved in working upon and solving the problem. The intent in this behavior may be to establish continuing working relationships related to the problem of concern.
- VIII. EXAMINING This behavior occurs as an ongoing part of the interactive process. The participants find out about each other and themselves.
- A. Consult The participants ask questions concerning statements or actions of other participants. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) distinguish purposeful features in the actions or statements, (2) acquire shared meanings, and (3) clarify personal identity and continue establishing relationships by participants.
- B. Inform Participants share information. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) recognize the viable ideas and actions held by other participants to be used by all, and (2) recognize that knowledge and experience can be useful in solving personal and social problems.

- IX. P.S.C.* There are times in the verbal interaction when there is no participant talk or when verbal interaction cannot be understood.
- A. Pause A participant may be in mid sentence and thinking about his next comment.
- B. Silence There is no participant talk.
- C. Confusion The verbal behavior is incomprehensible at this point.

Examples Utilizing Informal Group Processes

The following examples illustrate the behavior in an informal group utilizing the categories of the interaction process.

- I. ORIGINATING This behavior occurs at the outset of an informal group process. It is the point at which the first interaction comes into being.
- A. Initiate Participants extend greetings and begin communicating with other participants. The intent may be to (1) act out awareness of other persons, and (2) make personal contact.
- B. Introduce Participants make preliminary statements to each other. The intent may be to (1) establish possible reasons and purposes for the group's existence, and (2) provide certain information about himself.
- C. Identify Participants consult each other concerning feelings, attitudes, and values. The intent may be to recognize similarities or dissimilarities of ideas expressed.

*These initials stand for pause, silence or confusion. They will be used to designate this category for the remainder of the study.

ORIGINATING	
Initiate	<u>extends greetings</u> <u>makes personal contact</u> Participant: "Hi Jan, glad you are here!"
Introduce	<u>makes preliminary statement</u> <u>establishes reasons for group</u> <u>provides information about self</u> Participant: "I'm going to start by asking questions. I go slow in groups."
<u>Identify</u>	<u>consults each other</u> <u>recognizes similarities and dissimilarities</u> Participant: "Mary, how do you feel about my position on the present plans?"

- II. DISCOVERING This behavior occurs as an ongoing and continuing part of the informal group process.
- A. Encounter Participants indicate a willingness to interact with each other. The intent of each participant in this interaction may be to (1) establish personal relationships with other individuals in the group, (2) respond to comments, and (3) confirm reception of communications.
- B. Explore Each participant analyzes the statements of the other participants. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) extend encounter, (2) elicit further statements from participants concerning meaning of verbal activities, and (3) obtain clarification of communications received.

DISCOVERING	
Encounter	<u>indicates a willingness to interact</u> <u>establishes personal relationships</u> <u>responds to comments</u> <u>confirms reception</u> Participant: "Yes, I'd like to see what you have done, Fred."
Explore	<u>analyzes offered statements</u> <u>elicits statements</u> <u>obtains clarification</u> Participant: "What have you said about abolishing grades? I need more information."

III. ACCOMPANYING

This behavior occurs as both an emerging and receding process in an informal group. In this action a participant moves with (emerges) or moves away from (recedes) the position taken by another participant(s).

A. Emerge

A participant verbally takes a position. He may suggest ways in which the informal group could develop. Other participants verbally express interest and demonstrate consent to move with the first participant. The intent may be to (1) show awareness; (2) consent to the initiating participant's position, and/or (3) commit themselves to the initiator's position.

B. Recede

A participant verbally takes a complementary or alternate position to a preceding position. This participant suggests possible ways which he feels the group may develop. At this point the prior (emerging) accompaniment tends to move away from (recede) and to shift to a new position. The prior relationships recede and dissolve into new relationships. The intent in the response may be to (1) move away from previous relationships, and (2) offer openness and permission for additional alternatives.

ACCOMPANYING	
Emerge	<u>participant takes position</u> <u>shows awareness</u> <u>consents to initiating participant's position</u> <u>commits to initiator's position</u>
	Participant: "I'd like to develop an alternative to the present foreign language requirement."
	Participant: "Wow, man I'll work with you on that!"
Recede	<u>participant takes a complimentary or alternate position</u> <u>moves away from previous relationships</u> <u>offers additional alternatives</u>
	Participant: "My plans are for meeting with the mayor. I'll get together with you later."

IV. LOCATING

This behavior occurs as a consequence of accompanying interaction. The specific problems are located when, as a result of an individual's comment, several participants find common areas of concern.

- A. Determine A participant verbally expresses an interest in a particular problem. Other participants verbally agree to the problem. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) verbally interact and isolate a problem for consideration, and (2) verbally place the problem alongside other problems to be considered.
- B. Arrange A participant verbally suggests classification of problems being considered. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) see the problems in relationship to each other, and (2) maintain opportunity for more problems being provided.

LOCATING	
Determine	<u>verbally expresses interest</u> <u>isolates problem</u> <u>places problem alongside others</u>
	Participant: "I'll like writing to the Senator but who will type? Or should we go back to the other idea and call?"
Arrange	<u>suggests classification of problems</u> <u>sees problems in relation to each other</u> <u>maintains opportunity for more problems</u>
	Participant: "No, I don't think these two problems go together."

- V. SELECTING This behavior usually occurs as a direct consequence of locating. It involves the process of choosing certain of the problems for action.
- A. Prefer Participants verbally express specific choices concerning the problems located by interaction in the informal group. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) verbally specify a particular problem to work upon, and (2) express a desire to interact with others concerning the problem.
- B. Decide Participants verbally elect a problem for action. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) make clear each participant's position, and (2) check with the other participants to ascertain if they have taken similar positions.

SELECTING	
Prefer	<u>expresses specific choices concerning problems</u> <u>specifies a problem to work upon</u> <u>expresses desire to interact concerning problems</u>
	Participant: "I'd rather drive than do the typing."
Decide	<u>elects problem for action</u> <u>makes clear participant's position</u> <u>checks with other participants concerning similar positions</u>
	Participant: "I've chosen to work on the United Nations."

- VI. DEVELOPING This behavior occurs as a result of the interaction concerning the selected problems. During this process, approaches to the problem are developed.
- A. Design Participants verbally interact concerning possible means by which the selected problems may be designed. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) provide certain methods for acting upon selected problems, and (2) provide ways for the participants to continue interaction upon the selected problems.
- B. Construct Participants formulate procedures concerning the conditions surrounding and creating the selected problem. The intent in this behavior may be for the participants to (1) arrange specific ways of acting upon certain aspects of the problem, and (2) formulate organized relationships for attacking the problem.

