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How do adolescent students experience teacher-student interactions in a seventh grade classroom and how do those experiences affect their self-efficacy beliefs?

Katherine Sanjiyan Barg

The University of San Francisco

HOW DO ADOLESCENT STUDENTS EXPERIENCE TEACHER-STUDENT INTERACTIONS IN A SEVENTH-GRADE CLASSROOM AND HOW DO THOSE EXPERIENCES AFFECT THEIR SELF-EFFICACY BELIEFS?

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Dissertation Abstract

How do Adolescent Students Experience Teacher-student Interactions in a Seventh Grade Classroom and How Do Those Experiences Affect Their Self-Efficacy Beliefs?

Studies over the past 30 years have examined teacher-student interactions in the classroom but have not focused on how those interactions may affect the self-efficacy feelings of students. Research suggests that students who connect well with their teachers experience more positive academic success. Therefore this study examined how adolescent students experience teacher-student interactions within the middle school classroom environment and how those interactions may relate to students' feelings of self-efficacy.

The researcher examined teacher-student interactions in a seventh-grade classroom because this grade level is a pivotal point for adolescents in middle school. Qualitative interpretive research was used to observe teacher-student interactions. Classroom observations were conducted over a four-week period. Focus group interviews were also used to understand how students experienced teacher-student interactions and to examine how students feelings of self-efficacy that may have resulted from teacher-student interactions.

Results of the study produced several findings. First, the results of this study suggested that purely qualitative methods alone might not produce useful findings when examining self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents. Researcher observations found that the interactions in the classroom fall into more categories than previous researchers had noted. For example, this study found the teacher had a strong influence on the tone of the

classroom. The researcher also observed that male students called out more frequently than female students but that these call-outs were not initiated by the teacher. This study also found that the teacher used non-verbal cues that were experienced negatively by most students and that students often had a difficult time articulating their experiences with self-efficacy as they related to their interactions with the teacher.

Therefore, the researcher concluded that while males may dominate classroom discussions as previous research has shown, the teacher might not always be responsible for that behavior. Also the researcher determined that non-verbal actions on the part of the teacher were also a type of interaction that strongly influenced student experiences in the classroom. The researcher concluded that focus group interviews alone were not helpful in determining student self-perceptions of self-efficacy and that additional methods such as surveys and one-to-one interviews might be useful.

Katherine S. Barg
Author

Mathew Mitchell
Chairperson, Dissertation Committee

This dissertation written under the direction of the candidate's dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee, has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented in this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

Katherine Sanjiyan Barg Candidate	December 2009 Date

Dissertation Committee:

Mathew Mitchell Chairperson	December 2009 Date
Yvonne Bui	December 2009 Date
Caryl Hodges	December 2009 Date

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Statement of the Problem

Studies conducted over the past 30 years have examined the frequency and type of teacher-student interactions in the classroom and reported that teachers favor males during those interactions. Additional studies suggested that differential treatment of males and females may explain why females continue to score lower than males on most standardized tests (AAUW, 1998; Beamon, Wheldall, & Kemp, 2006; Brophy, 1985; Datnow & Hubard, 2002; Duffy, Warren, & Walsh, 2001; Eccles & Blumenfeld, 1985; Frawley, 2005; Hansot & Tyack, 1988; Meece & Eccles, 1993). (Caruthers, 2000; Cole & Willinghan, 1999, 2003; NAEP, 2005; Sadker & Sadker, 1994; Younger & Warrington, 1996).

However, no studies have focused specifically on how teacher-student interactions might affect the self-efficacy feelings of students. Bandura (1977) pointed out that feelings of self-efficacy could play a role in student achievement Self-efficacy is a construct that evolved from Bandura's social learning theory. Self-efficacy theory says that how successful a person is at a task is directly related to that person's beliefs about his/her capabilities to produce results by his/her task-related actions (Bandura, 1977). An increasing amount of research beyond Bandura suggests that the self-efficacy beliefs of students may affect students' feelings about their academic achievement (Brown, Lent, & Multon, 1991; Cho, Hsieh, Liu, & Schallert, 2004; Gore, 2006; Lane, & Lane, 2001; Pajares & Schunk, 2001).

The earliest research studies on student success in school focused primarily on the lack of attention received by females during teacher-student interactions studies (Brophy & Good, 1970; Brophy & Sikes, 1973; Dweck, Davidson, Nelson, & Enna, 1978; Hughes, 1973). Current research has documented that in the lower elementary grades, female achievement is equal to or exceeds that of males (Cole & Willinghan, 2003; Gore, 2006). However, the same research has also shown that despite the evidence that female grade point averages often exceed those of males, females still achieve lower standardized test scores than males (NAEP, 2005).

Current research studies have also focused on a more current decline in male achievement on standardized tests compared to previous years, and a reduction in male enrollment in higher education courses (Kleinfeld, 2006; Marjoribanks, 2006). Scholastic Aptitude Test scores for both males and females show that, despite the trend of declining standardized test scores for males as compared to previous years, male test score results still exceed those of females (NAEP 2005).

In addition, males still outperform females in most subject areas of those same tests (Educational Testing Service [ETS], 2005). It also appears that while both male and female adolescents begin to demonstrate reduced self-efficacy as learners, male adolescents may also begin to feel alienated from the school environment (Kleinfeld, 2006). Studies have demonstrated the positive role of self-efficacy beliefs on students' academic interest and motivation (Bandura, 1997; Pajares & Schunk, 2001). The stronger a student's perceived self-efficacy, the more he/she may be motivated to manage his/her own learning and have higher goals and accomplishments (Bandura, Martinez-Pons, & Zimmerman, 1992).

To date there have been no studies that explore how teacher-student interactions in middle school classrooms may affect adolescent self-efficacy. Bandura (1997) pointed out that a teacher's beliefs about his or her own teaching abilities may determine how he/she interacts with his/her students. Bandura asserts that the task of creating productive learning environments is strongly dependent upon the talent and efficacy of teachers themselves. Bandura felt that the teacher-student interactions that result from those beliefs may affect a student's academic development as well as students' judgments about their abilities to complete academic tasks.

Research has suggested that during adolescence students enter a phase of life where their confidence in their abilities is at a critical stage (Barber & Olsen, 2004; Bartlet-Jorgensen, 2004; Cauley & Jovanovich, 2006; Sadker & Sadker, 1994). In addition to major biological, educational, and social role changes, adolescents must manage major environmental changes that may affect personal feelings of self-efficacy (Pajares & Urdan, 2006). One example of an environmental change is students' transition to middle school. Adolescents in middle school may experience a loss of personal control, become less confident in themselves, and become more sensitive to how they are viewed by adults as well as peers (Eccles & Midgley, 1989). Therefore, teacher-student relationships and interactions in middle school are important. Students become more concerned about getting along with their teachers and want teachers with whom they feel comfortable approaching with problems (Cauley & Jovanovich, 2006).

Researchers have found that teacher engagement with early adolescents can be critical (Barber & Olsen, 2004; Cauley & Jovanovich, 2006; Diemert, 1992). Research suggests that students who connect well with their teachers and obtain help with their

academic skills, have more positive academic success. Therefore, teacher-student interactions during classroom instruction may be critical for the growth of self-efficacy beliefs and subsequent achievement for adolescents (Barber & Olsen, 2004; Diemert, 1992). Adolescents also have greater developmental needs for positive interpersonal connections with nonparental, nonguardian adults. In middle school this occurs at a time when there may be a decline in those teacher-student connections due to the structure of the school environment (Barber & Olsen, 2004). In addition to the hormonal and physical changes experienced by adolescents in middle school, students' cognitive abilities also grow rapidly, while at the same time there is often a decline in academic self-confidence, interest in school, and grades (Cauley & Jovanovich, 2006; Eccles & Wigfield, 1997). It is therefore important to examine how adolescent students experience teacher-student interactions within the middle school classroom environment and how those interactions may relate to students' feelings of self-efficacy and subsequent achievement.

The researcher selected a seventh-grade classroom for this study because this grade level is a pivotal point in middle school, where male and female achievement appears to change (Cauley & Jovanovich, 2006; Eccles & Wigfield, 1997). Seventh grade is frequently the transition grade for students from elementary school. Students move from seeing one primary teacher each day in sixth grade to departmentalized programs in seventh and eighth grades where they have from two to six teachers per day. The nature of the relationships between teachers and students may contribute to students' feelings of self-efficacy. Reduced feelings of self-efficacy may contribute to lower standardized test scores for females starting in adolescence, as well as declining test scores and increasing dropout rates for males in high school. The purpose of this study then was to examine

how teacher-student interactions may affect adolescent beliefs about their learning and confidence as achievers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was examine teacher-student interactions using classroom observations and focus groups to determine if there was a connection between those interactions and students' feelings of self-efficacy. The researcher analyzed the complex nature of what occurred between teachers and students during all types of classroom interactions during a normal classroom period. Transcripts of those observations and focus groups provided insight into how students experience teacher-student interactions and how these may affect students' feelings of self-efficacy.

Focus group interviews with adolescent seventh-grade students allowed the researcher to carefully structure questions based on classroom observations. Such questioning allowed students to "open up" about their experiences and talk to each other about the day-to-day teacher interactions in their classroom. Careful questioning also allowed students to share how those interactions with their teachers might affect their feelings of self-efficacy in that classroom.

Earlier studies on teacher-student interactions have not explored how teacher-student interactions might affect student self-efficacy and their perceptions of themselves as learners at the middle school level, specifically seventh grade. By combining observations and focus group interviews, this study was able to address the limitations of earlier studies on teacher-student interactions cited by Brophy (1985). Therefore, this study differed from earlier studies in two respects. First, it examined the nature of teacher-student interactions through observations. Second, this study extended

the work of others by using inductive analysis of the nature of teacher-student interactions. Such analysis provided a better understanding of how adolescent students experience teacher-student interactions.

The use of focus group interviews increased the understanding of the culture of the seventh-grade classroom by examining what students said about their experiences during classroom teacher-student interactions. Focus groups have been used previously with adolescent students to explore other sociological phenomenon. In this study, focus groups were used to gain a better understanding of adolescent student experiences and perceptions in the middle school classroom setting. Allowing adolescents to come together as a group and talk about their classroom interaction experiences was a useful way to explore teacher-student interactions and students' perceptions of themselves as confident learners.

The combination of observations of classroom interactions with focus group interviews allowed this researcher to address some of the limitations of earlier studies on teacher-student interactions cited by Brophy (1985), "They [questionnaires and coding scales] do not allow for capturing the subtleties and qualitative aspects of classroom events" (p. 141). This study provided new data and examined the possible consequences of teacher-student interactions as to how they may affect students' feelings of self-efficacy and subsequent academic confidence.

The purpose of this study, then, was to provide new qualitative data about teacher-student interactions in seventh-grade classrooms and examine how these may affect adolescent students' feelings of self-efficacy.

Background and Need

The goal of this study was to examine how adolescents experience classroom interactions in middle school and how those experiences may affect adolescents' feelings of self-efficacy that may later affect their achievement and interest in school. Sadker and Sadker (1994) wrote in *Failing at Fairness: How Our Schools Cheat Girls* that the "classroom is the only place in society where so many different, young, and restless individuals are crowded into close quarters for an extended period of time, day after day"(p. 43). Their research indicated that teachers interact with male students more frequently and that females have less opportunity to participate in classroom interactions with their teachers. However, female students may not be the only ones affected by what occurs in the classroom. Current studies (AAUW, 1998; Bailey, 1996; Beamon et al., 2006; Chapman, 1997; Duffy et al., 2001; Kleinfeld, 2006; Nichols & Good, 1998) suggest that something is also affecting males' interest in school and their ability to feel successful academically. Therefore, the background and need for this study focused on the following issues: the differentials between male and female achievement on standardized tests, seventh grade as an educational transition for adolescent students, and what previous research has said about teacher-student interactions in the classroom.

Male and Female Achievement Differentials

Data from the ETS (2009) have indicated that differences in female and male achievement scores appear as students' transition from lower elementary school to high school. Scholastic Aptitude Tests' (SAT) and Graduate Record Exam's (GRE) combined results for both males and females show males outperforming females in both mathematics and verbal ability. Even though females more recently appear to be scoring

higher on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) examinations, they still continue to score lower than males on Advanced Placement (AP) examinations in English despite the higher proportion of female students taking the exam (NAEP, 2009).

Between 1990 and the early 2000s, other trends in educational achievement for males and females appeared. Researchers (Bailey, 1996; Chapman, 1997; Cole & Willinghan, 1999; Taylor & Lorimer, 2003) observed not only continuing disparities in male and female achievement test scores, but also the increasing prevalence of boys in special education. For example, two thirds of students receiving special education services in public schools are now males (NAEP, 2009). While males continue to outscore females on most standardized tests, they now score comparatively lower than they had in previous years, specifically in reading and writing. Cole and Willinghan (2003) found that the gap between females and males on the SAT and GRE tests averaged 16 points when it had been more than 20 in prior years.

Researchers (Klein, 2006; Kleinfeld, 2006) have also observed that recently increasing numbers of males appear to be disengaged from school. Fewer males are enrolling in advanced courses in high school or applying to college. In 2000 the U.S. Department of Education (2000) reported that the average enrollment in college freshman classes was 56% for females and 44% for males. In 2009 the U.S. Census Bureau of Statistics reported that for every 100 females enrolled in college, there were 77 males enrolled at the same time. Also, male students are beginning to show a higher dropout rate than females: 15% for male and 12% for females (U.S. Census Bureau). Therefore, the issues that have surrounded female education since the early 1970s now include new

concerns about the disengagement from and declining achievement of males in school (Kleinfeld, 2006; Sadker & Sadker, 1994).

To address these gaps in male-female achievement test scores, a recent trend in public education has been to promote single sex schooling as an answer to differential test scores (Bailey, 1996; Klein, 2006; Kleinfeld, 2006). The trend to support this movement has focused on test score differences between males and females as well as learning style differentials of males and females. Some educators have felt that separating males and females during instruction might provide better learning opportunities for both (Kleinfeld, 2006). However, other researchers (Datnow & Hubbard, 2002) have suggested that the separation of the sexes is not the answer to achievement variances between males and females. Despite the dialogue on how to educate both males and females better, little evidence has been offered on the role that differential teacher-student interactions might play in the academic success of students in a coeducational classroom versus a single sex classroom (National Association for Single Sex Public Schools [NAASPE], 2005).

Researchers (Bartelt-Jorgensen, 2004; Kurman, 2004) have emphasized the need for a study on teacher-student interactions during the transition time of middle school and what the effect might be on adolescent student perceptions of their ability to be successful students. Other researchers (Bursik & Martin, 2006) have observed that adolescent females may be more influenced than males by a teacher's authority during classroom interactions. This may result in different feelings of self-efficacy for both males and females. Bursik and Martin also suggested that adolescents who experience more positive interactions with their teachers may also experience greater academic success.

