Alecia Hudson

Education 1301

Dr. G. Phan, Professor

“How Second-Grade Students Internalize Rules during Teacher-Student Transactions: A Case Study”

By Jacques Meard, Stefano Bertone, and Eric Flavier (2008)
Context – Why is it important?

• It is important for teachers to understand the process by which rules are constructed and how students internalize rules, so teachers can make rules more effective in the classroom.
Definitions

• **Rules** - considered to be “external signs” (Meard, Bertone, & Flavier, 2008, p.2).
  – a *sign* being an association of a word to a behavior.
  – *external* referring to a sign originating outside of the students' mind.

• **Internalization** - to become self-addressed; “an internal link is established” (Meard, Bertone, & Flavier, 2008, p.2).
  – the *internal link* being the relationship between a sign and the motive or expected/desired behavior.
Purpose of this study

The purpose of this research study was to examine the process used for second-grade students to internalize rules through teacher-student interactions.
The purpose was gained by answering:

- “how rules were established and negotiated”
- “how they (rules) were addressed by the teacher and self-addressed (internalized) by the students”

(Meard, Bertone, & Flavier, 2008, p.3).
Research was used from various studies including:


Need for study

Previous studies lacked a comprehensive approach to how each various area of external signs and thought processes worked together with teacher-student interactions to help student internalize rules.
For the study, teacher–student interactions were studied in a second grade classroom for the span of one academic year.

- **Teacher**
  - 18 years teaching experience, 7 of those in the same school

- **Class**
  - second-grade class
  - public primary school in south France
  - 24 students – 13 boys and 11 girls
  - ages 6 – 8 years
Physical observation was the main source of information collection.

– in-class observation for 25 half days, totaling 72 hours or 102 lessons

• One third of the observation took place within the first month of the academic year.

• Two thirds of the observation was completed over the last 8 months of the academic year.
Method – Research Design (2)

• For the general observations, one researcher was present to take notes.
  – A relationship was established between the researcher, the teacher, and the students, to build trust.

• Notes were taken “on the students’ actions, the teacher’s’ actions, and the verbal interactions” where interpretation of the observation was performed at the time of observance (Meard, Bertone, & Flavier, 2008, p.3).
Method – Research Design (3)

• In addition to the general observations, **three lessons** were studied in depth with **notes, video-recording, and post-lesson interviews** with the teacher.
  
  – To ensure the video-recording would not distract or hinder the student or teacher behavior, much care was taken, including student familiarity with cameras in the classroom and comparison of behaviors with previous observations to confirm consistency.

• For the three video-recorded lessons, an additional researcher came in to “directly observe the lessons and interviews” and work autonomously to take notes (Meard, Bertone, & Flavier, 2008, pp.3 - 4).
Data Processing

• Data from the general observations:
  – was collected to give an overall picture of the classroom.
  – was processed at the time of the observation by the researcher.
Data Processing (2)

- Data from the video recorded lessons was analyzed through a five-step process.

1. Transcripts of lessons were broken into segments of teacher-students transactions.
2. Each transaction was coded by its method – dictation, question, or question with motives.
3. Students’ actions were observed and coded, consistent with the four behaviors described in Vygotsky’s study.
4. Each researcher, independently interpreted data from each aspect of observation (direct observations, video recordings, and interviews).
5. Researchers compared interpretations to come to agreement with each other.
Summary

• Rules in the classroom were thought to be most effective by explicit dictation with a follow up of a motive or explanation of the rule, so that the rule “makes sense when the person...is capable of seeing the relationship between the actions to be performed and...motives” (Meard, Bertone, & Flavier, 2008, p.12).

• However, it is apparent that rules are not always internalized through this logical relationship built from explanation and justification.
Outcomes

• The study found that:
  – rules were formed not only through explanation and justification, but also negotiation and persuasion to the entire class.
  – personalized instances of this negotiation and persuasion arose in times of heteronomous actions by students, where students needed teacher supervision to regulate their actions.
    • For example, instead of offering an explanation of a rule, a teacher changes her tone or stands near the student when stating the rule.
  – rules were adjusted to the dynamics of the class through “negotiation by adaption” (Meard, Bertone, & Flavier, 2008, p.9).
    • where the actions of the students affect the teacher, thus affecting the construction and enforcement of rules.
Outcomes (2)

With the emergence of persuasion and negotiation, an internalization of rules appears to occur through social interaction and not only through a logical connection between a sign and a motive, as previously thought.

“This observation suggests that the postulate that signs and rules are internalized principally through and understanding of the justification, is more complex” (Mead, Bertone, & Flavier, 2008, p.12).
Challenges

- Within this study, limits exist due to the limited observations, as well as the lack of knowledge about the social aspects of the self-addressing of rules by students.
Generalizations

Generalizations exist in:

- uniformity of classrooms across the world.
- consistent use of explicit rules in the classroom.
- enforcement of rules being the determining factor of student behavior.

These generalizations can hinder the interpretation of the findings.
Benefits

• These findings offer a perspective for teacher training.
  – With knowledge of the multiple avenues for internalization of rules, it is easier for teachers to focus on student actions.
  – This study also provides a comprehensive look into the co-construction of rules in the classroom as opposed to an independent construction and enforcement by the teacher.
Limitations of Findings

• Divergence in interpretation:
  – The teacher’s lack of providing an explanation or justification can be interpreted as a “lack of consistency on the teacher’s part rather than as an adjustment of actions” due to the classroom dynamics (Mead, Bertone, & Flavier, 2008, p.14).
  – However, in this study, the teacher’s actions were not to be compared with an ideal model, thus the interpretation was made based directly on the teacher’s understanding and the students actions.