DEVELOPING	
Design	<u>interacts concerning means of problem design</u> <u>provides methods for acting on problem</u> <u>provides continuing interaction on problem</u>
	Participant: "The charts need to be made first."
Construct	<u>formulates procedures concerning conditions of problems</u> <u>arranges ways of acting on aspects of problem</u> <u>formulates relationships for attacking problem</u>
	Participant: "I'm using the questions in the book right now."

- VII. PURSUING This behavior occurs as an integral part of the working aspect of the group. It involves pursuing the study of selected problems.
- A. Engage Participants are actively involved in working upon and solving the problem. The intent in this behavior may be to establish continuing working relationships related to the problem of concern.

PURSUING

Engage involves working upon and solving problem
establishes working relationships related
to solving problem

Participant: "Fred, let's continue writing
our letter to the mayor."

- VIII. EXAMINING This behavior occurs as an ongoing part of the interactive process. The participants find out about each other and themselves.
- A. Consult The participants ask questions concerning statements or actions of other participants. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) distinguish purposeful features in the actions or statements, (2) acquire shared meanings, and (3) clarify personal identity and continue establishing relationships by participants.
- B. Inform Participants share information. The intent in this behavior may be to (1) recognize the viable ideas and actions held by other participants to be used by all, and (2) recognize that knowledge and experience can be useful in solving personal and social problems.

EXAMINING

Consult questions concerning statements or actions
of participants
distinguishes features in statements or
actions
acquires shared meanings
clarifies identity and relationships by
participants

Participant: "How do you see what happened,
John?"

Inform shares information
recognizes ideas and actions of participants
recognizes that knowledge and experience can
be useful in solving personal and social
problems

Participants: "Henry VIII was Ann's husband,
and also King."

- IX. P.S.C. There are times in the verbal interaction when there is no participant talk or when verbal interaction cannot be understood.
- A. Pause A participant may be in mid sentence and thinking about his next comment.
- B. Silence There is no participant talk.
- C. Confusion The verbal behavior is incomprehensible at this point.

PAUSE, SILENCE, OR CONFUSION	
Pause	<u>participant in mid sentence and thinking about next comment</u>
Silence	<u>no participant talk</u>
Confusion	<u>several persons talking at once outside interruption such as jet overhead</u>

Summary

The purpose of Chapter 4 was to acquaint the reader with an instrument for examining and analyzing informal group verbal behavior. The code, entitled "Interaction Process Code -- Verbal Patterns in an Informal Group" included nine major categories: originating, discovering, accompanying, locating, selecting, developing, pursuing, examining, and P.S.C. Each category was followed by a series of examples which illustrated the behavior of an informal group utilizing the interaction process.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION OF DATA: EXAMINATION AND ANALYSIS

Informal Group Process

In this chapter data regarding selected incidents of interactive behavior taken from audio taped sessions of the informal group are described and analyzed. Sessions of the informal group were selected to illustrate the theory explained in Chapter 2.

The Group

The informal group originated during University registration. The initial volunteers were primarily prospective social studies teachers and were interested in experimenting with democratic processes in education. Twenty-two persons participated during the study. The writer was one of the participants. The other group participants were freshmen at the University. Aside from a common interest in becoming teachers and utilizing democratic processes, the participants' ideas, attitudes, and philosophies were highly diversified.

Participant Observation

The writer of this study functioned as a participant-observer. Taylor¹ explained that participation often has the advantage of

1. Taylor, op. cit., p. 26.

helping an investigator establish relationships with group members so that the channels of communication will be opened. Whyte² held that participant observation affords personal contact, rapport, and continuing personal relationships. According to Kluckhohn³ participant observation provides ample opportunity for gathering data. It also appears to allow values, attitudes, and feelings to flow freely, claimed Lee.⁴

Audio-taping

During the initial session participants gave the writer permission to audio tape all sessions of the informal group. The tapes were coded, analyzed, and reported in this study.

Coding and Coders

The writer and three assistants operated as the coding team. The coders familiarized themselves with the Interaction Process Code. They practiced coding until the team members achieved approximately 90 percent reliability. Ground rules were developed during the coding practice which provided guidance to the team members.

Selected Sessions

Upon completion of the coding, selected sessions illustrating the theory of this study were chosen for description and analysis.

2. William F. Whyte, op. cit., p. 299.

3. Kluckhohn, op. cit., p. 176.

4. Dorothy Lee, Freedom and Culture (New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1959), p. 2.

The chosen sessions were then organized for presentation. For purposes of presentation the data were organized using the nine categories of the Interaction Process Code.

Session Legend

A session legend was developed to aid the reader in understanding the dialogue and maintaining continuity within the session.

Plots

Plots are used to illustrate the frequency and patterns of the informal group's verbal behavior. The nine categories are found on the left of the plot. Across the top of the plot, time sequence is indicated in ten second intervals, there being 30 such intervals in each five minute segment.

In Figure 1, a critical segment plot is presented. This is followed by a list of the coded categories and a session legend intermingled with the session script from which the plot was derived. An analysis of the session segment plots is presented. Definitions for all of the behavior categories presented in the plots can be found in Chapter 4.

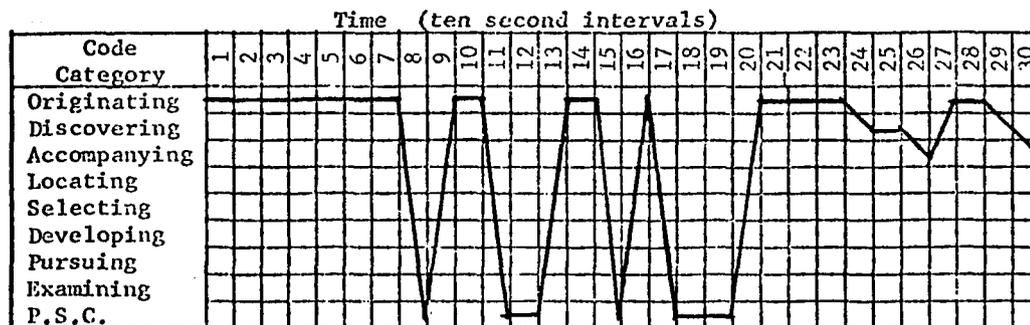


Figure 1. A five minute segment illustrating ORIGINATING.