Seventh Grade as an Educational Transition for Adolescents

The transition from the protective environment of the lower elementary grades to the more complex environment of the middle school may have an effect, both positive and negative, on the self-efficacy of students (Barber & Olsen, 2004; Blythe & Traeger, 1983; Eccles & Wigfield, 1997; Pajares & Schunk, 2001). However, few studies have looked at teacher-student interactions at the middle school level, specifically in seventh grade. Middle school is generally defined as Grades 5 to 9 (McLaughlin & Drori, 2000). Most students in seventh grade are between ages of 11 and 13, which is the beginning of adolescence (Barber & Olsen, 2004). Seventh grade is in the middle of this span of grades and can be a pivotal time in the emotional and educational development of adolescent students (Barber & Olsen, 2004; Blythe & Traeger, 1983; Cauley & Jovanovich, 2006). Students at this grade level experience cognitive changes, as well as changes in self-perceptions and identity formations. The increase in the number of significant mentors (teachers) students see each day, as compared with the lower elementary grades, may also affect how students view themselves (Barber & Olsen, 2004).

Adolescence is also recognized as a fragile time in the lives of students for other reasons (Gilligan, 1982; Pipher, 1994; Sadker & Sadker, 1994). Social pressures for both males and females increase at school, and adolescents are also increasingly influenced by popular culture. Any negative experiences students may have beginning in middle school and high school may cause students, specifically females, to lose interest in academics and opt out of more difficult courses (Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1992).

Adolescence is also a transition time for students in terms of the formation of their own identity and self-worth (Chapman, 1997). Researchers (Bursik & Martin, 2006; Chapman, 1997) have pointed out that middle school students are vulnerable to issues of self-efficacy and self-concept. Behavior problems and reduced achievement issues for males often begin or accelerate in the seventh and eighth grades (Kleinfeld, 2006). While female adolescents may suffer a loss of self-confidence as learners, male adolescents may lose their "connection" with school altogether. Male interest in learning, while often the same as females during lower elementary years, frequently begins to decline during middle school (Kleinfeld). Research (Barber & Olsen, 2004) has suggested that females start elementary school with strong academic progress that often begins to decline during the middle school years of adolescence. Other studies (Owens, Smothers, & Love, 2003) have also documented a decline in overall achievement during adolescence as students move through middle school. Whitehouse (2002) conducted a study on the difficult transition from elementary to middle school and observed that both males and females reported less motivation to achieve during that time, with females reporting an even greater decrease than males.

Along with declining academic achievement in adolescence, researchers (Bursik & Martin, 2006) have reported reduced feelings of self-efficacy for females during the middle school years. They attributed this to the possible change in relationship between students and teachers in the middle school environment, but they did not focus specifically on teacher-student classroom interactions. Bandura (1997) has suggested that positive feedback from mentors, such as teachers, may play a role in the self-efficacy beliefs of students since the task of creating productive positive learning environments is

dependent to a great deal upon the classroom teacher. How teachers construct academic activities may affect not only a student's academic development but a student's judgment of his or her intellectual ability.

Handley and Morse (1985) also reported on the difference between the frequency of teacher-student interactions in elementary school and middle school. They observed a greater discrepancy in the frequency of such interactions beginning in seventh grade. In addition, peer pressure, classroom climate, and negative self-worth perceptions of adolescent students have frequently been used to explain the decline in middle school achievement. Bursik and Martin (2006) studied the relationship between adolescent ego development and achievement differences among male and female adolescents. They concluded that "frequent interactions with an environment that challenges one's frame of reference, fosters ego development" (p. 18). Their study concluded that certain types of interactions and interpersonal environments might be more conducive to ego development in adolescent males and females; however, they did not explain what types of interactions might promote student achievement. No other studies appear to have been done on the nature of seventh-grade classroom teacher-student interactions, how students actually experience them, and what effect these interactions may have on feelings of students' self-efficacy, academic confidence, and achievement.

Teacher-Student Interactions

In the past 40 years many studies (Brophy, 1985; Brophy & Good, 1970; Brophy & Sikes, 1973; Hansot & Tyack, 1988) have been done on classroom interaction patterns. These studies focused either on the student as the recipient of teacher attention, or the teacher as the initiator, but not the interaction between them. For example, in the 1960s,

the first studies of classroom interactions were concerned with boys who had trouble reading. Whether the teacher was male or female was also examined as a possible factor, but little evidence was found to suggest any effect of either of those on boys' ability to learn to read (Brophy, 1985; Brophy & Good, 1970). Research (Hansot & Tyack, 1988) indicated that both male and female students received generally the same instruction in reading regardless of whether the teacher was male or female.

Those studies on boys and reading also revealed differences in the way teachers treated boys and girls in the classroom (Brophy & Good, 1970; Hansot & Tyack, 1988). For example, researchers (Brophy, 1985; Eccles & Blumenfeld, 1985) had previously observed that boys were more boisterous than girls and, for that reason, the boys appeared to be more frequently admonished by the teacher. Therefore, researchers concluded that boys were generally more disruptive and, as a result, required more of the teacher's attention (Brophy & Good, 1970; Hansot & Tyack, 1988).

Researchers such as Brophy and Good (1970) began to suggest that the lack of female achievement might be due to the inequality of treatment in the classroom during classroom interactions. Brophy and Good speculated that achievement problems might be related not only to classroom interactions that favored males, but "sex-typed attitudes and behaviors" (p. 370) of the teachers toward their students. "Sex-typed" behaviors meant that teachers might be reacting differently to male and female students based on teachers' previously observed differences in the behaviors of males and females. The research began to implicate the role of gender as a possible cause of differential teacher-student interaction behaviors.

From the 1970s through the early 1990s, additional studies (Brophy, 1985; Brophy & Good, 1970; Eccles & Blumenfeld, 1985; Handley & Morse, 1985; Meece & Eccles, 1993) of classroom interaction patterns focused on females. This research continued to indicate that teachers interacted differently with male and female students. These studies measured the quantity and frequency of teacher-student interactions, but the causes and effects of those interaction differences continued to be conjectural.

The passage of Title IX legislation in 1972 resulted in increased focus on all aspects of equal education for females in the classroom. Title IX stated that no individuals can be denied educational access, based on their sex, if the educational institution they attended received federal funding (*Title IX: 25 Years of Progress*, 1997). The results were that, even though more females were gaining access to higher education than ever before, males continued to outperform females on all standardized tests, and women continued to dominate traditional female fields, such as education, social work, nursing, and library science (Meece & Eccles, 1993).

Title IX changed the way educators thought about the treatment of females in classrooms. Institutional sexism became the primary focus for research in the 1980s (Hansot & Tyack, 1988). Studies (Brophy, 1985; Irvine, 1986) looked at sexism in teaching materials, teacher-student interaction behavior that might favor males, and the teaching styles of male and female teachers. In addition to the shift in focus from male to female achievement during the 1970s and early 1980s, other changes were occurring. Researchers (Brophy, 1985; Hansot & Tyack, 1988; Irvine, 1986) in the 1980s now redirected their focus from lower elementary to secondary schooling and from male achievement in reading to female achievement in mathematics and science. The results of

these studies again indicated that teachers interacted more frequently with boys than girls possibly due to a "need to supervise and intervene" (Irvine, 1986, p. 18). The majority of these studies examined teacher attitudes toward students during teacher-student interactions, but did not explore the students' perceptions of how they were treated in the classroom during those same interactions.

Researchers (Eccles & Blumenfeld, 1985; Handley & Morse, 1985; Meece & Eccles, 1993) continued to conduct quantitative investigations into the roles that teachers may play in terms of sex-differentiated achievement of boys and girls. However, the findings were inconsistent and inconclusive (Sadker & Sadker, 1994). Research (Sadker & Sadker) on teacher-student interactions in the classroom continued to echo the results and conclusions that had been reported in earlier studies: Teachers call on males more than females in all classroom environments from the lower elementary grades through college. The implications of this research suggested that less frequent teacher-student interactions might be impairing female achievement, but no studies were undertaken that tested that connection.

Two themes appear to recur within the research on teacher-student interactions: (a) There has been inconclusive evidence of a relationship between the frequency of teacher-student interactions and achievement, and (b) most teacher-student interaction studies have been conducted only in lower elementary or high school classrooms (Caruthers, 2000; Dillon, 2001; Krieg, 2005; Patchen, 2006). Recent studies continue to indicate that teachers treat male and female students differently, yet researchers acknowledge that little research exists to determine how such interaction disparities may impact student self-efficacy and achievement (Caruthers, 2000; Dillon, 2001; Patchen,

2006). Instead, studies on classroom interactions continue to focus on "exonerating teachers from having any role in differential student treatment rather than probing the reasons and possible impact of any differences that are observed" (Brophy, 1985, p. 185).

Naturalistic qualitative observations of teacher-student interactions in American public school classrooms are not found in the literature. Instead, researchers have used quantitative instruments such as the Brophy-Good Dyadic Interaction Scale to log their observations of the frequency and type of interactions between teachers and students (Brophy, 1985; Good, Cooper, & Blakey, 1980; Good, Slavings, Harel, & Emerson, 1987; Irvine, 1986; Jones & Wheatley, 1990). Most student responses have been narrowed into categories: positive teacher feedback, academic feedback, and various other response types. The subjects for the studies were almost always students in the lower elementary grades. The results of these studies suggested primarily that teachers called on males more frequently than females.

At the high school level, some researchers (Ryan, Gheen, & Midgley, 1998; Streitmatter, 1998) used questionnaires and surveys to understand both students' and teachers' perceptions of their general classroom experiences. Students were asked about their level of comfort in asking questions in the classroom. Teachers were asked what criteria they used to determine which students to call on. These surveys showed that teachers were not aware of any biases toward males or females during classroom interactions. However, female student responses on those same surveys and questionnaires showed that, in science and mathematics classes, female students felt that they were given fewer opportunities than males for engagement with the teacher (Ryan et al., 1998; Streitmatter, 1998).

There also appear to be no published studies that describe open-ended approaches, such as focus group interviews with middle school seventh graders, regarding their experiences and perceptions of teacher-student interactions. A limitation of previous teacher-student interaction studies is that few of them have addressed classrooms at the middle school level or examined how the interactions in that middle school environment are experienced and perceived by students (Duffy et al., 2001).

Research Questions

1. What are the observable characteristics of teacher-student interactions seventh-grade classroom?
2. What are the observable differences between the ways males and females are treated during teacher-student interactions in the seventh-grade classroom?
3. How do those interactions affect the self-efficacy beliefs of male and female seventh-grade students?

Based on the limitations of the current body of knowledge on teacher-student interactions and adolescents, this study attempted to address three questions that have not been studied in the literature.

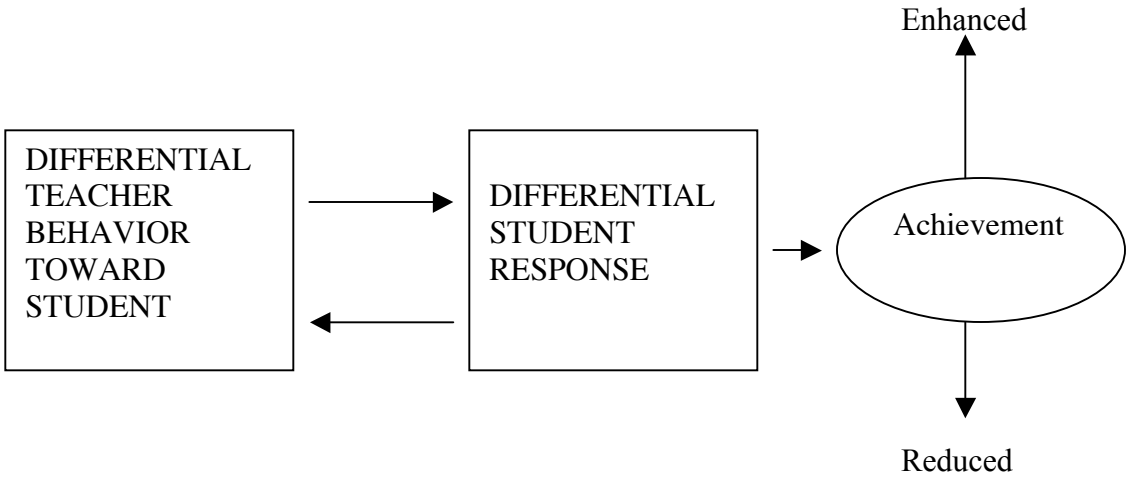
Theoretical Rationale

The underlying rationale for this study was based on two theories. The first was the work of Brophy and Good (1970) which provided the theoretical framework for the study of teacher-student interactions. The second was Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy, and how it relates to a person's belief about his or her own expectations and performance.

Teacher-Student Interactions

Brophy and Good (1970) developed a theoretical model to expand and challenge the work of earlier researchers who described the relationship between teacher-student interactions and student behavior (see Figure 1). They contended that previous research demonstrated the existence of teacher effects on students, but the research did not address what those effects might be. Their theoretical model suggested that differential teacher expectations might result in differential student responses that directly affect achievement. For example, if a teacher forms differential expectations for student performance, he or she may treat that student differently. Students then may respond differently to the teacher because they are being treated differently by that teacher. The student's behavior then may reinforce the teacher's expectations. The result is that for some students, academic performance will be enhanced, while for others it will be depressed. The changes in student outcomes may appear in achievement tests given at the end of that school year (Brophy & Good, 1970). The model in Figure 1 demonstrates this relationship between teacher expectations and achievement.

Figure 1. Brophy and Good's Theoretical Model of how researchers describe the interactions between teacher expectations and student outcomes.



Brophy and Good (1970) concluded that teachers do communicate differential expectations through their classroom behavior. However, they admitted that their study only dealt with "a few of the events that intervene between the formation of teacher expectations for students and the reciprocal behavior of those students" (p. 373).

Brophy and Good (1970) conducted additional research using their original model to determine if there was any variance in the way teachers interacted with students based not only on expectations but the time of year. They found that, earlier in the year, teachers initiated more praise toward students and also engaged in more private contacts with students. As the school year progressed, teachers engaged in less praise and fewer private contacts. This was seen as a possible attempt to "socialize students into expected patterns of behavior" (p. 374). They also suggested that giving or withholding such praise may be a control mechanism. Gender differences among student behaviors appeared in this study. Teachers were found to differ in their reactions to male and female students, so Brophy and Good suggested that "students appear to perceive more differences in teacher behavior . . . toward boys and girls" (p. 383).

The Brophy and Good study (1970), along with other studies (Brophy, 1985; Canada & Pringle, 1995; Caruthers, 2000; Dillon, 2001; Eccles & Blumenfeld, 1985; Kurman, 2004) imply that females are called upon less often than males in classroom settings beginning in lower elementary through secondary school. These studies parallel each other in several ways and document the differentials between male and female students' receipt of praise and criticism. However, little research has been conducted

specifically on middle school students and how students' perceptions of gender differentials in classroom interactions may affect student self-efficacy beliefs.

Self-Efficacy Beliefs of Adolescent Learners

The self-efficacy theory of Bandura (1997) provides the rationale for understanding how students create their own beliefs about their abilities to learn and complete academic tasks. Self-efficacy, as defined by Bandura, is task specific or related to a specific type of goal. Bandura's key ideas about the role of self-efficacy beliefs in human functioning are that people's level of motivation, affective states, and actions are based more on what they believe than what is actually true. Therefore, how people behave can be predicted more by their beliefs about their abilities than by what they are actually capable of accomplishing. For example, many talented people suffer self-doubt about the capabilities they clearly possess. However, other individuals may seem confident about what they can accomplish despite actually possessing limited skills.

Bandura's self-efficacy theory emphasizes three aspects related to how students construct these beliefs: the importance of an individual's observation of the behavior of others, the attitudes of others toward that same individual's performance, and the individual's own emotional reactions to those attitudes and behaviors. Through these observations and behaviors, Bandura believed a person gains personal self-efficacy beliefs about his or her own abilities.

Bandura (1977) believed that the observation of others is a primary factor in human motivation, thought, and action. When a person observes the rules that underlie the modeled behaviors of others, that person creates his or her own behaviors that may extend beyond what that person has observed. Bandura suggested that, in addition to

cultivating new competencies, observation of others influences motivation by causing individuals to experience the emotional feelings of others. Bandura indicated that how a student creates his/her own perceptions about his or her abilities might be the basis for his/her resulting actions. A person's beliefs about the success of the choices he or she makes may be related to the judgments that person has constructed about his or her own abilities. The result of these constructs may relate directly to a person's level of persistence when faced with any task (Bandura, 1986).

Bandura (1986) was also concerned with students' attitudes toward their own performance. He found that students who continually encounter failure during a learning situation might develop reduced self-efficacy or lack of confidence in their own abilities. Learners often receive information about their ability to perform a task through persuasive information received from teachers and other learners. A negative classroom environment and any negative emotional reaction that is experienced by a learner in that environment may also contribute to reduced feelings of self-efficacy.

A student's emotional feelings about his or her performance and that of others he or she observes may also contribute to that student's feelings of ability. In addition, a student's feeling of accomplishment can be mediated by factors such as positive verbal persuasion, encouragement, and positive feedback. Such "social agents" (Bandura, 1977) may include the teacher who provides positive and encouraging feedback related to a task, and who may have a positive effect on the self-efficacy of adolescents (Bandura, 1977; Pajares, 2000). Bandura hypothesized that the self-efficacy beliefs of an individual interact with many other determinants of academic functioning. The magnitude of positive or negative adolescents' self-efficacy beliefs on their achievement is also subject

to many other variables (Pajares & Urdan, 2006). For example, in a classroom, the positive or negative feedback given to a student by teachers or peers during the learning process may influence the way in which a student views his or her own abilities to be successful at any given task, academic or otherwise.

Pajares (2000) expanded on Bandura's (1977) ideas. He suggested ways in which teachers may impact the performance of students based on the feelings of self-efficacy teachers create during interactions with their students. Pajares pointed out specific examples of teacher behaviors, such as types of feedback, expectations, evaluative reactions, and the type of attention they pay to students. Pajares also speculated about the influence of peers and the environment on the self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents. He suggested that such beliefs are based on how teachers and peers appraise student performance and how such appraisal creates experiences of self-worth or doubt for students. Pajares emphasized the importance of the social comparisons students make with others and what is valued and honored within the environment of the classroom. A student's self-efficacy beliefs that are formed in the classroom may determine how much effort a student will expend, particularly in the face of obstacles.

Pajares (2000) also observed that a student's confidence may influence the choices he or she makes and the subsequent goals he or she pursues. Students engage in tasks where they feel capable of achieving success and tend to avoid tasks where they expect to fail. Students with low self-efficacy may believe that failure is a reminder that they are not capable of performing a task or series of related tasks. Self-efficacy beliefs influence these attainments by influencing a student's effort, persistence, and perseverance. Bandura's (1977) beliefs about self-efficacy and how it is acquired relate to

the self-confidence of learners. If students form some of their self-efficacy beliefs through the interactions they have with their teachers, then the academic behaviors that go with those beliefs may result from a student's sense of self-efficacy and confidence as a learner.

Integration of Both Theories

The teacher interaction model of Brophy and Good (1970) and Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy combine to create a picture of how teacher-student interactions may affect adolescents' feelings of self-efficacy as learners. The current study expands the Brophy and Good model. This model illustrates how the interactions between teachers and students may affect the self-efficacy beliefs of students and possibly student achievement (see Figure 2).

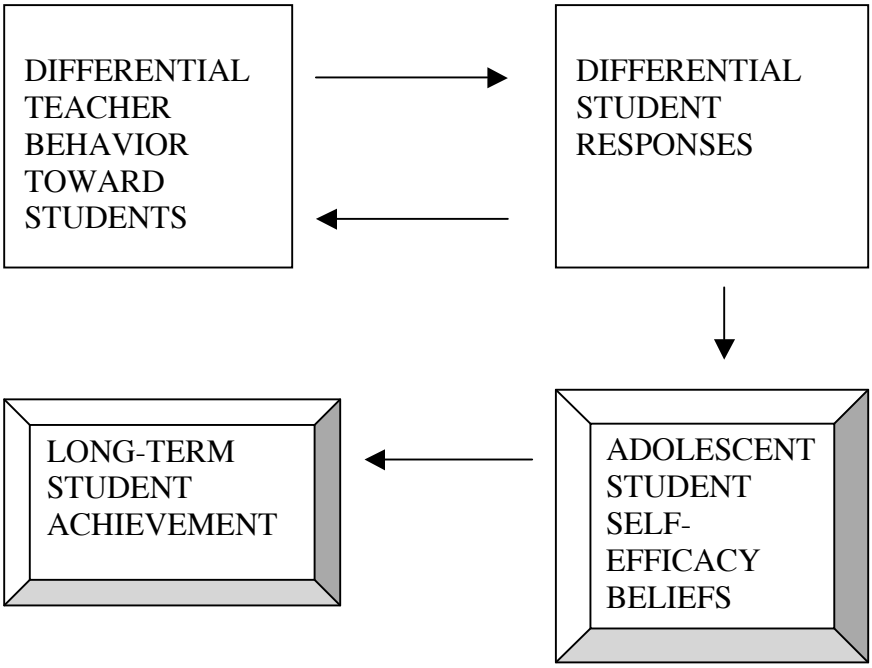


Figure 2. Expansion of Brophy and Good's Theoretical Model to include the self-efficacy beliefs of students, and their possible relationship to student achievement.

Figure 2 differs from Brophy and Good's model. While the reciprocal nature of teacher-student interactions is maintained, self-efficacy beliefs of students has been inserted before achievement as a possible response to teacher-student interactions. Therefore, this model suggests additional outcomes that may result from teacher-student interaction behavior. For example, while Brophy and Good's model moved directly from teacher-student interactions to student achievement, this model demonstrates the intervening factor of the self-efficacy beliefs of the adolescent student. This researcher's study examined the effects of teacher-student interactions on adolescents in terms of how students experience and develop feelings of self-efficacy from teacher-student interactions.

Significance of the Study

Classroom interactions between teachers and students have been studied for over 30 years. Researchers (Bartelt-Jorgensen, 2004; Brophy, 1985; Bursik & Martin, 2006; Caruthers, 2000; Fennema & Peterson, 1987; Hughes, 1973; Marjoribanks, 2006) have written about the possible connection between classroom interactions, student motivation, and achievement. These studies have focused on both teacher-student interactions and student gender. However all these studies have not examined a possible connection between the interactions between the teacher and his/her students and students' feelings of self-efficacy. To date, most studies have been primarily quantitative. Those studies were concerned with a comparison of frequency with which teachers called on male and female students. However, any possible link between those interactions, gender, and student self-efficacy has not been examined or established. How adolescent students experience classroom interactions between themselves and their teacher as they relate to

students' feelings of self-efficacy may be important because the relationship between them may have a long-lasting effect upon a student's achievement (Pajares 2000).

Using qualitative techniques, such as naturalistic observations and focus group interviews, this study will attempt to contribute to an understanding of the possible relationship between teacher-student classroom interactions and students' feelings of self-efficacy. This study, therefore, may also provide new information and perspectives that might inform middle school classroom teaching practice.

Summary

The role of teacher-student interactions has been studied over the years but the link between them and the self-efficacy of students has not been studied. In addition, the connection between teacher-student interactions and female and male students' feelings of self-efficacy has not been examined except in terms of long-range test score differentials. There is a need to observe and understand the interactions between teachers and students particularly during the transition time of adolescents to see if those interactions influence students' feelings of self-efficacy as achievers.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms and definitions are applicable to how they are used in this specific study. Any other definition may not be useful for the purpose and intent of this study.

Adolescent. A child from 12 to 14 years of age (Pajares, 2000).

Call-out. A student volunteers in a classroom without raising their hand or being recognized by the teacher.

Gender. The social self-concept of an adolescent, as either male or female, but not necessarily the biological distinction (Kahle, 1990).

Institutional sexism. Subordination of women that is part of the everyday workings of any particular social institution such as the government or business (Hansot & Tyack, 1988).

Learned Helplessness. A set of acquired behaviors wherein a student does not attempt to help him or herself because he or she perceives that he or she cannot do so effectively (Dweck, 1978).

Middle school. A school that usually includes Grades 6 through 8.

Naturalistic observation. An observation that requires the researcher to observe a situation from a distance and report on exactly what is seen without personal interpretation (Patton, 2002).

Self-efficacy. A person's self-impression as to his/her own capability to perform a task or reach a goal (Bandura, 1997).

Thick description. Written narrative that is detailed and uses a variety of adjectives to describe what is seen or heard (Patton, 2002).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The research questions for this study guided the three areas of focus for the review of the literature: teacher-student interactions in the classroom, gender issues in classroom interactions, and self-efficacy in the classroom. Research studies over the past 40 years have continued to indicate that males and females in coeducational classrooms may be treated differently (Brophy & Good, 1970; Brophy & Sikes, 1973; Brophy, Good, Cooper, & Blakey, 1980; Dweck et al., 1978; Fennema & Peterson, 1987; Irvine, 1986; Jackson & Lahaderne, 1966; Jones & Wheatley, 1990). More recent studies now suggest a decline in male enrollment in higher education courses and an increased dropout rate for males beginning at the secondary level (Klein, 2006; Krieg, 2005). These same studies also indicate that females still lag behind males on standardized achievement tests and that these trends begin to be more observable during the adolescent years of middle school. Therefore, the issues of teacher-student interactions and how they may relate to students' feelings of self-efficacy may be relevant. An exploration of the relationships between teacher-student interactions and student self-efficacy beliefs may help to understand how these factors may relate to recent trends in student success in school. Therefore, current research on teacher-student interactions, gender in the classroom, and self-efficacy as a factor in achievement, are reviewed next.

Current Research on Classroom Interactions

Toward the end of the 1990s, as the controversy over female achievement continued, researchers such as Streitmatter (1997) conducted studies in single-gender

classes to determine if there was a difference in teacher-student interactions between those and coeducational classrooms. While this study was not focusing on single-gender classrooms, Streitmatter's study is relevant because it examined the difference in teacher-student interactions between male and female students and their teachers. Streitmatter's study was qualitative in nature. It involved observations and student interview questionnaires. Streitmatter's hypothesis was that females receive less attention, both positive and negative, from teachers, particularly in terms of questioning strategies, than do males. She suggested that this might result in alienation from, and lack of confidence in, the school environment on the part of female students. Streitmatter also suggested that teachers might influence a student's personal decision about him or herself and mathematics. Streitmatter's study was designed specifically to bolster the argument for single-gender schooling or classes.

For her study Streitmatter (1997) used one single-gender mathematics class at the middle school level for a total of 30 observation hours. Her observations were grouped into categories surrounding teacher and student behaviors that involved academic risk taking. At the end of this time period, the female students were given questionnaires to complete. Streitmatter found that the females in the class seemed comfortable taking academic risks. Of the 14 females who were interviewed, most agreed that they felt free to interact with the teacher and each other without criticism from male students. The researcher felt this demonstrated student confidence. This was a qualitative finding based on her opinion only. Her primary conclusion, which relates to the gender aspect of this researcher's study, was that more research needed to be done in the area of single-gender classrooms where there might be a more positive teacher-student interaction environment

for both males and females. Streitmatter also reflected on the gender of the teacher as having a possible effect on a student's level of confidence during classroom discourse, a topic studied earlier by Brophy and Good (1970). Streitmatter (1997) acknowledged the limitations to her study. She specifically noted the small sample size and other classroom variables such as the type of student, the time of year and the ability levels of her students. She was also concerned about a possible Hawthorne effect of the females she interviewed since they had been specially selected for the class she observed.

At the end of the 1990s educators and researchers were still looking for answers as to why female achievement in math and science lagged behind males. Altermatt, Jovanovic, and Perry (1998) undertook a large research study to determine if the rate at which students volunteer could account for the gender differentiated teacher-student exchanges and how this might impact achievement. They cited the research works of others, some of which are mentioned in this review of the literature (Brophy & Good, 1970; Jones & Wheatley, 1990) who were concerned about the "very different experiences of females and males in U.S. (United States) classrooms" (p. 2). In addressing the achievement gap, Altermatt et al. (1998) examined the types of question exchanges between teachers and students. Although no consistent effects between the teacher's use of higher order thinking questions and achievement had been shown, teachers were using those strategies to improve student cognition.

Therefore, Altermatt et al. (1998) focused their study on the role that students themselves may play in influencing the number of questions they are asked to respond to in a classroom, since up until the late 1990s, any empirical research on this topic had "largely been ignored" (p. 2). Altermatt et al.'s focus was on the volunteering rates of

males and females, what the differences might be, and what factors might influence those differences. They hypothesized that pre-existing differences in student behavior may be responsible for the differentiation in teacher-student interactions. Citing earlier work by Good et al. (1973), Altermatt et al. (1998) reviewed the evidence that suggested that high-achieving students were more active participants and were more likely to call out during classroom discourse.

Altermatt et al.'s (1998) study had four components. First, they assessed whether males were asked to respond to more questions than females. They also examined whether males were called on more frequently to respond to different types of questions than females. In addition, they looked at whether which student a teacher calls on is directly related to the responsiveness of that student and, finally, they explored the hypothesis that student gender and achievement may interact to influence the types and numbers of questions students are called upon to answer.

Since the 1990s was a time of focus on science and mathematics achievement for females, the participants in the study were 165 students in upper elementary science classrooms. Fifty-three percent of the students were female, and the science teachers were both male and female. The teachers were selected for the project based on a number of factors including teaching experience and commitment to the teaching of science to females. In-class lessons were observed over a period of one academic year for a total of 70 lessons. Interestingly, the teachers were not told the exact purpose of the study, apparently for fear of instilling bias. Classroom interactions were videotaped and a coding scheme was used to determine the cognitive type of questions asked and the number of males and females who volunteered. The Brophy-Good Teacher-Child Dyadic

Interaction System was used to tally classroom interaction types. Distinctions were made between direct questions, call-outs, and open-ended questions. Student volunteer rates were carefully recorded. In addition, students' total scores on a standardized test in science were used as a measure of a student's science ability.