Informal Group Situation

The first session of the informal group was initiated by an invitation extended during University registration. Approximately one-half of the total participants of the study were present at this session. There was no syllabus, agenda, or plan, except an invitation to develop something relevant to teaching utilizing democratic processes. The session began with relaxed and casual conversation. One of the first behaviors was identifying. The participants introduced themselves to each other.

Coded categories: originating, discovering, accompanying, and p.s.c.*

The typed script which follows presents the informal group's verbal behavior from which Figure 1 was constructed. The numbers appearing at the left of the script indicate the time in ten second intervals. A session legend will appear periodically to assist the reader.

Session Script

The participants were all seated in a circle. The conversation was non-directed. They were getting acquainted. One participant was talking about a snake.

1. Participant: "Oh, put it in the bottle."
originating provides information about self
2. Participant: "I informed him that it had the venom of a cobra."
originating provided information about self
3. Participant: "And after about six tries, I netted him."
originating provides information about self

*P.S.C. are initials representative of the categories Pause, Silence, or Confusion.

Participant shifted and explained behavior of crowd around the snake.

4. Participant: "They were all gathered around and they stood way off."

originating provides information about self

The casual relationship shifted when the storyteller asked the group members to identify themselves. At this point another participant returned him to his story with a question. The storyteller responded concurring with the consultative inquiry. This comment was about the snake.

5. Participant: "There must be."

originating Provides information about self

The dialogue returned to social amenities when certain participants asked others to give their names.

6. Participant: "Whom do we have here, John Crane?!"*

originating consults each other

One participant seemed determined to find out the names of the others, therefore this identifying procedure continued. He asked for a name. When the participant gave her name, another participant commented.

7. Participant: "That's a good Irish name."

originating makes personal contact

At times during the originating and identifying process no interaction occurred. At this coded interval, the participant asking for the name of each member paused, and no one spoke, hence the behavior had to be coded P.S.C.

- 8.

P.S.C. no participant talk

Conversation continued around name introductions. The same participant was still asking for each participant's name.

9. Participant: "Ah, Judy Spencer?"
Other Participant: "Yeh, that's me."

originating makes personal contact

*All names used throughout this study are pseudonyms.

The conversation was still casual. While one participant continued name identification, others commented about seating arrangements for the session

10. Participant: "You and I didn't carry a chair in for us."

originating makes personal contact

The action immediately focused upon getting adequate seating. Consequently, conversation was sparse. Two coded intervals of silence occurred.

11-12.

P.S.C. no participant talk (two intervals)

The directionless conversation seemed to wait upon the seating problem. At least it focused upon a certain casual interaction while the chairs were brought and various participants were seated. At this time the comments appeared personal and amiable.

13. Participant: "Oh, hey, wait a minute."

originating makes personal contact

Conversation centered around seating

14. Participant: "Those new chairs are kinda small."

originating makes preliminary statement

15.

P.S.C. no participant talk

One participant assumed responsibility for chairs and seating arrangement. It may be well to note that the seating arrangement was not only in a circle, but the participants were very close. This allowed for quiet conversations and appeared to aid dialogue.

16. Participant: "O.K., you take that."

originating makes personal contact

17-19

P.S.C. no participant talk (three intervals)

When the additional seating arrangements were completed, a participant returned the dialogue to the purpose of the session. His comment focused upon a person who was not attending but apparently wanted to participate.

20. Participant: "But I know she wants to be involved in this thing."

originating makes preliminary statement

The conversation continued about persons not in attendance.

21. Participant: "Yeh, I know her."

originating providing information about self

An interactive exchange occurred between a participant and the participant observer. It appeared that the latter had known the absent person in a previous situation. The comments were about the absent person.

22. Participant: "I think she may be a good gal for this."

originating makes preliminary statement

The dialogue shifted as one participant seemed concerned about where the sessions would be held. He suggested a place to meet.

23. Participant: "I can get a room for us probably in psychology."

originating makes preliminary statement

Alternatives were mentioned.

24. Participant: "Can we get one that has movable chairs?"

discovering elicits statement

25. Participant: "How about meeting in psychology?"

discovering responds to comment

The participant talking was concerned about certain facilitating features for future sessions. He joined with a previous participant who had suggested a room with furniture that seemed agreeable.

26. Participant: "I think if we're going to do what we're going to do with tapes . . ."

accompanying takes position

The dialogue again shifts to two additional persons who were not in attendance.

27. Participant: "These boys said they can't make tonight's session."

originating makes preliminary statement

A participant shifted the conversation to session scheduling.

28. Participant: "If you could decide on a time and a day . . ."

originating consults each other

29. Participant: "Does it need to be a night?"

discovering obtains clarification

30. Participant: "My feeling is that Doug and I can meet any afternoon or evening."

accompanying participant takes position

After the initial five minute segment the session dialogue extended through a series of topics. The primary concerns of the informal group were getting acquainted, developing a variety of ideas, attempting to establish organization, pursuing self inquiry and examination, giving personal histories, and exploring democracy and use of democratic processes in the classroom. Frequently the discussions were concerned with personal anecdotes, attitudes, and examples of classroom experiences. A wide variety of classroom concerns were expressed. The examples most frequently cited represented authoritarian instances rather than democratic.

Inasmuch as this initial session held closely to the categories of identifying behavior such as getting acquainted, it seemed unique

that they immediately turned to the question of democracy and democratic processes in the classroom.

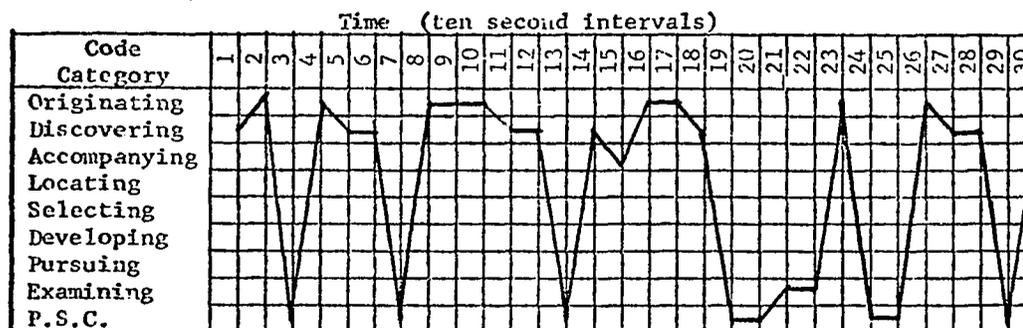


Figure 2. A five minute segment of dialogue illustrating ORIGINATING and DISCOVERING.

Informal Group Situation

The participants had raised a variety of questions concerning democracy in the classroom. Previous to the five minute segment in Figure 2, the participants appeared to focus entirely on democracy and democratic processes in the classroom.

Coded categories: originating, discovering, accompanying, examining, and p.s.c.

Session Script

The segment begins with a discussion concerning the origination of the group.

1. Participant: "I begin imagining who is going to be here."
discovering analyzes offered statements
2. Participant: "I'm here because I want to be here."
originating makes preliminary statement
3. P.S.C. no participant talk

Even though the previous participant appeared to discuss the origin of the group, the dialogue had moved away from democracy slightly and was again moving back toward democracy in the classroom.

4. Participant: "There may not be even a complete set of answers for any of these."

originating provides reasons for group

An initial definition of democracy emerges.

5. Participant: "You said you'd expect we could have a democracy here but it wouldn't represent any other democracy because all of us have a common interest."

discovering responds to comment

Participant continues with definition.

6. Participant: "You won't have a disinterested person."

discovering responds to comment

- 7.

P.S.C. no participant talk

Another participant picks up the definition and extends the discussion but expresses his own ideas.

8. Participant: "We haven't decided what our diversities are."

originating recognizes similarities and dissimilarities

The same participant asserts a personal position concerning democracy and predicts differences.

9. Participant: "May I predict you without knowing who you are?"

originating recognizes similarities and dissimilarities

He continued with his position on democracy.

10. Participant: ". . . who would want to threaten punishment."

originating provides information about self

At this point the dialogue caused several participants to ask questions to discover a position.

11. Participant: "Does that include grades?"

discovering obtains clarification

Several participants picked up the grade question as an issue. This dialogue was abrupt and immediate. Three persons spoke almost simultaneously.

12. Participants: "Pink slips!"
"Pass or fail!"
"Report cards!"

discovering obtains clarification

- 13.

P.S.C. no participant talk

14. Participant: "I don't think that I went to any class that didn't say such and such."

discovering responds to comments

15. Participant: "It's really subjective."

accompanying commits to initiator's position

The dialogue moved to using grades as an illustration of democracy and authority.

16. Participant: "There's a great deal of teacher's decisions."

originating takes position

Participant continues his position concerning the teacher's decisions.

17. Participant: "For example, three absences -- no excuses will be accepted."

originating makes preliminary statement

18. Participant: "But how can you get along without any of my precious pearls?"

discovering analyzes offered statements

19-20.

P.S.C. no participant talk

A participant began examining what was going on in the dialogue and the group.

21. Participant: "We find quite a diversity of what represents our feelings about classrooms across the country."

examining acquires shared meanings

The participant continues examining.

22. Participant: "You responded with a whole series of ideas."
examining recognizes ideas and actions of participants

The dialogue changes immediately to another category.

23. Participant: "Sometimes you wonder if it wouldn't be better if you didn't show up for class at all."

originating makes preliminary statement

24-25.

P.S.C. no participant talk

26. Participant: "I see another thing when you say to you or to me."

originating makes personal contact

27. Participant: "What would you really like to do in this group?"

discovering elicits statement

28. Participant: "What would you like to do in this room?"

discovering elicits statement

29.

P.S.C. no participant talk

30. Participant: "What would you really like to do?"

discovering elicits statement

Examination and Analysis of Figures 1 and 2

Several patterns appeared to emerge in the above segments. In the first five minute segment originating occurred 18 times (60%). Discovering appeared three times (10%), accompanying two times (7%), and P.S.C. seven times (23%).

In the second five minute segment the categories used were somewhat different. Originating occurred nine times (30%), discover-
ing ten times (33%), accompanying one time (3%), examining two times (7%), and P.S.C. eight times (27%).

During each five minute segment, several participants interacted frequently. The originating behaviors utilized in the session were: provides preliminary information, consults each other, and makes personal contact. The use of originating behaviors was high during the initial segments. The use of discovering behavior during the first segment demonstrated such behaviors as elicits statements and responds to comments.

P.S.C. and accompanying occurred less frequently. When P.S.C. appeared, there was no participant talk. Accompanying came into focus at two separate intervals when one participant apparently verbally positioned himself with another participant.

Several other patterns appear in these two segments. Inasmuch as it was the initial session of the informal group, originating and discovering behaviors were utilized most frequently. However, as the session developed and the participants moved through a variety of identifying interaction it appeared that discovering increased and

other categories came into focus. Additionally, it became apparent that no general predictable order would describe the occurrence of the nine categories. The sequence presented in this chapter is primarily for examination and analysis.

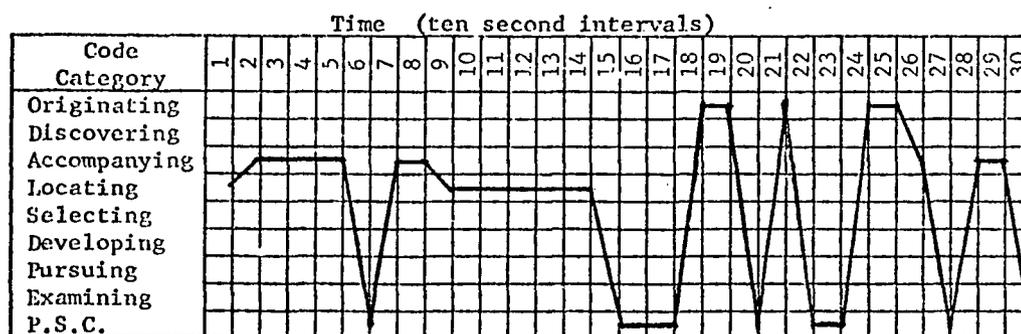


Figure 3. A five minute segment illustrating ACCOMPANYING and LOCATING.