The results showed that males were asked 61% of all questions and were responsible for 54% of the call-outs. These rates were consistent for all question types. Chi-square analyses were used to compare observed and expected rates of teacher responsiveness and were done in each classroom due to the disparity in numbers of males and females that varied class to class. Actual teacher responsiveness was compared to expected teacher responsiveness. For the purpose of this study the term "teacher bias" was used if teachers called on students of one gender more frequently than would be expected by chance, given the relative proportion of males and females in the class. Chi-square cell values accounted for such discrepancies. It was found that there were significant differences between observed and expected teacher responsiveness based on the proportion of males and females in a class. There was also a significant difference between observed and expected volunteering rates with males volunteering more often than would be expected. However, in none of the classrooms did the researchers observe actual teacher responsiveness to differ significantly from expected teacher responsiveness. In fact, females volunteered slightly more than males with a rate of 46% for females and 44% for males.

Altermatt et al. (1998) found little relationship between teacher responsiveness, student volunteering rates, and achievement. They observed that student-volunteering rates were more strongly related to student gender than achievement. The most important

observation related to their original hypothesis was that none of the observed teacher responsiveness rates differed from what they expected based on the gender makeup of the class. What they did find was that teachers in three of the six classrooms called on males significantly more often than would be expected based on the proportion of males to females in the class. Patterns were similar but not as pronounced in the three remaining classrooms. They also noted that males and females were asked the same types of questions and that this had nothing to do with student achievement level. They also observed that males and females were equally likely to be called upon when they volunteered. In fact, in one classroom a female volunteered to answer more questions than would be expected relative to males. In this classroom, 63% of the students were females.

Altermatt et al.'s (1998) study was lengthy, detailed, and broad. They concluded that teachers were not calling on males more than females due to some bias that was present, but instead were responding to the volunteering rates of males, who volunteered more often. Altermatt et al. suggested that further study was needed to determine why females' relative nonparticipation is less than males' and that teachers needed to find ways to encourage them to become fuller participants. They suggested changing teaching strategies to defend against male dominance in a classroom so that classroom experiences are equitable for both genders.

Altermatt et al. (1998) also noted the limitations of their own study. For example, teacher feedback and its affect on student responses were not studied. Also the teacher sample was small and the reasons why teachers did or did not respond to students at the same rates as student volunteering rates should be examined. Altermatt et al. also stated

that their study "provided an alternative explanation for observed gender differences in teacher-student interactions" (p. 13). At the end of the 1990s, researchers were still focused on any inequalities that remained in the area of teacher-student interactions and were suggesting further studies to eliminate them.

Citing the results of a study in 1992 by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) showing that student enthusiasm for mathematics was about equal in the elementary school years, but dropped dramatically for females by high school, Wimer, Ridenour, Thomas, and Place (2001) conducted a study to determine why this disparity might exist. The primary focus of their study was the role of the teacher in the classroom and the resultant teacher-student interactions. Through their emphasis on the role of the teacher in teacher-student interactions, their study looked at teacher questioning and how students are questioned. They were concerned that the students might demonstrate an "attentiveness and body language" (p. 85) that might trigger the number or types of questions from the teacher. Wimer et al. were concerned with four main areas: (a) the effect on the learning of students based on the types of questions given to them; (b) that teachers may inadvertently reinforce gender stereotypes; (c) the social-cultural environment of the schools in general; and (d) the significance of mathematics proficiency for student learning, which was the primary impetus for the study. They also focused on the types of higher order thinking questions and how they might affect learning. Wimer et al.'s study incorporated a lengthy review of Benjamin Bloom's taxonomy with the implication that higher level questioning leads to higher-level learning. Wimer et al. theorized that while most teachers want to treat students fairly, if males are asked more higher level thinking questions regarding

academic content, achievement gains would be greater. They also suggested that even when teachers are made aware of their tendency to direct higher ordered questions to males, their teaching behavior did not change.

To further examine the effect of questioning on achievement, Wimer et al. (2001) analyzed the data from a study done at a Midwestern university that explored the culture of urban schools as it related to a privately funded scholarship program. Using that larger study as a basis for a new study, Wimer et al. studied teacher-questioning behaviors. Four doctoral students spent 40 hours in four public schools collecting data on teacher questioning, both qualitative and quantitative. The teachers were told that they were being observed only in terms of teacher-student interactions. The classrooms observed were in Grades 2 to 4. The researchers used "systematic observations." Sixteen lessons were observed from 11 teachers; 9 of which were female and 2 were male. Using a grid, the observers tallied which students were asked which types of questions. Student response was not of interest nor was it recorded. Questions were identified as to "higher order" thinking types.

Wimer et al. (2001) reported a wide variety of instructional strategies, but assumed that the teacher was in control of the discussion at all times. However, varying instructional strategies were not controlled for and neither were the number of volunteers for each question. Wimer et al. cited this as a limitation to the study. Another problem with their research was that more than one researcher gathered data even though they used strategies to counter inter-rater reliability, such as in-depth training. During the 5 months prior to the study, the researchers engaged in pilot observations and then developed shared understandings of question types.

The results of the data obtained from this study showed that higher order questions were asked infrequently and that more than half of the students were asked lower order type questions. The frequency distributions for males and females were similar for all question types. Therefore, the results suggested that females were not asked fewer questions than males in urban elementary mathematics classrooms and that both genders experienced the same rate (low frequency) of being asked higher order question types. In their conclusion, Wimer et al. stated that the results of the study in question may support the belief that gender issues in mathematics education may not appear until adolescence. Therefore, Wimer et al. found the results of their study to be inconclusive as to teacher-student interactions and how they may affect mathematics achievement during the elementary school years. Wimer et al. acknowledged that gender might be less of a factor at the time of their study than it had been historically, and they recommended further studies.

In the early 2000s, educational researchers and writers were still concerned about the inequalities seen in female achievement and classroom participation and continued to link these to disparities in teacher-student interactions. Caruthers (2000) focused on the general classroom environment as a possible contributing factor to the reduction in the rates of student classroom participation among females. Caruthers observed that a student's self-perception of how he or she is treated within a classroom could have an affect on his/her achievement. Caruthers recognized the complex nature of teacher-student interactions as being part of the environment of the classroom. Caruthers theorized that student expectations as to how they will be treated during interactions is as important as the teacher's expectations of them. Caruthers also stated that a student's

perception of himself or herself as successful or not successful might dictate their effort level academically.

At the time of Caruthers's writing, females still lagged behind on standardized achievement tests. Caruthers expressed the concern that expectations, demonstrated through the nature of teacher-student relationships, might strongly affect student performance and influence student achievement. Caruthers stated that the expectations teachers have for students can be affected by knowledge of their test performance, classroom conduct, physical appearance, and gender. Such expectations may affect the interactions between students and their teachers positively or negatively. In an effort to understand why and how teacher interactions might affect student outcomes, Caruthers speculated that teachers engage in "well-intended but unconscious behaviors that are damaging to students" (p. 2), and that these behaviors often remain unchallenged, even though they may affect the future behavior and success of their students. However, Caruthers did not state clearly nor define what those unconscious behaviors might be. She repeated the results from studies, such as Altermatt et al. (1998) and Brophy and Good (1970), that teachers ask males more questions, give them more feedback, praise male students more, and give them more time to respond.

Caruthers's (2000) discussion was a result of continued concern about the achievement of females and as such she expanded on the ideas of Jones and Wheatley (1990). Caruthers also offered a set of strategies for teachers, such as effective use of wait-time, providing more equal praise and feedback, and being more conscious of equal responses to all types of achievers and both genders. Caruthers suggested that more

research should be done on the overall effect of teacher behavior and student responses as they may relate to student academic success.

Streitmatter (1997), Altermatt et al (1998), Wimer et al (2001), and Caruthers (2006) all addressed the general category of student teacher interactions and student's feelings of success in a classroom. This researcher's study is clearly related to the focus of teacher-student interactions and student's self-efficacy toward a goal of academic success. Therefore these particular studies are relevant to this study. The one exception is that none of them directly interviewed students to gain their experiences when they interact with their teacher, and none of these studies attempted to create a specific link between teacher-student interactions and student self-efficacy.

Gender Issues in Classroom Interactions

As researchers' concerns with gender gaps in male and female achievement continued into the late 1980s and early 1990s, researchers continued to investigate the reasons. They focused on the central issue of gender in the classroom more than just teacher-student interactions that showed females receiving less teacher attention than males.

Lindow, Marrett, and Wilkinson (1985) reviewed the current thinking on classroom interaction patterns and gender. They examined such variables as classroom organization, activity structure, teacher-student ratio, and teacher attitudes toward gender-role stereotypes and student perceptions. Like most researchers in the 1980s, Lindow et al. focused on the lack of female achievement in mathematics as well as science. They covered many of the classroom interaction variables already mentioned in this literature review, such as student contact with teachers and teacher expectations.

However, they also focused on the role of the teacher in maintaining gender differences in the classroom, rather than creating them. However, they did not establish definite conclusions as to the relationship between student gender and teacher expectations.

Expanding on the work of Brophy and Good (1970), Lindow et al. (1985) suggested that student characteristics and expectations, as well as teacher behaviors, might shape gender differences in class participation. Both studies focused on the teacher as one who not only may give cues to students as to different expectations, but responds to cues from students about how they feel about their work. Lindow et al. suggested that the teacher is only one of the various influences that may produce gender differences in student achievement. Lindow et al. (1985) pointed out the need for more qualitative research to identify the gender dimensions of classroom interactions. Such research might address the many variables that might contribute to gender-differentiated classroom interactions. Lindow et al. also theorized that gender differences in classroom processes might potentially affect the academic outcomes for students.

Jones and Wheatley (1990) examined gender differences in classroom interactions between science teachers and their students the way teachers communicate gender-role expectations through their interaction patterns with their students. The purpose of their study was to understand why women were underrepresented in high school physics and calculus classes, college technical majors, and careers in physical science and engineering. Jones and Wheatley cited statistics from the National Science Foundation (1986) showing that, while women constituted half of the workforce in the United States, only 3% were in the field of engineering. Jones and Wheatley (1990) examined the way teachers communicate gender expectations through their interaction patterns with their

students. Their sample included 30 physical science classes and 30 chemistry classes of over 1,300 students. Teacher-student interactions were recorded using a modified version of the Brophy-Good Teacher Child Dyadic Interaction System. Each interaction between a student and a teacher was recorded into a particular category, but the researchers did not record any other type of classroom interactions that might be occurring. Analysis of variance was used to analyze the results of their data. The categories used were comprehensive and detailed. Their analysis utilized a two-level analysis of variance: gender of the student and race and gender of the teacher and subject. The researchers were looking for main effects for teacher gender, subject, student gender, race, and interactions.

The results of the Jones and Wheatley (1990) study were varied. Significant main effects were found with male teachers asking significantly more questions in general than female teachers; however, in both cases no student gender differences were noted in terms of whom the teachers called on. However, call-outs in response to teacher questions were far greater for male students than female students. These occurred at a rate of 67% for males versus 33% for females. Jones and Wheatley also observed that when males called out, teachers were more inclined to accept their answers, but when females called out, teachers asked them to raise their hands. They attributed this teacher behavior to a tendency to socialize males to be assertive and females to be passive. They observed also that the females in the study were quiet and even self-conscious, whereas the males were more aggressive during whole class activities. Jones and Wheatley (1990) also observed that teacher praise was randomly distributed for females, but that the more male students participated, the more they were rewarded.

Jones and Wheatley (1990) also reported a significant main effect for behavioral admonitions toward males than females. They speculated that this might be in response to the aggressive classroom behavior of males. However, they suggested that what may appear to be more negative treatment toward males, may have positive effects in that males were criticized for lack of effort, but females were criticized for the quality of their work. Jones and Wheatley concluded that male students do not feel that any criticisms they received are a threat to their ability whereas the opposite may be true for females. Carrying their logic one step further, the researchers concluded that females might see themselves as less capable in science and therefore be discouraged from taking any more science courses than are required. Such an outcome might then be directly related to the teacher-student interactions experienced by both male and female students in science classrooms and the lack of females seeking professional careers in science.

Jones and Wheatley (1990) suggested that if teachers hold different expectations for their students based on gender, they might treat their students differently based on those expectations. Therefore, students may respond differentially based on their perceived (or constructed) gender-role expectation coming from not only their teachers, but also society in general. However, Jones and Wheatley also speculated that teachers responded to different behaviors of students rather than their gender. At the time of their study (1990), Jones and Wheatley suggested that the way students are treated may reflect the values of society and that teachers may hold differing academic expectations for students based on gender. They indicated that teachers might not even be aware of any teaching bias toward one gender or another. The main limitation to their study was the use of only one instrument, which narrowed the focus of their results.

In 2000, Jones, Evans, Byrd, and Campbell conducted a short study to examine a gender resource module to facilitate gender equity in the classroom that might modify some of the teacher behaviors described by earlier researchers to facilitate gender equity in the classroom. Jones et al. expressed the concern of many researchers about females not enrolling in higher-level math and science classes and thereby limiting their future success. They hypothesized that females were not given the encouragement by their teachers that is needed to excel in these areas. Instead female students continue to be confronted with teachers who favor male students by giving them more positive feedback. Such differential treatment can send subtle messages that shape gender-role expectations for both males and females (Jones et al., 2000). Therefore, the purpose of their study was to determine whether gender equity strategies that were designed to modify teacher behaviors toward males and females might be successful. Such training would result in females moving toward more equity in the classroom and being subjected to fewer negative behaviors directed toward them by their teachers.

The subjects for the study were four teachers: two elementary and two high school. The researchers used the Louisiana Gender Equity Quiz (LGEQ) and INTERSECT (Interactions for Gender Equity in Classroom Teaching) observation scale to identify patterns of gender inequity. Jones et al. (2000) used videotaping and interviews first and later employed subsequent implementation of gender-modifying teaching strategies. Teachers were given the LGEQ test and then a self-directed gender resource module aimed at reducing gender bias. Based on the results of the videotape, gender-based interactions in the modules were tailored for each teacher. Teachers were encouraged to use the module in the classroom for 8 weeks. At that time they were again

videotaped and the second videotape was coded and analyzed exactly like the first. Using chi-square tests to analyze the results, researchers tried to determine if the second videotaped sessions were different from the first in terms of teacher behaviors toward equal treatment of males and females.

The results were varied. Jones et al. (2000) had hypothesized that female students would move from a position of deficiency toward equity, and this was supported by the overall results. Jones et al. observed that the frequency and type of teacher behaviors toward females were significantly different from what had been expected. Therefore, they concluded that use of the gender equity module was successful. The results showed that during the first videotaping, teacher treatment of females and males was unequal as expected. However, the results from the second videotaping demonstrated a reversal in teacher behaviors in favor of female students. Jones et al. concluded that the strategies involved in the sensitizing module given to each teacher gave him or her the tools needed to increase educational equity in the classroom for females. They recommended the use of strategies to help teachers understand their behaviors so that their classrooms would become more equitable in terms of how both males and females view their roles. The main limitation to their study was that their sample was small and specific and yet they used the results to suggest strategies to improve teacher behavior as it relates to students of both genders.

In 2001, Canadian researchers Duffy et al. conducted one of the most current major studies on classroom interactions and gender specifically. Using an observational study they investigated the effects of gender of teacher, gender of student, and classroom subject matter. The basis of their study was research dating back to the 1980s, some of

which is reported on in this review. They also cited research from other countries, such as Greece and Austria that repeated what had been found in earlier studies in the United States: There were differences in the classroom interaction patterns between male and female teachers with their students (Brophy, 1985). They also cited earlier studies that showed that both male and female teachers interacted more often with male students at the elementary and junior high level. Therefore, they suggested that teachers might treat students differently depending on the subject of the class. Duffy et al. discussed the weaknesses of previous studies as being too subjective and not empirical, nor were many of them published in peer-reviewed journals. The implications of all those studies, according to Duffy et al. (2001), were that "female students may be receiving subtle messages that could negatively affect their academic self esteem and/or performance" (p. 582). They also cited research that suggested that teachers interact more with male students because male students initiate interactions with teachers more than female students.

Using the INTERSECT, an observation instrument, Duffy et al. (2001) observed the classrooms and interactions of 597 high school students with a teacher sample of 14 males and 4 females. The subject matter in the classes observed was mathematics or literature. All participants were from schools in Canada that were chosen randomly. As in other studies, teacher-student interactions were coded in terms of who initiated them, who received them, the gender of teacher or student, the method of interaction, and the type and content. Two researchers conducted the study and pilot studies were done to assess inter-rater reliability. Observations were done over a 3-month period in early 1999 and

were continuous throughout each 40- to 50-minute class period. Chi-square analyses were used to report the data.

A variety of results were observed. Overall, female teachers showed a greater tendency than males to interact with male students, but there was some variation based on the subject being taught. In the case of mathematics classrooms, the interactions between male teachers and male and female students were about equal. However, among female mathematics teachers, male language teachers, and female language teachers, all of them directed significantly more interactions to male than female students. When an interaction was addressed to the class as a whole, however, there was no difference in student response by gender.

Duffy et al. (2001) also discussed significant differences in types of interactions. The amount of praise was about equal across both genders and subjects. The amount of acceptance interactions was slightly greater in mathematics, but not significantly. Female students did receive a greater number of remediation interactions and fewer numbers of criticisms than males. In breaking these down, Duffy et al. found that male students received more accepting-intellectual comments, criticism-intellectual comments, and criticism-conduct comments than females. Duffy et al. speculated that this might reinforce higher-level male thinking. This study did not support the work of others (Altermatt et al., 1998) that suggested that the greater number of interactions directed toward male students is a result of increased initiations by males. Duffy et al. discounted the results of that research by speculating that the age of the students in those earlier studies, elementary and junior high, might have an affect not seen at the high school level with older students. Duffy et al. discussed the age differences between his and other

studies, but made no suggestions for adjusting for it or explaining why it might be important. This was a limitation to their study.

Duffy et al.'s (2001) final conclusion included a discussion of possible explanations for the observed disparities between male and female teacher-student interactions. Perhaps males are called on more because they are more valued, they may require more help, teachers direct more comments to them to maintain their interest, and females overall may be less responsive to teachers' interactions than males. However, since male mathematics teachers treated both equally, some of these findings did not easily agree with their hypothesis. Duffy et al.'s study suggested a need for further study, particularly in the area of teaching strategies, personality differences among teachers, and how those differences might correlate with a teacher's tendency to interact more with students of one gender or the other.

In 2006, Patchen conducted a study related to the sociology of the classroom, to examine the extent to which student gender determined student perceptions and understandings of patterns of participation in the classroom, and what constituted a supportive environment. When students engage in participation practices, such as keeping quiet, answering questions when asked, or asking questions spontaneously, they are demonstrating their understandings of what is allowed, what is right, and what is safe. Classroom participation determines how students interpret themselves and others in terms of the classroom community. It also provides a mechanism necessary for psychological and social development as well as contributing to the socialization process of males and females (Patchen, 2006). Such participation exists within a classroom hierarchy based on how students engage within the school and within any particular classroom.

Many teachers expect students to participate in classroom discussions, but few define what they expect, and students do not always know what the rules are (Patchen, 2006). Researchers have neglected to examine the ways in which perceptions of participation fall across lines of gender-role constructs and how these may influence each other (Patchen, 2006). Patchen cited the research of others to support her premise that "gendered forms of classroom participation give females and males different understandings of educational access and opportunity (p. 2). Patchen stated that few gender studies have considered the complexity of all the variables that influence participation within the context of the classroom or address students' perspectives. In her study, Patchen adopted the perspective that gender is a relationship that is a combination of the hierarchy within a classroom, individual student attributes, student perceptions, classroom structure, and symbolic behaviors. For example, this means that males may benefit at the expense of females in ways that are already built into the systems that exist in classrooms in the United States.

Gender roles for females are often socialized to include attention to personal relations, such as being sensitive, having empathy for others, and overly emphasizing physical appearance, popularity, and emotions (Patchen, 2006). She did not give similar examples of gender-role expectations for males, but suggested that it could possibly be assumed to be the opposite: impersonal, insensitive, and unemotional. Patchen asserts that classroom gender roles are constructed through students' participation in a complex combination of daily social practices and is one of many factors that shape a person's identity. In the past, the tendency has been to depend on either teachers' perceptions of students or researchers' observations to determine what students experience in a

classroom. In Patchen's study, students' own experiences and understandings were included.

The subjects for Patchen's (2006) study were students in an inner city high school in California that was primarily first-generation Latina or Latino. Her study was conducted over a period of two semesters. The researchers used a class in Life Skills because it was required of every student for graduation; therefore, placement in the class was completely random. The researchers used formal student interviews, observations, and informal conversations with students that included scenarios created from actual observed classroom processes. Students were asked their perceptions of what they saw and experienced and how those experiences might have affected them. Patchen is careful to point out that gender is not just about females, but is also part of social relationships and includes males also. Due to the ethnographic nature of her study, the data and interpretation of it evolved slowly over time. Observations were coded and compared to examine categories in terms of student strategies for coping in the classroom and their resultant perceptions.

What was surprising about the findings of this study was that even though the observers documented that males participated more audibly and visibly, when interviewed, both males and females said that females participated more or that both genders participated equally. This discrepancy between student perceptions and the observational data was problematic and not explored further in this study. The gender-role expectations for females also differed in perceptions from males to females. Females stated that males are more open, smarter, more confident, that they like to show off, and do not care what others think. The males stated that the females who participated

more were not that shy, eager to answer, were smarter, more open, and more dedicated, and did not care what others think. Both males and females categorized those who did not participate as shy, not that smart, and afraid of being embarrassed.

Although classroom observation demonstrated that males participated more often than females did, only one group of students agreed with those data. The rest said females participated more or equally with males. All students attributed positive characteristics to both males and females. The researchers tried to find a reason for the discrepancies in class participation perceptions, but in reviewing the qualitative data, no clear explanation emerged. In conclusion, Patchen (2006) stated that "perceptions of participation can vary widely . . . because participation is not explicitly defined in most classrooms" (p. 12). Perceptions of participation also varied far more than what the researchers observed to be actual practice. This study also highlighted other aspects of classroom participation practice. Students' perceptions appear to have been influenced based on previous ideas about gender brought to class from outside the school. The variables that related to student participation seemed to focus on relationships with teachers, peers, and subject matter.

Patchen (2006) cited a limitation of her study as not having related classroom participation to academic performance, which she suggested as an implication for future research. Also such research should depend on the use of multiple viewpoints including observation and interview data to better understand the role of classroom gender issues and student perceptions of classroom practice.

Aside from Patchen's (2006) study, during the early 2000s very few studies were done on teacher-student interactions and gender. However, educational researchers and

writers still found research in the area of classroom gender issues to be relevant. For example, in 2006, Beamon et al. reviewed the general themes and issues in gender and classroom interactions. They reviewed current theoretical perspectives, such as the influence of feminism on the classroom environment and the way disruptive behavior, mainly exhibited by males, has affected teacher-student interactions. They also discussed recent concerns related to the emerging underachievement of males.

Beamon et al. (2006) began their review by citing the issues of gender inequality in the classroom that have appeared to be prevalent for over 30 years and how researchers have reviewed and studied them, but have not come to any conclusions as to the causes and effects. Much of their review of the literature in regard to male and female differentials in the classroom is similar to what this researcher has reviewed here. Beamon et al. cited the work of additional researchers both in the United States and Great Britain who examined everything from male domination in the classroom, and the role of teacher attention, right down to studies on the role of eye gaze by teachers that might cue student responses.

Beamon et al. (2006) also cited conflicting studies that showed that despite common thinking, females did not always perform less well than males in many subject areas. However, they agreed that most studies did show that the discrepancy between classroom interactions of females and males was most evident in the area of behavioral criticism, but even so there were differences classroom to classroom. Their conclusion, from their review of the literature, was that males and females were equally likely to get above average, average, and below average amounts of teacher attention.

Beamon et al. (2006) also reviewed studies in the 1990s focused on males as being disadvantaged due to declining levels of performance on secondary school examinations. They cited conflicting studies and the lack of firm conclusions. They also cited studies in the late 1990s that focused on the interactions of high-achieving males, high-achieving females, female expectations within classrooms, and the issues surrounding changes in interactions that occur around the time of adolescence. Beamon et al. reviewed studies that expressed concern that despite males' appearance of dominance in the classroom, this did not translate to better test scores. Beamon et al. stated that, toward the end of the 1990s, the model student was beginning to be seen as "female." This was related more to behavior, work ethic, and a willingness to try harder.

Beamon et al. (2006) raised some new issues based on their review of current trends in the early 2000s. They reported increasing numbers of males being referred by teachers for special education evaluation and placement at ratios of 15:1. They concluded from their research that classroom interaction patterns could not be divided just along lines of gender and that this was "simplistic and driven by rhetoric rather than evidence" (p. 360). They suggested the need for further studies to examine why males are suddenly not keeping pace with their achievement level of previous years, why more males are deemed behaviorally difficult, and why females still feel silenced in coeducational classroom environments. Their suggestions for changing the teaching context of classrooms to yield more effective learning environments for both males and females arose from their review of literature and research. Their final summation reverted back to their original premise that the relationships students have with their teachers, most

prominently evident during classroom interactions, point to a needed commitment for more affirming and consistent classroom environments for all students.

The issues of gender in the classroom have been approached in various ways by the researchers listed above. Many have focused on the achievement gap between male and female students, question-asking differences between the teacher and males and female students, and differences in admonitions given to males and females. These are all relevant studies for this researcher but none of them address student perceptions of these possible differences or how they might affect students' feelings about their academic confidence.

Classroom Interactions and Student Self-Efficacy

The effect of classroom interactions and gender, teacher-student interactions on student self-efficacy beliefs, and later student achievement, has only been explored with a few studies. The following section contains a discussion of some of the most relevant research on teacher-student interactions, gender, and self-efficacy beliefs of students.

Dweck et al. (1978) examined teacher-student interactions in terms of teacher feedback and how it may affect a student's beliefs about his or her efficacy as a learner. In an effort to understand why females were not achieving at the same rate as males, particularly in the upper grades and on standardized tests, Dweck et al. examined the concept of gender differences as a phenomenon they termed "learned helplessness." The researchers described learned helplessness as "existing when failure is perceived as insurmountable" (p. 268). Dweck et al. began their study with the general observations that females were more likely than males to exhibit a helpless pattern of negative self-attributions, which could affect their personal self-efficacy beliefs. They reported

that females appeared to place less emphasis than males on motivational factors as reasons for failure and were more likely to blame their own lack of ability. Dweck et al. noted that females also showed decreased persistence to complete a task once they had experienced failure.

Dweck et al. (1978) reported that females were thought to remain dependent on feedback from others to judge their ability or the adequacy of their performance. The result of these perceptions might create learned helplessness among females primarily when the evaluators were adults. They noted that when females failed, they quickly attributed it to their own lack of ability. Males on the other hand were seen as far more likely to attribute their failure to a lack of motivation or to the characteristics of a particular teacher. The carryover implications for these observations could have significant implications for females as they progress through school. Males who have not done well may see each new school year as a new opportunity for better effort and a new beginning with a different teacher. In contrast, females may carry over feelings of low ability from year to year and not feel that the teacher or their own effort makes any difference.

Dweck et al. (1978) conducted two studies. The first was an observational study of teachers' feedback to males and females in the same classroom. They predicted that males would receive more negative feedback and much of that would be related to conduct or other nonintellectual aspects of their work. Negative feedback for females was expected to be primarily for intellectual inadequacies. Both studies were conducted at the lower elementary level: fourth and fifth grade. In the first study, the subjects were observed twice a week for 5 weeks. Every instance of evaluative feedback from teachers

was coded as to the gender of the child and whether the feedback was positive or negative. Contingent feedback was also coded as it related to the intellectual aspects of the work or nonintellectual aspects such as neatness. Any explicit attribution given by the teacher for the success or failure of a student was also noted.

The results of Dweck et al.'s (1978) study demonstrated a strong gender difference when examining the total feedback of male and female students related to the intellectual aspects and nonintellectual aspects of their performance. For males, 90% of all positive feedback was related to the intellectual quality of their progress, but less than 80% of positive feedback was directed toward females. This was seen as significant. Gender differences for negative evaluative feedback were even more pronounced. For males, only 54% were work-related criticism, whereas for females it was 88%. Failure feedback directed toward males was more often labeled as lack of motivation than ability. Dweck et al. speculated that teacher behavior might actually cause gender differences in the attributions of students about their own abilities; therefore, they conducted an additional study to address this concern.

Their second study again used lower elementary students in fifth grade. However, for this study students were taken to a testing area where they were asked to solve puzzles. The experimenter used varying types of evaluative, solution-specific positive and negative feedback with both males and females. At the end of each session students were asked an attribution question to determine how they judged their own performance. The results demonstrated that when male students were corrected by the experimenter, they did not view their failure as reflecting a lack of ability. Instead they attributed their failure to a lack of effort. However, when female students were asked the same question

they "overwhelmingly interpreted any failure feedback as indicating a lack of ability" (p. 274). Dweck et al. concluded that the type of feedback given to males and females in the classroom during teacher-student interactions might result directly in females' greater tendency to see failure as an indicator of their lack of ability. The teachers in question also attributed male students' failures to lack of effort more so than females. Therefore Dweck et al. saw the interactions in a classroom as a strong determinant for gender-related differences in achievement-related behaviors. The researchers took their conclusions a step further by implying that females may underestimate their chances for future success, particularly in fields of math and science, which during the 1970s and 1980s was an increasing cause of concern among educators. The main limitation to their study was the grade level, which is lower elementary. Adolescent students or even high school students might demonstrate a different effect than ten year olds (the average age of a fifth grader). Older students might have answered the questions differently or exhibited more confidence because they were closer in age to the adults who were testing them. Dweck et al, acknowledged this as a possible limitation to their study.

Ryan et al. (1998) also examined an aspect of the classroom environment that may contribute to student beliefs about their own abilities: help seeking. They defined help seeking as a strategy that contributes to student learning. Help seeking was described by the researchers as an important strategy for learning and success in school and could also be an important self-regulatory strategy. The researchers hypothesized that teachers may create classroom environments that encourage or discourage students from behaviors. Ryan et al. focused their study on adolescents because of the advanced meta-cognitive skills students have at that age that may help them monitor and reflect on their

performance. Therefore, the primary question for their study was why some adolescent students decide not to seek help when they know they need it.