Informal Group Situation

At various times during the sessions, the participants seemed to locate common interests. They struggled as if attempting to establish the worth of the interest. Often the focus would be approached and located and then immediately abandoned. The five minute segment chosen for this examination and analysis was a different case.

Near the end of the previous five minute segment the participants discovered a common interest in school boards. Through several intervals they located the specific aspects of this interest. This segment begins with the last of a series of locating behaviors.

One participant in the previous segment had just asked about going to the school board meetings and using tape recorders to study the program.

Coded categories: originating, accompanying, locating, and p.s.c.

Session Script

A participant wondered about the reaction of the board regarding the use of tape recorders at the board meeting.

1. Participant: "I wonder what they'll do with us after a while?"

locating verbally expresses interest

At this point the taping of school boards was apparently accepted as a possible project.

2. Participant: "What we'd learn about the operation of things by doing this . . ."

accompanying commits to initiator's position

3. Participant: "Let's have one that wasn't open to the public."

accompanying participant takes position

Another participant had picked up one particular aspect of the group interest. It had been suggested that they record a secret board meeting. Various participants had verbally reflected concerning the possible board reactions. The interaction was high. The group was obviously enjoying the possible results of such a project.

4. Participant: "Oh, let's do it!"

accompanying commits to the initiator's position

Participation continues with the speculated results of the school board meeting. However, emphasis shifted for several intervals to the idea of students as second class people.

5. Participant: "O.K. - like you are a teacher in a situation . . ."

accompanying shows awareness

- 6.

P.S.C. no participant talk

This participant was apparently concerned about the authoritarianism of the board meeting and expressed his concern about the possibility of students being able to exert enough influence to effect some kind of change.

7. Participant: "Ideally and hopefully it can be changed."

accompanying participant takes position

The authority in the situation appeared significant. The student's position as a lesser authority came into focus. The use of grades as authority was mentioned.

8. Participant: "But a student's under a threat of grades."
accompanying participant takes position

At this point another participant interrupted and appeared to be attempting to locate a specific meaning in the content of the dialogue. This statement referred to a film, "The Detached American" which he used as a reference for the idea he was developing. At best, he was attempting to locate a specific aspect of a problem.

9. Participant: "It's called 'The Detached American.'"
locating isolates problem

The participant had held the attention of the group for this period of time by describing aspects of the film mentioned. He continued his idea. His purpose for the use of the film as a reference had not yet emerged.

10. Participant: "They handed him a piece of paper."
locating isolates a problem

As the participant continued his definition, his position was appearing more clearly as a definition of the student being in an inferior position.

11. Participant: "So I mean he is in a position where he can't make a stink."
locating isolates a problem

Another participant enters and locates another aspect of the idea by pointing out that some students just want to make a stink.

12. Participant: ". . . but some just want to make a stink."
locating places problem alongside of others

This emerging participant attempted to define his aspect of the located problem by relating it to radicals and subversives.

13. Participant: "And then there are people who are really concerned who get written up as radicals and subversives."

locating places problem alongside of others

14. Participant: "In other words you're not supposed to be democratic. What's the matter with you is, you're abnormal."

locating places problem alongside others

15-17.

P.S.C. no participant talk

Out of the three intervals where the P.S.C. occurred, an additional participant originated a whole new concern for the dialogue by referring to aspects of the so-called "system." By now the dialogue had shifted completely away from the idea of taping the school board.

18. Participant: "I thought of it as a nice subversive way of doing it."

originating makes preliminary statement

Continuing with his shift, it became apparent that he was reflecting about his experiences in his own school system. He referred to his special way of dealing with school passes.

19. Participant: "I just kept with the system."

originating provides information about self

20.

P.S.C. no participant talk

21. Participant: "You go down to the attendance office."

originating provides information about self

22-23.

P.S.C. no participant talk

He was still discussing his own school system.

24. Participant: "But he can also frustrate the system."

originating provides information about self

25. Participant: "He can just cease to be cooperative."

originating provides information about self

Informal Group Situation

Frequently during a session, a topic of common interest would attract high participation. This five minute segment is an example. After several actions of originating behavior, the participants moved to a topic which apparently concerned most of the group.

Coded categories: originating, accompanying, locating, discovering, and p.s.c.

Session Script

One participant explained her tardiness at the group.

1. Participant: "I'm always late because I go to a language lab."

originating provides information about self

An introduction interrupted the dialogue when one participant named another participant for identification.

2. Participant: "This is Mark."

originating makes preliminary statement

Continuing with the introduction, the social amenities predominate momentarily.

3. Participant: (responding to another) "Barely."

accompanying shows awareness

Frequently throughout the dialogue, the informal group would have several smaller groups develop. Within these smaller groups, conversations would center on a given topic and merge into the main stream of the larger group. In this instance a discussion appeared to center around an experience common to the students. The discussion centered around a particular class and teacher. A participant from a smaller group was explaining a conversation she had with a teacher's assistant. She asked him about his teaching experience.

4. Participant: "What was the purpose in it?"

locating isolates a problem

Picking up the dialogue trend, another participant spoke of her experience with a university teacher.

5. Participant: "He was in the social studies department - the head of the history department."

locating isolates a problem

At this point the conversations in smaller groups still existed. Several of these apparently happening simultaneously. One participant seemed strongest. She was still talking about her history teacher.

6. Participant: "Anyway, he said he was going - he went into teaching because he was interested in history."

locating isolates a problem

7. Participant: "He wanted to get his point across."

locating isolates a problem

8. Participant: "But he hates kids."

locating isolates a problem

9. Participant: "He teaches history of the West, doesn't he?"

discovering obtains clarification

10.

P.S.C. no participant talk

Several participants began to accompany the participant who originated the topic.

11. Participant: "Sounds like Dr. Pipper, the way he talks."

accompanying takes position

Dr. Pipper had apparently become the focus of the group. Several had now emerged to accompany

12. Participant: "The only reason you should go into history is to be a historian."

accompanying takes position

Another participant joined in.

13. Participant: "He said there are no historians, correct?"
accompanying takes position

Another participant moved in to inquire.

14. Participant: "What was his point there?"
discovering elicits statement

15. Participant: "Everybody has a different slant."
accompanying takes position

16. Participant: "Which is very hard to do."
accompanying takes position

Another participant enters.

17. Participant: "One of your colleague teachers."
accompanying shows awareness

18. Participant: "What a nut!"
accompanying takes position

Interaction during this dialogue was high. Several participants were making short comments about the discussed teacher and related areas. However, the whole trend was toward accompanying.

19. Participant: "A different way of sowing corn."
accompanying takes position

20. Participant: "He ran around the states like this."
accompanying takes position

21.

P.S.C. no participant talk

A whole new topic emerged. Although not really disruptive, the whole group began to shift at this point as a participant raised a new idea and entered it for conversation. The conversation remained casual.

22. Participant: "I don't mind history - it's interesting."
originating makes preliminary statement
23. Participant: "He keeps your interest every time you go."
accompanying takes position
24. Participant: "There were 75 to 80 people in there."
accompanying takes position
25.
P.S.C. no participant talk
26. Participant: "It's very interesting because you got all
sorts of people talking."
27. Participant: "Use the information text."
accompanying takes position
- 28-30.
P.S.C. verbal dialogue could not be understood
(jets flew over drowning out all dialogue)

Examination and Analysis of Figures 3 and 4

Accompanying and locating, the featured behaviors of Figures 3 and 4, show certain patterns emerging. In the first five minute segment accompanying appeared nine times (30%), with originating five times (17%), locating seven times (23%), and P.S.C. nine times (30%).

In the second five minute segment, accompanying appeared 14 times (47%), locating appeared five times (17%), and originating three times (10%). Discovering appeared two times (6%) and P.S.C. six times (20%).

During these two five minute segments interaction was high. A total of 14 participants verbally interacted in the first segment and eight in the second. The sessions selected were near the middle of the University semester and the participants in the group had established closer relationships with each other. The formal social amenities had been exchanged for casual, and apparently, more friendly relationships.

Locating, the behavior of verbally expressing interest, was the first category to appear in Figure 3. The problem or interest located was apparently satisfying to several of the participants. Six of the participants decided to accompany or commit to the initiator's position. Once the problem or interest was located, participant behavior frequently moved to accompany or another of the categories.

While originating behavior appeared most often, accompanying was the second most frequently used category of the entire study. In accompanying behavior, participants took positions and showed awareness. Throughout the various sessions accompanying most frequently followed locating, but it also appeared after originating and several of the other categories.

Two patterns appeared during the accompanying process. As a problem was located and the various participants moved to accompany, emerging or receding behavior could be seen. A participant might emerge (move toward) the initiator's position by making a supportive statement. There were also times when a participant who was actively involved in the interactive process would recede (move away) from the

initiator's position by offering alternatives or making negative comments. At this point, the group could either remain with the initiator's position or establish a new focus for discussion.

One unusual aspect of the group's interaction centered around the accompanying behavior. In this group which was attempting to operate democratically, no single individual appeared to dominate or assume a position of leadership. Intermittently throughout the study, certain individuals expressed topics of interest and of fundamental value to themselves. Other participants would frequently enter into the locating process. Once the interest or problem was located, a majority of the participants discussed the issue, or entered into the dialogue as though the idea were their own. This accompanying behavior was constantly a major part of the group experience.

Other behavioral categories (selecting, developing, pursuing, and examining) occurred more frequently near the end of the semester.

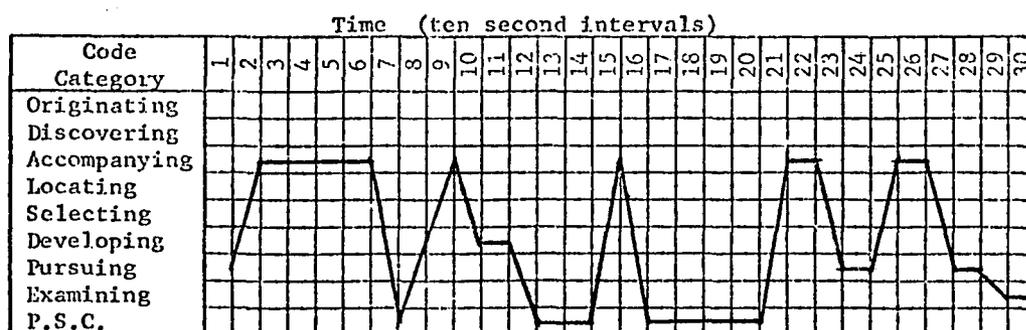


Figure 5. A five minute segment illustrating the interaction of ACCOMPANYING, DEVELOPING, PURSUING, EXAMINING, and P.S.C. Informal Group Situation

Among the topics chosen by participants, various current problems and issues were dominant. In this five minute segment, the use of drugs was a major concern. This segment begins

just after one of the participants related an incident concerning a high school setting where several students had suggested interviewing some of their peers, and taping them while they were under the influence of drugs. The students wanted to play the recorded tape in their high school class. The discussion dealt with the implications and consequences if such an action were taken. This five minute segment was taken at the peak of the discussion.

Coded Categories: pursuing, accompanying, developing, examining, and p.s.c.

Session Script

The dialogue appeared intensely concerned with the major question of taping individuals and utilizing the recording in class. The first participant pursuing this suggestion comments:

1. Participant: "You'd be responsible for the action of the students if you said 'Go ahead and bring the tape in.'"

pursuing involves working and solving problems

Several students were responding to the issue of being responsible. One had compared responsibility in a sex education course to the drug issue. A chorus of support accompanied the statement at this coded interval

2. Participant: (Several in unison) "Right!"

accompanying consents and commits to initiator's position

The impact of the comparison with sex education elicited humor and laughter. One person had asked about pregnancy and responsibility. The responsibility seemed to one participant to be similar.

3. Participant: "That's the same thing."

accompanying (emerging) shows awareness and consents to initiator's position

Another participant took an alternate view. She appeared to feel that responsibility had to do with giving of permission in sex or drugs.

4. Participant: "Number one, you didn't give the student permission."
accompanying (receding) participant takes alternate position
5. Participant: "Yah, but you didn't give the other kids permission to smoke the dope, either."
accompanying (receding) participant takes alternate position .
6. Participant: "Bring in a recording of his ideas of what sex is all about."
accompanying consents and commits to initiator's position
7.
P.S.C. no participant talk

At this point the dialogue drifted into disarray. The participants were interacting, however the direction seemed to disappear. Out of several seemingly unrelated comments a participant saw a focus.