One factor in behavior is academic self-efficacy (Ryan et al., 1998). Behavior in the classroom becomes important when students with low self-efficacy are afraid to ask for help because they think it indicates a lack of ability in front of other students. Ryan et al. described the relationship between self-efficacy and help seeking as "troubling" (p. 2). The initial aim of their longitudinal study was to investigate how the context of the classroom relates to the overall level of student-reported avoidance of help seeking in the classroom, the relationship between student academic self-efficacy, and the avoidance of asking for help among adolescents. Ryan et al. believed that the goal structure of the classroom and how it is communicated to students creates a positive or negative setting that encourages or discourages help seeking.

In the beginning of their study, gender was not a focus. Instead, the relationship between the teacher and student as well as classmates was of interest. Citing studies that suggested that caring and supportive classrooms engender comfort during interactions, Ryan et al. (1998) hypothesized that if teachers tended to the emotional needs of students, students would be less likely to avoid asking for help. For this study, a variety of instruments and rating scales were used and administered by trained research assistants in mathematics classes that were chosen at random. The results were varied among the different instruments and classrooms studied. Teachers' views were also solicited using several rating scales. The earliest results showed a strong correlation between gender and academic self-efficacy, indicating that females felt less efficacious than males about their academic ability. An analysis of data suggested that the relationship between gender and

the avoidance of help seeking did not vary between classrooms; however, within class variance, it did suggest that males were more likely than females to avoid seeking help when needed. Also, both males and females reported they were less likely to seek help if they felt less efficacious altogether.

The result of Ryan et al.'s (1998) study was that the decision to ask for help was clearly related to a student's self-efficacy beliefs. Interestingly enough, however, in this study it was males who were more likely to avoid seeking help than females. Ryan et al. pointed out that this finding was contrary to theorists who suggested just the opposite (Gilligan, 1982). They theorized that females might see as dependent and fitting into a traditional female role, and not assertive or threatening. Ryan et al. (1998) acknowledged this limitation to their study and suggested that further studies should be conducted to determine if students perceive help seeking as masculine or feminine and how this might affect their abilities to be successful students.

Lane and Lane (2001) conducted a study to predict the effectiveness of self-efficacy in an academic setting. They noted that research findings consistently link high self-efficacy with achievement but that the behaviors or factors necessary to achieve success also need to be examined. In addition to task-specific behaviors, students must have a certain knowledge base in order to complete a task. Their study addressed the need to investigate self-efficacy and its relationships to performance. Therefore, the purpose of their study was to identify measures of self-efficacy that evaluate the full range of behaviors relevant to a certain task and whether self-efficacy measures can predict academic success over time.

The participants for this study (Lane & Lane, 2001) were 76 postgraduate students enrolled in business school. The strategy for the study was to develop a self-efficacy tool that assessed students' confidence at different intervals as they develop competency. Students were given a list of competencies that might be necessary for achievement success and asked which they thought would be the most critical. They were also asked to complete a number of self-efficacy measures twice with a week in between. Students were given no feedback about their progress during that time. The measure of performance was the grades received over the course of the two separate time periods when the self-efficacy measures were given. Since it was a business school environment, students were asked to participate in research into how students might be selected for management programs in the school. Students were asked to fill out a questionnaire at the beginning of a course in management selection and again one week later. Thirteen weeks after both measures were administered, the researcher assessed academic performance. Participants were also interviewed to identify behaviors they felt influenced student performance. Using multiple regression techniques, the end-of-semester performance grades were the dependent variable. The students' self-analysis of being able to "cope with the demands of the program" (p. 692) turned out to be the only significant predictor of later performance. As self-efficacy scores increased, so did academic performance.

The researchers (Lane & Lane, 2001) concluded that self-judgments about a person's self-efficacy are more difficult to assess the first time a self-efficacy measure is given and are more accurate as time passes by. They cited other intervening factors, which are not relevant for this review, such as time management, outside paid employment, attendance, family and social pressure. Lane and Lane observed that their

results compared favorably with earlier studies that have supported the predictive effectiveness of self-efficacy measures. Lane and Lane concluded that self-efficacy is changeable depending on positive and negative performance feedback. This supports this researcher's premise that teacher-student interactions may influence self-efficacy beliefs. Lane and Lane suggested that students need a clear knowledge of the task at hand and should be shown work that is acceptable as a guideline. Students who are able to work with others who have been successful at a task also improve self-efficacy. This relates to Bandura's (1997) theory that positive modeling is important for success. Lane and Lane suggested the need for further research to validate the findings of their study. This researcher found that a limitation to this student was the age of the subjects who were adults. Since the researcher is focusing on adolescents, the behaviors and reactions of adult subject to researchers may be quite different. Therefore the researcher felt Land and Lane's conclusions were narrower than they acknowledged.

In 2004, Cho et al. conducted a study to investigate the relationship among students' self-efficacy beliefs, attitudes toward science, and achievement. The purpose of the study was to determine which had a greater affect on achievement: student attitude toward the subject or a student's self-efficacy beliefs about his or her ability to successfully complete a task. This study was of interest to this researcher because it was conducted with middle school students at the sixth-grade level. Cho et al. examined possible changes in middle school students' achievement, self-efficacy, and attitude toward science as a result of their participation in a computer-enhanced, problem-based learning module, which was part of their science curriculum. The researchers wanted to see that, if students became more skillful as they worked on various tasks, they would

then develop a sense of positive self-efficacy. Cho et al. pointed out that any positive relationship between self-efficacy and academic achievement has been studied primarily in sports and mathematics, so they wanted to see if achievement might be domain specific. Cho et al. were concerned with three research questions for this study, but the one that was relevant to this review of the literature was "How do student's science self-efficacy beliefs and their attitude toward science relate to their science achievement?" (p. 3).

The participants for Cho et al.'s (2004) study were 549 sixth grades in two middle schools and five teachers who were asked to use the problem-based learning computer program in their science classes. The study took place over a 3-week period of time. This study used a pretest and posttest design. Students were asked to participate in a program called Alien Rescue and their task was to help aliens find new homes that could support their life forms. A variety of problem-solving activities were needed. Students used the program daily for 45 minutes over a 15-day period. Students were shown videos and then allowed to work together to determine their tasks. The teachers were able to circulate around the class and provide support, but most of the direction came from the computer program itself.

Cho et al. (2004) addressed the research question using quantitative and qualitative instruments. The quantitative data consisted of a science test at the end of the time period. The qualitative data were a self-efficacy questionnaire, an attitude toward science questionnaire and open-ended questions and interviews. The first three instruments were given to students before they began the project and then again after. Data were examined to determine if there were changes in student scores from pretests to

posttests in achievement, self-efficacy, and attitude. The responses to the interviews and questions conducted after the study were coded and analyzed. The results indicated a significant increase in science achievement from pretest to posttest. However, a comparison of scores on the attitude toward science scale did not show a significant difference between the pretest and posttest. An analysis of self-efficacy beliefs did show a significant effect between a student's self-efficacy beliefs about the science tasks involved in the program and their science achievement test score. This was of greater significance than a student's attitude toward the subject. Cho et al. (2004) concluded that students' self-efficacy beliefs were a significant predictor of student achievement, which they said supported other research conducted in traditional classroom settings. Low-achieving students with high self-efficacy scores scored quite well on the achievement tests. This demonstrated a stronger relationship between self-efficacy and achievement than a student's attitude toward the subject matter. Cho et al. concluded that teachers could target students with low attitude and low self-efficacy beliefs and, by raising their self-efficacy beliefs through effective learning environments, could improve their achievement. A description of what those effective learning environments might be was not provided. However, Cho et al. confirmed that a person's self-efficacy beliefs could have a strong impact on their academic achievement, even if they do not have a strong interest in the subject matter. Due to the large sample size and careful research techniques, this researcher did not feel there were significant limitations to this study and none were acknowledge by Cho et al.

There are few current studies that directly link self-efficacy to academic success, but several have been conducted focusing on academic self-efficacy beliefs and college

success. Researchers studying academic self-efficacy have developed instruments to measure an individual's confidence in his/her ability to perform a wide variety of academic tasks. Gore (2006) conducted two studies that were intended to extend the work of others by addressing incremental validity of academic self-efficacy. Like Lane and Lane (2001), Gore's study focused only on college success, which was a limitation to his study. The first study included 629 first-year college students. Of those, 335 were male and 294 were female. Their composite ACT (Achievement College Test) scores were used as well as their self-reported GPAs (grade point averages) from high school. Researchers used the CSEI (College Self-efficacy Inventory) and asked participants to respond in terms of their confidence in their ability to successfully complete college tasks. Students were also given the ASC (Academic Self Confidence Scale) to complete. Students' current college GPAs were also used as well as their enrollment status. The purpose of this first study was to evaluate the degree to which ACT test scores, CSEI results, and ASC results predicted college GPA. CSEIs were completed on all students at both the beginning and end of their first college semester because the researcher (Gore, 2006) believed that self-efficacy beliefs are informed by personal experiences.

Academic self-confidence and college self-efficacy measures taken at the beginning of the first college semester accounted for about 1% of the variance in GPA. However, at the end of the semester ASC and CSEI instruments results accounted for about 9% of the variance in GPA. The findings suggested that course-related college self-efficacy beliefs are strong predictors of college GPA, aside from any other factor, such as professor-student relationships. Gore (2006) stated that a limitation of this first study was the small sample size.

Gore (2006) then conducted a second study with a larger sample over a longer period of time. For this study 7,956 participants were first-year students who were randomly selected from 25 different colleges and universities. The majority were Caucasian females (54%). As in the first study, student ACT scores were obtained since the purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between academic self-confidence and college outcomes as seen by student GPAs. The results demonstrated that ACT composite scores were powerful predictors of college GPA results over ASC scores. The use of ACT composite scores significantly improved the model (Gore, 2006).

These two studies were conducted to describe the relationship, if any, between academic self-efficacy beliefs and college outcomes. The data from the first study suggested that self-efficacy beliefs were weak predictors of academic performance and failed to account for a significant proportion of variance beyond what was expected. However, the data for the second study were very different. The relationship between the CSEI and end of second semester GPA was far greater. Therefore, Gore concluded that a stronger relationship existed between a student's self-efficacy beliefs and GPA at the end of the second semester than when student self-efficacy beliefs were solicited at the beginning of the freshmen year. Gore (2006) believed these results were consistent with Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory, which says that self-efficacy beliefs develop as a result of personal accomplishment. Gore suggested that his results demonstrated that students need feedback on their performance, both academically and socially, before they can "realistically assess their ability to achieve academic goals" (p. 112). Gore then discussed the positives and negatives of the instruments used and made recommendations for colleges and universities in terms of promoting a focus on academic self-efficacy

beliefs for first-year students. Such a discussion was not relevant for this research that focuses on adolescents. However, Gore's conclusions may relate to the necessity of positive teacher feedback to improve self-efficacy beliefs of students.

Most studies on student predictions of their own self–efficacies have been conducted with adult students and most have not focused specifically on student relationships with their professors or teachers. Researchers have used quantitative instruments that are quick and easy to analyze but have not interviewed students about their feelings and experiences related to self-efficacy, Some studies, like Gore (2006) have not taken into account the role of teacher feedback so that students can adjust their performance. These types of studies are more relevant for older students and might be difficult to adapt for adolescents.

Summary

There have been many studies over the years of classroom interactions, and they continue into the 2000s. However, researchers tend to repeat the same observations from different points of view: male students dominate the classroom, whether positively or negatively, and female students generally have fewer opportunities to participate. Trends in female and male demographics and achievement in secondary school and undergraduate educations are beginning to show a preponderance of females at the college level, even though a smaller proportion than males enters scientific fields. Little research has yet been done on the changing picture for males in education in terms of placement in special services classes and the increasing dropout rates for males at the secondary level. This researcher predicts such studies to be forthcoming if these trends continue.

There are few empirical studies on gender-role expectations in the classroom as it relates to teacher-student interactions and self-efficacy in the classroom. However, Patchen's study, conducted as recently as 2006, may lead the way for more current research into the changing educational picture for males and females in the United States. A better understanding is needed of the differential treatment of both males and females during classroom interactions, and the perceptions of both teachers and students. At the middle school level how these differences may affect students' self-efficacy beliefs in the learning environment may make qualitative studies, such as this researcher's, relevant and hopefully useful.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to gain understanding and insight into how seventh graders experience classroom interactions with their teacher and how those interactions might affect their feelings of self-efficacy. This chapter contains details regarding the interpretive research design model to be used, information on researcher background, description of the proposed participants, protection of human subjects, methods for data collection and data analyses, and methods for attending to validity. The research questions for this study were the following:

1. What are the observable characteristics of teacher-student interactions in a seventh-grade classroom?
2. What are the observable differences between the ways males and females are treated during teacher-student interactions in the seventh-grade classroom?
3. How do those interactions affect the self-efficacy beliefs of male and female seventh-grade students?

Interpretive Research Model

In this study, qualitative interpretive research was used to observe teacher-student interactions in a seventh-grade classroom. The researcher used an interpretive research model (Erickson, 1986) to capture the perceptions of seventh-grade students' experiences during classroom interactions and their feelings of self-efficacy. Interpretive research requires the researcher to go beyond simple descriptive data, such as observations, and attempt to make sense about observed phenomena by offering explanations, drawing conclusions, and making inferences about the meanings

participants have regarding that same phenomena (Patton, 2002). Observational fieldwork and focus groups are useful in qualitative interpretive research when the researcher is trying to understand the perspective of subjects while they are engaged in particular events (Erickson, 1986). Focus group interviews were used in an attempt to understand how the observed students experienced teacher-student interactions in their classroom. In this study the researcher attempted to attach meaning to the teacher-student interactions she observed. Then, through the use of focus groups, the researcher drew conclusions as to how students gained feelings of self-efficacy from teacher-student interactions.

The data for this study consisted of continuous written narrative descriptions of classroom observations as well as focus group interviews. The intent of this researcher was to expand the work of others who have studied teacher-student interactions (Brophy, 1985; Caruthers, 2000; Dillon, 2001; Duffy et al., 2001). Therefore, this study attempted to develop a better understanding of how students in a seventh-grade classroom experience teacher-student interactions and how these interactions may affect students' feelings of self-efficacy.

Researcher Background

The researcher has taught seventh grade for 15 years and currently teaches eighth grade, for a total of 20 years experience in the classroom. The researcher has a Single Subject History California Teaching Credential as well as a Multiple Subject California Teaching Credential. The researcher also has a master's degree in school administration and a master's degree in general education. She has spent 2 years in administrative capacities of various types on two middle school campuses. This experience has provided

her with many opportunities to use observational techniques when observing classrooms. However, as a teacher and administrator, the researcher has not had many meaningful opportunities to talk with students about their experiences in the classroom, except for one descriptive study conducted 3 years ago at the University of San Francisco.

In 2004, during a class on descriptive research at the University of San Francisco, the researcher completed a project where she conducted focus groups with six different groups of seventh-grade girls. She interviewed, recorded, and analyzed their experiences during teacher-student interactions in mixed-sex classrooms. The results of that project indicated that female students felt they were often ignored by the teacher, in favor of male students. The students in the study gave various reasons why they thought this happened. They stated that teachers call on males more frequently to maintain classroom order, that teachers call on males because they are loud, and that females do not volunteer answers for fear of being teased.