8. Participant: "We're talking about dope, right?"
developing arranges ways of acting on problem
- Another shift occurred at this interval. One participant picked up drift of the dialogue, but once he had gained the attention of the other participants he selected his own reference to the drug issue. He continued to talk for three consecutive intervals.
9. Participant: "I was thinking - that's kind of a nice mental image."
accompanying shows awareness
10. Participant: "If you would like to have a tape played in an American Problems class."
developing arranges ways of acting on problem
11. Participant: "Maybe you'd like to hear what it sounds like to be high on certain kinds of drugs."
developing arranges ways of acting on problems
- 12-14.
P.S.C. no participant talk

Another participant picked up a personal concern about a film on drugs he had seen. He asked the group if they had seen it. One participant responded.

15. Participant: "Yeh, I saw that."

accompanying shows awareness

At this point there was extensive interaction. However, there was only laughter and distinct pauses during the following intervals.

16-20.

P.S.C. no participant talk, confusion

During the interaction, several digressions from the central topic of drugs occurred. These appeared as relief from the flow of dialogue. Concerning one of these side topics, a participant joined the conversation for two intervals.

21. Participant: "It's like if someone tells me . . ."

accompanying shows awareness

22. Participant: "What is it like in the closet, and you go well . . ."

accompanying shows awareness

The participants shifted back to the initial topic of drugs and pursued it.

23. Participant: "What if the person is on drugs and the negative situation happens where some kids get to go try it."

pursuing involves working on problems

24. Participant: "Yeh, that was their purpose in doing it."

pursuing establishes working relationship

Now the dialogue is back fully on drugs and the reasons for using them.

25. Participant: "Well some of the reason is good old everyday curiosity."

accompanying takes position

26. Participant: "Wouldn't it be better to satisfy curiosity by having someone else on drugs than by waiting until they go off and get on drugs by themselves?"

accompanying takes position

Another participant picked up the discussion and pursued its meaning for further relationship

27. Participant: "You can find out just as much as you want to know about drugs."

pursuing involves working upon problems

28. Participant: "The people who are going to use drugs are going to use them anyway."

pursuing involves working upon problems

The drug issue in the dialogue had been discussed for almost the entire segment. At this point the initial participant examined his relationship in the experience of taping people on drugs and its implications.

29. Participant: "We really haven't faced the issue."

examining distinguishes features in statements for action

30. Participant: "I'm ultimately responsible for what goes on and what doesn't."

examining clarifies identity and personal relationships

Examination and Analysis of Figure 5

The five behavioral categories of Figure 5 show several patterns emerging. Accompanying appeared 12 times (40%), developing three times (10%), pursuing five times (17%), examining two times (7%) and P.S.C. eight times (26%). Fourteen participants interacted during the five minutes.

Initially the participants in Figure 5 were discussing an issue of general interest. The dialogue had developed in a previous

portion of the session. At the height of the discussion interaction appeared intense and there was frequent participation by major members of the group. Though the conversation at one point moved away from the central issue, the interest of the participants soon returned the dialogue to the main topic.

In this segment the intensity of the discussion demonstrated a diversity of ideas, humor, argument, and agreement.

Pursuing was the initial behavior of the segment. This behavior demonstrated a working aspect of the participant's efforts. The participants in the five acts of pursuing were establishing working relationships which often involved some attempts to solve problems. Throughout the five minutes, pursuing was most often followed by accompanying.

Accompanying behavior appeared in two forms; accompanying-emerging, and accompanying-receding. During the interaction, accompanying-emerging behavior appeared as participants verbally committed themselves to an initiator's position, showed awareness of other members of the group, or used their statements in order to continue the dialogue.

Accompanying-receding behavior appeared less frequently. In this behavior, the participants took a view somewhat alternate, yet complimentary to that of the initiator. The intent of this behavior seemed to be to maintain the dialogue and, at the same time, expand it.

In this five minute segment accompanying-receding appeared two times. In the first appearance one participant offered an organized alternative that expanded and complicated the initiator's position. The second appearance occurred when one participant took an alternate position by clarifying the initiator's statement.

Accompanying appeared to function in the interaction allowing the participants to establish clear relationships with each other. No consistent leadership seemed to emerge. Instead of leadership, the term most adequately describing the interactive behavior was accompanying. No participant emerged as a distinct leader. Often, in this relationship, the accompanying individual would emerge to be more dominant in the offered idea or project than the initiator.

Additionally, after the initiator had established a position, another participant might take a complementary or alternate position. In effect, the receding participant would move away from the previous relationships by offering new alternatives.

Developing was another behavior which frequently emerged from accompanying. In this action, the participants attempted to design ways of dealing with problems by providing methods of acting upon them. One participant formulated procedures and suggested participant relationships for acting on certain aspects of the problem.

Throughout the study and in Figure 5 the participants frequently examined what was going on. Twice in Figure 5, participants examined by consulting other participants, asked questions concerning statements or actions, or distinguished features in statements.

Originating occurred most frequently. This may have been due, in part, to the fact that the group met weekly. The initial stages of each session began by participants extending greeting. They made certain preliminary statements, personal contacts and consulted each other concerning a variety of topics, or issues. It appeared that the three sub-categories (initiate, introduce, and identify) were utilized each session. Additionally, originating was used when the direction or established purpose of the group seemed to break down. At these points throughout the study the participants would utilize originating behavior to establish reasons for the group, provide certain new information, make additional personal contacts, or consult each other.

Discovering appeared to function as a bridge between originating and accompanying. In this behavior the participants analyzed certain statements, obtained clarification of newly offered ideas, elicited statements around new thoughts, confirmed reception when statements were directed to them, responded to statements, and established personal relationships with other participants.

Accompanying behavior appeared second in frequency. It appeared as the behavior showing the group moving to work together. The participants had limited previous contacts with each other. However, in the dialogue, when ideas emerged, accompanying-emerging revealed participants showing awareness by consenting to other participants' positions. Accompanying seemed to demonstrate the commitment of certain participants to the positions of other group members.

This behavior found the participants moving together, joining efforts in dialogue over the ideas brought into focus by various participants.

Accompanying-receding appeared to offer new alternatives by utilizing complimentary and differing positions. In this phase the participants acted on the initiator's position by expanding the original idea with alternate possibilities and moved to include new relationships. The participants did, however, remain close to the initiator's position in terms of dialogue.