In 2006, during a class on qualitative research at the University of San Francisco, the researcher also completed a qualitative project using observational field notes and teacher interviews. This project focused on teachers' experiences managing mixed-sex classrooms and interviewing those same teachers to find out how they decided which students to call on during class discussions. The researcher observed that the frequency with which teachers called on male and female students in mathematics classrooms was not the same as reported by the teachers themselves. The teachers in that study indicated that their decisions to call on males or females were always balanced.

Both of these projects were useful because they gave the researcher an opportunity to do observational research. The researcher also gained experience

organizing and conducting focus groups of seventh graders as well as experience transcribing audiotaped recordings of what students said. The focus group transcriptions for those studies were coded into themes which also provided an opportunity for the researcher to gain experience in this qualitative research technique.

Setting

The setting for this study was a seventh-grade classroom in a middle school of 600 students in the San Francisco Bay Area. The school is located in a middle-upper income town of approximately 30,000 people. The school consists of Grades 5 through 8. The student population is 75% Caucasian with the remainder being an ethnic mix of Hispanic, Asian, African American, and Tongan students. The researcher selected a school site where she had the trust of the administration as well as the staff.

Participants

The participants in this study were approximately 32 (standard class size) seventh-grade students in the school described above and their female teacher. The class consisted of 16 males and 14 females. This class was selected due to the grade level being studied (seventh grade), its convenient geographical location near the researcher's school, and the willingness of the teacher to allow the researcher to observe and use her students for focus groups. The teacher in this seventh grade World History class (referred to in this study under the pseudonym "Mrs. Jensen") was in her early 30s, with experience in several upper elementary grades. She taught English as well as an eighth-grade leadership class. She had been teaching for 10 years and had taught fifth-grade

English and history as well. She also worked with some of the school's student leaders who coordinate community service projects throughout the school year. The female teacher was 8 months pregnant at the time of the researcher observations; therefore, some instruction occurred as the teacher sat on a stool and drank from a thermos of water. Whether the apparent fatigue level of the teacher affected her interaction strategies with students is not known.

Since the researcher is employed by the same school district where the class is located, the school site administrator agreed that the researcher should have normal access to additional demographic information as well as standardized test scores and report card grades. Much of the information needed for this study is public record through the California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS) as of September 2008. This information was used to help the researcher interpret observations and student responses; however, specific detailed student information was not used in data analysis. The students in the classroom selected for this study had no personal contact with the researcher in any other setting prior to the beginning of the study. Therefore, student responses to questions posed by the researcher during focus groups had less chance of being affected by any biases students may have felt toward the researcher if they had been aware that she was a teacher in the same school district.

The teacher provided a seating chart for the researcher. Next to the names of each student she had marked her opinion of their ability level based on tests she did not share with me. For example the teacher would place a "P" by their name if they were proficient or a "BL" if they were working below grade level. Initially the researcher thought this might be helpful in understanding something about the students who were

participating in class, but unfortunately students were not kept in their assigned seats often enough to always be easily correlated to the seating chart. However, the information was helpful for the researcher's interpretations of responses during focus group interviews (Chapter V).

The physical environment of this large classroom contained walls that were partially covered with posters, student work, school schedules, notices placed randomly, a few potted plants, and additional posters taped to the windows. The rectangular shaped room also held books, files, large beanbags, and carpet squares in the rear by the sink. The teacher told the researcher that she was often tired and it was difficult to keep the room, as she would have liked it.

Student desks were paired two to a row and occupied three quarters of the front of the room. A large whiteboard faced the student desks. The researcher was able to sit comfortably toward the rear of the room, see the entire room as well as the door, but not be sitting among or next to any student. There were two access doors to the room, one from the hall and one onto a large patio. The room had two window walls, which allowed for natural light.

Data Collection

The data for this study were obtained over a 6-week period of time. For the first 3 weeks, the researcher spent approximately 1 to 1 1/2 hours a day, 3 days per week in the seventh-grade classroom described above, observing and taking field notes. The remaining 3 weeks were set aside to organize and conduct focus groups and to engage in any additional observations that became necessary. Qualitative findings during this study grew from two kinds of data: direct classroom observations recorded as transcribed field

notes and transcripts from focus group interviews. The reason the researcher selected these methods is that they best served the purposes of the research questions in terms of observing and recording the observable characteristics of teacher-student interactions and any differences that were observed as to how males and females participated or were treated during those same interactions. Focus group interviews provided additional information about teacher-student interactions, characteristics, student experiences during those interactions, and how those interactions affected students' feelings of self-efficacy.

The first source of data was transcriptions from field notes taken during classroom observations. Field notes taken during classroom observations provided a description of what was observed. They contained everything the researcher believed was worth noting that related to the observable characteristics of teacher-student interactions in the classroom. In order to accomplish a systematic method for taking field notes, the researcher used the following protocol.

1. During classroom observations the researcher was to be as unobtrusive as possible.
2. All notes were taken in a spiral notebook.
3. All entries were dated, with time and place noted.
4. All pages were numbered.
5. The notebook pages were divided into two columns.
6. The column on the right contained a running record of what the researcher was observing.
7. The column on the left contained shorthand codes created by the researcher that related to who was speaking and who was responding. For example, the teacher was

represented by a capital “T” and students were represented by the scientific symbols for males and females.

8. Using a classroom seating chart and keeping student names anonymous, each student was coded as to demographic and achievement level.

9. The researcher focused on and entered codes related to specific observable aspects of teacher-student interactions, such as body language, tone of voice, volume of voice, verbal language, subtle cues from the teacher, either verbal or nonverbal, facial expressions by the teacher or student during interactions, praise, and admonishment.

10. Brackets were used around key phrases that related to the research questions.

11. The researcher drew diagrams if necessary.

12. The researcher also used a code system to note evidence of differing teacher expectations for students based on how she questioned them, responded to them, or directed students during classroom discussions, activities, or any other type of interaction that occurred between the teacher and the students.

13. Subjective researcher insights or impressions were in the form of memos placed among the field notes using Post-it Notes. Such memos contained researcher interpretations, beginning analyses, working hypotheses, and speculation about what was being seen and heard.

14. The field notes and memos were transcribed and word-processed within 24 hours of observation to maintain accuracy.

15. The researcher used direct quotations in the field notes when appropriate.

16. During transcription the researcher wrote a reflective summary of what she had observed that day.

17. After the field notes were transcribed each day, the researcher began noting preliminary coding categories.

Data obtained through these field note observations also allowed the researcher to understand the culture and feeling tone of the seventh-grade classroom being observed. Such an understanding provided additional insights that related to the research questions.

The researcher used the data from the field note observations described earlier to organize and conduct focus groups of students. Focus groups have been used frequently as a qualitative method in the social sciences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). Focus groups are in-depth discussions with small groups of participants, based on a set of questions that have been structured prior to the focus group, but may also include questions related to issues that may arise during the focus group discussions. Some of the advantages of focus groups in qualitative research are that they may uncover issues that might not otherwise appear just by observation or through the use of questionnaires. Therefore, an additional source of data was direct quotations from focus group transcripts. By using the data obtained from focus group transcripts, the researcher was able to gain additional insight that augmented field note observations related to students' perspectives about their interactions with the teacher. How these perspectives and experiences affect students' feelings of self-efficacy provided further data.

Participants for the focus groups were selected from students whose parents had given written consent for them to participate. The goal of the researcher was to have at least three or more focus groups of at least five students each depending on parental consent. The groups were structured based on what the researcher had observed during class and additional student data. If some students were more dominant, aggressive, shy,

or withdrawn, these factors were taken into consideration when the focus groups were constructed. In addition, the focus groups were designed around student achievement. Students of the same general ability level were placed together to avoid the possibility that higher achievers might intimidate those who achieved at a lower rate.

Since gender differences have been observed historically during classroom interactions, the researcher constructed four separate focus groups: two groups of 6 males each and two groups of 6 females each. The teacher agreed that students could be excused from class to participate in focus groups. She suggested that points be awarded for those who returned a signed consent form. This increased the number of students who participated in focus groups. The school librarian agreed to let the researcher use one of the library annex rooms. These rooms were glassed-in cubicles where the researcher was clearly visible to others in the library. The researcher's experience had been that seventh-grade students are very willing to meet any time, particularly if snacks are provided by the researcher.

During focus groups, students were asked to respond to questions prepared by the researcher. Adult focus groups usually last 1 to 2 hours; however, the experience of the researcher with seventh graders is that a 1-hour focus group was likely to be the maximum time-frame to maintain students' attention and keep their interest. All focus group interviews were audiotaped on two recorders to ensure accuracy and allow the researcher to give her full attention to what students were saying without taking notes.

During focus groups, the researcher used prepared questions to keep students on track as the focus group progressed. The researcher's experience conducting focus groups showed that often students raised issues that were not expected or planned. Therefore the

researcher had to adjust the questions during the focus groups. Such issues offered additional insights and thereby enhance the data. The first set of questions was related to the first research question about teacher-student classroom interaction characteristics

The second group of focus group questions was related to student self-efficacy feelings that may result from those interactions. Gender issues related to classroom interactions, appeared during observations and focus group comments by students. The questions listed in the following sections were sample questions. They were piloted with five students from the researcher's eighth-grade history class. Those students helped the researcher word them so they would be easily understood.

Focus Group Questions Relating to Classroom Interactions Experiences

1. When you are sitting in class and Ms. Jensen starts to call on students to answer questions, what does that feel like for you? What has been your experience when that happens?
2. When Ms. Jensen is talking to you during class discussions so that she calls on you and you respond back and forth with her, how does that a feel to you when that is happening?
3. When you have interactions with Ms. Jensen not only during class discussion but also at other times, such as when you go up to her to ask about a grade or ask to go to the bathroom or anything else, can you describe those interactions for me?
4. What happens if someone calls out in this class? Do you ever call out?
5. If several students have their hand sup, which students usually gets called on and why do you think so?

6. Would you like to participate more or less during class discussions? Explain.

The second set of questions is related to students' feeling of self-efficacy in the classroom and during class discussions.

a. How confident are you about raising your hand to answer questions in this classroom?
b. Are you learning anything in this classroom? Is it easy or hard? Explain.
c. Please describe anything that happens in this classroom that makes learning easy or hard?.
d. If you don't understand something in this class, what do you do?
e. How do you feel about yourself as a student in this classroom? Do you feel successful or unsuccessful? Please explain.
f. Is there anything that happens in this class that makes you feel like you can do the work no matter what?
g. Is there anything that happens in this class that makes you feel like you are not capable of doing the work?

The researcher selected two experts familiar with seventh graders who reviewed the above questions for clarity and grade-level appropriateness. They were a middle school psychologist and a middle school principal who had taught seventh grade for 8 years. These two experts helped the researcher clarify her thinking by reviewing portions of the data obtained from the researcher's observation field notes and the focus group transcripts.

The combination of naturalistic observations and focus groups were the methods used to describe the interactions in a seventh-grade classroom. These were used to find

out how students experienced classroom interactions as they related to their feelings of self-efficacy. These approaches did not constrain the results but allowed for themes to emerge naturally. The patterns that emerged were then used to gain a better understanding of the characteristics of teacher-student interactions in seventh grade and their effect, if any, upon adolescent feelings of self-efficacy.

Protection of Human Subjects

The researcher obtained verbal approval from the site principal and classroom teacher to conduct this study. As soon as the researcher received permission from her doctoral committee to proceed, she obtained permission from the University of San Francisco Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects to conduct this study. The researcher also adhered to the ethical guidelines provided by the school district where the observations and focus group interviews were conducted.

Two weeks prior to beginning this study, the researcher obtained written informed consent from the classroom teacher and the school administration. As the study progressed, written informed consent was obtained from the parents of the students who would participate in the focus groups. The researcher sent a letter home to all parents about the general nature of the research. No one for whom the researcher did not have consent participated in focus groups. Parental consent was not necessary for the classroom observations. The site administrator advised the researcher that formal and informal observations are allowed routinely for anyone in a public school who visits a classroom for any purpose: administrators, school board members, parents, social workers, psychologists, community members, police officials, teachers, and reporters.

Once permission was obtained from all persons involved, the identity of all participants, the school district, the name of the school, the teacher's name, and any other personnel were protected and pseudonyms or initials were used in reporting the findings of the study. All individuals were assured of confidentiality in writing and informed that the findings would not be discussed with school personnel except the teacher and principal, if they requested it.

In addition, all written materials, field notes, audiotapes, transcripts, test scores, and memos, were locked in a file at the researcher's home. During the school site visits all materials were kept in the possession of the researcher.

Data Analysis

Data analysis for this study was inductive and began as soon as the researcher began observing and transcribing her field notes (the very first day of observation). The researcher began to immediately reflect upon her observations and what she had written in her field notes because transcription occurred the same day as the observations. The qualitative data for this study were in the form of transcribed field notes and focus group interview transcripts which included memos, narratives, and quotations. The data acquired during data collection were reduced using the constant comparative process described in Bogdan and Biklen (2003). This method is useful during observation studies such as this one. The constant comparative methods include a number of steps.

The first step in the process occurred when the researcher began to examine the field notes and focus group transcripts to identify key issues and events that correlated with the research questions. The next step required researcher to develop a coding scheme. The researcher then assigned the codes she created to those same issues and

events. The codes were related to the three research questions. The transcripts from both field notes and interviews were coded by placing a word or a symbol adjacent to the text. Some passages had more than one code to describe the data. Different codes were developed to refine and clarify the meaning of the transcribed text. These then became tentative themes. These categories of themes were necessary as a basis for organizing and analyzing the data. These patterns and themes emerged from the data rather than being imposed on them (Patton, 2002). It was important for the researcher to limit the number of codes so as to generate a manageable number of themes. The process at this point required the researcher to frequently double back and re-examine the data in order to add to or augment the codes already being used.

In addition to relating the codes to the research questions, the codes derived during the data reduction process related to what had been reported in the literature about teacher-student interactions and the self-efficacy of students. The next step required the researcher to look for overlapping of codes and to create ones that related to incidents or types of interactions as well as events that were one-time occurrences. Some codes were used to note how the teacher communicates with students, and other codes denoted the relationship between teacher and student. Next, the researcher examined the data for patterns and regularities. Qualitative data required both analysis and creativity in creating categories from the various codes assigned by the researcher (Patton, 2002).

Once the codes were assigned, the researcher refined the categories by analyzing and changing the criteria for each category. Some categories became subsets of other categories and some were combined or eliminated altogether. Over time and with continuing analysis, relevant categories that met the purpose of this study were

established; categories that related to teacher-student interaction characteristics, incidents of gender differences in classroom interactions, if any, and categories that related to students' feelings of self-efficacy.

The basic elements of qualitative research are general assertions about the data observed, narrative vignettes as part of the observational field notes, quotations from focus group transcripts, tables and figures, if appropriate, and interpretive researcher commentary arising from the field notes and focus group interviews. As the researcher sorted through the transcripts and assigns codes, she conducted a continuous search for disconfirming evidence because discrepant evidence is part of inductive analysis (Erickson, 1986).