One aspect of accompanying behavior and the general development of the group was the fact that no sustained leadership emerged. One participant would take a certain position. Others would accompany him. At that point the participant accompanying might emerge dominant to the initiator. Frequently the participants would alternate from dominant to less dominant positions. This pattern tended to persist throughout the study.

Locating seemed to appear as an expression of concerted interest in a specific problem. The problem would be isolated by one of the participants, or placed alongside another problem. This part of the interactive process tended to demonstrate participants not only determining what the specific problem was, but also suggesting a classification. The participant classifying the problem seemed to arrange it in relation to other problems or issues. It also left the opportunity for more problems to emerge.

Selecting behavior appeared less frequently in the study than any other. (This may be due to the fact that selecting tended to be

a brief and quick expression by participants.) In this behavior participants tended to be involved in certain kinds of preferring experiences. Participants tended to express preferences or specific choices concerning the problems to work upon. Selecting was also the decision to clarify one participant's position. Frequently the participant would check with others to clarify his choice.

Developing provided methods for acting upon a chosen or selected problem. Participant interaction tended to be concerned with the design and the formulation of procedures. Developing seemed to occur when smaller groups were working upon a specific problem. In the smaller group the participants tended to formulate new relationships for attacking the problems.

Pursuing appeared as a participant behavior involving working upon or solving chosen problems. From the working relationships that were established for the purpose related to the problem, cooperating participants engaged each other in the project. The focus here seemed to be on getting the job done.

Examining appeared throughout the entire study. Intermittently and persistently participants would question each other about statements to distinguish useful parts. Frequently the examining behavior established shared meanings along with clarifying the personal identity or interactive relationships of participants. Examining tended to show participants consulting with each other for such values as shared information and experiences. This verbal behavior seemed to be highly valued by participants.

Pauses in the dialogue occurred throughout the study. Occasionally it was in a monologue by one participant, or it may have been when the dialogue had been quite active and the participants were seeking a new direction. There were also times when verbal interaction could not be understood due to outside disturbances. These occasions were coded P.S.C.

Summary

Chapter 5 presented selected data from the study and provided an examination and analysis of that data. Plots of selected five minute segments of group dialogue were presented to demonstrate the group's use of each of the nine major categories. Each plot was followed by the Informal Group Situation and Session Script. An examination and analysis of the plots was presented. Finally, a plot showing the total coded verbal behavior of the entire study was followed by a brief examination and analysis of the total verbal behavior.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine the behavior of the participants in an informal group of college students who were interested in being teachers and who chose to utilize democratic processes within the group. The verbal behavior occurring in the group was used as the basis of this study. The theory was divided into three categories: democracy and democratic processes in group behavior, informal groups as an organizing base for utilizing democratic processes, and interactive verbal behavior by various participants of an informal group utilizing democratic processes. Literature related to the various divisions and components of the theory was reviewed. The theory was used to provide direction in creating an instrument and collecting, organizing and treating the data.

The literature in the study was divided into a presentation of democracy and democratic processes, an explanation of informal groups attempting to utilize democratic processes, plus the eight categories utilized to establish the theory and develop a code.

The categories were: originating and identifying within the informal group through interaction, discovering and sharing interests among members of an informal group, accompanying -- both an emerging and receding process within an informal group, locating individual or

group problems, selecting certain problems for action, developing approaches to selected problems, pursuing the study of selected problems, and examining the results.

Following the development of the theory, the general situation and direction of the study was provided. It was presented in the following way:

1. The informal group setting was presented including the origin, planning, and development of the study, along with a brief description of the participants.
2. The problems, and projects that emerged in the study were outlined.
3. Social and political problems which concerned participants were discussed.
4. Educational problems selected by the participant were explained.
5. Projects developed by the participants were also explained.

Findings of the Study

From the data collected certain distinct patterns seemed to emerge. Originating behavior was most frequently used by the participants. The data demonstrated originating behavior as the participants extended greetings and made personal contacts. This behavior tended to occur during the early part of each session and generally throughout the entire study. The participants also made preliminary statements, established possible reasons for the group, and provided

information useful to several of the participants. The participants also consulted each other concerning feelings, attitudes, and values. In fact during originating behavior, the participants utilized initiating, introducing, and identifying behavior.

Discovering behavior, in which the participants indicated a willingness to interact and establish personal working relationships, attempted clarification, and obtained meaning, occurred frequently. This behavior tended to show the participants as they explored each other's statements, ideas, and attitudes.

Accompanying, an emerging and receding behavior, occurred second to originating in frequency. In this behavior, a participant would verbally show awareness to a position initiated by another member of the group. The accompanying participant could decide to show support by consenting to the initiator's position, thus demonstrating an accompanying-emerging relationship. Quite often the participant accompanying could emerge as dominant. The initiator would then recede into an accompanying relationship demonstrating accompanying-receding. A second receding relationship could occur when a participant who had been accompanying took another view, a different emphasis, or direction. Thus accompanying behavior demonstrated a series of emerging and receding relationships within the informal group.

Locating behavior tended to occur as a consequence of accompanying or discovering behavior. This behavior involved finding common areas of concern, determining and isolating interests. As the

participants located a specific interest or problem, they would arrange or classify it in relation to other interests or problems.

As a result of the locating action, participants engaged in a selecting behavior as they chose specific areas in which to work. In this part of the process the participants expressed preferences and selected a problem for action. This action appeared to make clear the participants' personal positions, specify their particular choice of a problem and demonstrate their decision to act.

Frequently, while the selecting process was occurring, developing behavior appeared almost simultaneously. While engaging in developing behavior, participants designed or constructed approaches to problems by exploring certain methods, ways, and arrangements for the participants to act.

Pursuing behavior emerged immediately out of developing behavior. The participants were actively involved in the selected projects. Pursuing behavior demonstrated the group's relationships as the participants acted upon the task. Then engaged each other in the work at hand.

Throughout the entire study examining behavior was an ongoing part of the participants' efforts. Constantly each participant consulted other participants. In this action participants tended to ask questions, distinguish purposeful features, and acquire shared meanings along with clarifying personal meaning and personal identity. Examining behavior also provided needed information, helped recognize viable ideas, and recognized useful and relevant knowledge and

experiences. It tended to help participants find out about each other and aid in self discovery.

There were also times when there was no participant talk due to the occurrence of a pause in an individual's statement, silence, or confusion wherein verbal interaction was incomprehensible. These occurrences were labeled P.S.C.

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