Once the final set of codes was assigned to the data, the next step was for the researcher to create tables of observations and data from interviews that were aligned with the research questions. The findings derived from the themes and patterns seen in the tables were analyzed to draw conclusions that related to the research questions.

Validity

Qualitative research is concerned with theoretical, descriptive, and interpretive validity (Maxwell, 2005). Theoretical validity relates to how students understand their experiences during classroom interactions and can be addressed by asking for student perspectives during interviews. For example, any theoretical constructs or explanations the researcher uses to explain the data should be defensible. If a researcher states that students feel less confident if a teacher yells at them, there should be data from the observations or focus group transcripts to support that assertion.

Descriptive validity relates to the reporting accuracy by the researcher of what participants say during interviews. It is dependant upon the researcher to be as accurate as possible with field note observations and memos about researcher impressions or interpretations. In this study all transcripts of field notes and focus group discussions were faithful to what was actually seen or said by students, not simply paraphrased by the researcher.

Interpretive validity was addressed by checking the researcher's assertions and conclusions, based on student comments during focus group interviews, to determine if the researcher was accurately recording and understanding what she was observing. In this study, the panel of experts, who had experience with seventh graders, read portions of the field note transcripts and focus group transcripts to see if the researcher's interpretations appeared accurate. This was particularly helpful with the focus group results about self-efficacy. Erickson (1986) also refers to threats to validity as problems of "premature typification" (p. 144), which occurs when the researcher draws conclusions too early. In this study, the panel of experts' review of the researcher's data countered this possibility. This reduced any chance of bias and the panel suggested alternative explanations for observed phenomena. The use of audiotapes also further reduced the chance of researcher bias.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to describe observable characteristics of teacher-student interactions in an average seventh-grade classroom. Once classroom observations were completed, the researcher conducted focus group interviews. The purpose of those interviews was to determine if student perspectives supported the researcher's interpretation of what she had observed in the classroom. Student feelings about their own self-efficacy were also explored, during focus group interviews, to see if students felt that their interactions with the teacher had an affect on those experiences.

Chapter IV presents results from the study organized around the three research questions.

1. What are the observable characteristics of teacher-student interactions in a seventh-grade classroom?

2. What are the observable differences between the ways males and females are treated during teacher-student interactions in the seventh-grade classroom?

3. How do teacher-student interactions affect the self-efficacy beliefs of male and female seventh-grade students?

The themes that emerged from the data were based on the researcher's interpretation of what she observed and what students reported during focus group interviews. Transcripts of researcher observations and focus group interviews support the findings in this study. Throughout Chapters IV and V, transcripts of researcher observations and taped focus group transcripts are identified as shown in Table 1.

Transcript abbreviations and page numbers that follow them indicate where the excerpt may be found in the appropriate appendix.

Table 1

Explanation of Data References in Text

Data	Appendix location	Page numbers	Abbreviation in text
Researcher observation transcript	Appendix D	164-196	ROT
Focus group transcript 1	Appendix E	197-214	FGT1
Focus group transcript 2	Appendix F	215-240	FGT2
Focus group transcript 3	Appendix G	241-263	FGT3
Focus group transcript 4	Appendix H	264-289	FGT4

Description of the Classroom Environment in this Study

The researcher observed the characteristics of teacher-student interactions as she sat in the back of a seventh-grade World History class for 12 days. Each observation lasted for approximately 100 minutes. The researcher arrived in class early so that she could observe the interactions between the teacher and students as they entered and settled into their daily routine. During those observations, the researcher observed everything that happened during ordinary classroom discourse between the teacher and her students.

The researcher noted that although students glanced at her during the early days of her observations, students did not talk to her or appear to pay much attention to her. During the 11th day of observation, the teacher asked the researcher to watch the class while she had to leave the room for a moment. During that time the students continued to

work at their desks and did not speak to or look at the researcher. This gave the researcher confidence that her observations had not been unusually affected by her presence in the room.

Teacher-Student Interaction Characteristics

In response to the first research question, the researcher classified various types of teacher-student interactions into characteristics and themes as shown in Table 2. These were the result of the researcher's observations.

Table 2

Observable categories and themes of teacher-student interactions

Interaction Characteristic	Theme
Classroom tone	Teacher-student interactions created a positive, friendly tone in the classroom
Classroom management	Teacher-student interactions during the organization of materials, supplies, and daily routines were authoritative and not challenged by students
Instructional management	Teacher-student interactions related to instruction and learning were often student self-facilitated such as partner share and group work.
Questioning behaviors	Teacher-student interactions during question asking resulted in the teacher either reflecting questions back to students or ignoring questions entirely.
Admonishment behaviors	Teacher-student interactions to correct student behaviors were infrequent, casual and often directed at male students.
Admonishment during instruction	Teacher-student interactions when correcting errors were characterized by the teacher ignoring errors during class discussion or working with students one to one.
Encouragement behaviors	Teacher-student interactions to encourage and praise students were general to the class, and

	infrequent to individuals.
Non-Verbal Interaction behaviors	Teacher-students interactions resulting from non-verbal cues were pervasive and appeared to have a negative effect on students.

Classroom Tone

The researcher noted: "The culture of the classroom here is quiet, pleasant, and studious . . . [students] seem to like the teacher . . . and she [shows she] likes them by the way she speaks to them . . . and by their respect for her" (ROT, p. 180). Later in her observations the researcher commented about students' respect for the teacher "by the way they behave and talk to her" (ROT, p. 187). Therefore, the researcher found that a theme that emerged from these observations was that the tone in this classroom was positive, casual and friendly.

Specific examples of teacher-initiated interactions that appear to maintain a casual and friendly tone were "How are you doing?" [asked of students as they entered the room each day] (ROT, p. 164); "Who is not happy with where they are sitting?" (ROT, p. 171) after she had just changed their seats. Two male students told the teacher they were not happy where they were sitting, and yet nothing was done to change them. The teacher would often ask students casual personal questions; "Did you have a good weekend?" when greeting the class as a whole on Mondays. "What did you do?" as she engaged two females about shopping trips. At one point the teacher asked one female what color her eyes were, and then asked what else they (students) did, which she directed to two male students (ROT, p. 171-172). "How are you guys doing?" was also asked of the class as a whole before starting instruction. The teacher often stood at the door as students entered

and shook their hands. Her greeting and their quick responses were simple and to the point (ROT, p. 176).

Some of these casual teacher-generated interactions during the course of the class period were met by student responses that varied from “Fine,” “Yes,” to no response at all. Some of the responses were in the nature of general call-outs. It didn’t appear that the teacher was looking for specific answers to some of her questions, but that her comments were used to create a generally friendly atmosphere.

The teacher also exhibited politeness to confirm and maintain a positive tone; “Thank you for staying silent” as students were working at their desks (ROT, p. 181). At one point the teacher admitted she did not know how to answer a student’s question: “Sorry I can’t be more expert” (ROT, p. 185), in an effort to apologize to a student who asked the teacher a question she did not know. Later that same day the researcher again noted that the teacher “tries to answer but does not know and admits it” (ROT, p. 185). This honesty with her students appeared to be one way of keeping their respect for her, modeling that it is all right to not always have the answer and that nothing bad is going to happen to a student if he or she does not know something.

The researcher observed that the “classroom culture is quiet, pleasant, and studious—students [appear to] like the teacher and she likes them . . . by the way she speaks to them . . . teacher says ‘please’ often” (ROT, p. 180). The teacher-student interactions were simple and pleasant and appeared to contribute to the positive tone of the classroom as a pleasant place to learn. The researcher noted a sense of pleasure in the way the teacher talked to the class: “Teacher is having fun with the discussion” (ROT, p. 165).

The teacher also often joked with the students or told stories to create a friendly positive tone in the room: “Teacher passes out papers and smiles and jokes with male student” (ROT, p. 170); “Teacher assigns seatwork, a male asks questions about it and the teacher jokes around with him” (ROT, p. 177). On another occasion the researcher noted that when a student was asked if she had any questions and a female responded “no,” the “teacher gave her a playful look” (ROT, p. 187). Another incident: “Teacher is joking with a male student asking if he’d ever seen a clown car when all these people get out of the car,” to which the student responded “No,” as he smiled back at her (ROT, p. 194).

The teacher also created a positive classroom climate by using personal anecdotes and giving the students ideas about what she thought was important. On one occasion the teacher was “telling a story about a time when she was embarrassed” (ROT, p. 188), and another time she tried to convince the class to participate in a fundraiser for cancer patients. The teacher was also personal with the students by showing them her values and what was important to her aside from curricular instruction; to a male student:

> “Are you chewing gum? Don’t do this to me . . . who has a dirty desk?” A male student responds that he does so the teacher continues, “Okay—you will be after school cleaning the desk until it shines.” And she spends another 2-3 minutes on hygiene issues with the students nearby while they listen in what appeared to the researcher to be a respectful way. (ROT, p. 189)

The researcher felt that one of the most significant examples of the tone set by the teacher, not only with words, but also her actions, involved one male student who is autistic. Her interactions with him were brief but tolerant of his special needs:

> This [autistic] student was allowed to make a “nest” out of the beanbags in which to sit and do his work with no apparent or current comment from the teacher, and he also roams around the room and helps himself to water. The teacher told the

> researcher that this was part of his IEP [Individualized Education Plan] and was not a problem for her. (ROT, p. 185)

The observations made by the researcher about the positive tone created through the teacher-student interactions in this classroom, was often corroborated by participants in both the female and male focus groups:

> Female 1: Well when we have class discussions she usually kind of makes jokes. . . . And gets us to laugh as we go into the subject so that makes it kind of fun. (FG2, p. 216)
> Interviewer: So you guys like to make faces?
> Male 3: Like one time when I was bored.
> Male 4: Like she doesn't get really mad at you . . . like she likes a little laugh in the class but not too much.
> Interviewer: So it sounds like she welcomes humor so long as you don't go too far?
> Male 4: Like if you are the class clown but you still do your work—then it is all right with her. (FGT3, p. 247)

The interviewer also wanted to know how students would characterize their interactions with the teacher:

> Interviewer: So if I ask you to give me an adjective—under number three (question sheet students were using) . . . to describe your interactions with Ms. Jensen not during class discussion but anytime you have to go in and ask about a grade or an assignment what kind of adjective would you say?
> Female 2: Well I guess positive.
> Interviewer: Positive?—Okay.
> Female 2: She was always . . . helpful like if you were wondering something she would tell you where to look or help you figure it out.
> Female 4: I would have to say that she was more cordial—like if I really didn't understand she was patient with me and she helped me figure it out and didn't get mad at all.
> Interviewer: Okay—patient.
> Female 2: Because that is one of the characteristics you need to be a teacher—patient [*sic*]. (FGT4, p. 270)

Students in another focus group viewed the tone in class differently when asked the same question. This group consisted of a group of lower achieving boys. The researcher did not

know if this might account for their experience with the teacher being different than the female focus groups.

> Male 2: She might go like "[*uses a student's name*]" and she will grab the gum that is under the desk and put you on the spot . . . she tries to embarrass you because you don't really get it and . . .
> Male 4: She tells everyone to look under the desk.
> Interviewer: Do you find that embarrassing?
> Male 3: No.
> Male 2: She is trying to embarrass you when she does that.
> Male 3: Yeah.
> Interviewer: When you think she is trying to embarrass you, what do you think the goal is?
> Male 1: For us to stop doing what we are doing like . . .
> Male 5: She doesn't want you to do it again. (FGT1, pp. 201-202)

Classroom Management

The researcher was interested in the characteristics of interactions between teachers and students when the teacher was dealing with the day-to-day process of organizing students for learning, routines for entering and leaving class, distributing supplies and collecting work, organization of seating, and student requests or interruptions to leave class or get out of their seats. These types of activities involved teacher-student interactions outside of the actual learning process. The researcher observed that a fair amount of interaction during these times was either related to the teacher giving directions or responding to a student inquiry that was nonacademic. For example, when a female student interrupted a lesson to ask to sharpen a pencil, the teacher told the student to do it quickly and get back to her seat. The theme that was apparent throughout these activities was that when managing her classroom, the teacher was fairly authoritative and that students did not challenge her but were generally cooperative.

The researcher noted examples of classroom management interactions initiated by the teacher: “Leave your homework out and I will check it in a moment” (ROT, p. 165); “You have the last 5 minutes of class to start your homework” (ROT, p. 176); “Please bring your homework up here for me to check it” (ROT, p. 165). The researcher observed that occasionally, during this time as the teacher checked off homework, she “talks to a female student for a long time as she checks her work. The same female continues to ask for help and the teacher spends a long time with her” (ROT, p. 179).

Additional examples of classroom management interactions between the teacher and students:

> Teacher asks female student to get tape from the back of the room [where the student sits]; Teacher asks students to run around and get their supplies before they work in groups; Teacher tells students to start cleaning up; Teacher tells students what to do with the cubes they are constructing and says, “Let me give directions—then you can talk.” (ROT, pp. 166-167)
>
> Please clean up the desks and books lying around the room and anything else you see that was left by the substitute. (ROT, p. 176)
>
> Teacher asks male students near the windows to open the blinds because she comments that it is “stuffy” and they do so with little help from her. (ROT, p. 194)

The teacher provided a seating chart for the researcher. Next to the names of each student she had marked their test score abbreviation indicating their ability based on the results of the Student Teaching and Reporting (STAR) indicators (a California Statewide assessment given in the spring of every school year). Initially the researcher thought this might be helpful in understanding something about the students who were participating in class, but unfortunately students were not kept in their assigned seats often enough to always be easily correlated to the seating chart. However, the information was helpful for the researcher’s interpretations of responses during focus group interviews (Chapter V).

Students frequently changed seats, which was partially due to the nature of group work within the class. The teacher had established groups before the researcher joined the class and would instruct students to "get into groups now please" (ROT, p. 174). If the teacher noticed a student had moved him/herself out of his/her assigned group, she would ask him/her to go back to his/her original group. To a high-achieving male student, the teacher said, "Do you know you are in the wrong seat?" and "he moves [back] quickly with no comment" (ROT, p. 192). The researcher observed that "the kids are now in pairs, moving around the room—some having trouble getting into groups" (ROT, p. 193). The interactions during these processes were observed by the researcher to be one-sided: generated by the teacher. The students did not always respond to the teacher's directions about their groups, and could be heard mumbling to themselves if they did not like their placement, but the researcher did not observe them approaching the teacher with their concerns. In this way it appeared that the teacher's directions for how students were to navigate the classroom were mostly authoritative and not challenged by students.

The researcher observed students mumbling to themselves, after some directions were given, that they did not like their groups being mixed gender, but despite this they settled in quickly to the groups to which they were assigned. Their comments about their group placements were made among themselves and not directed at the teacher. Whether she heard them or not is not clear since she appeared to make no response to them. The students were also asked during this time by the teacher to work independently (ROT, p. 166).

There were times during classroom management of instruction when students were given directions and the "teacher is working at her computer while the kids are

quietly on task" (ROT, p. 184). At other times the "teacher collects an assignment by sitting at her desk and calling students up alphabetically one by one—with brief or no interaction between them" (ROT, p. 187). The researcher noted that when class started each day, even though students "were excited and talking . . . when the last bell rang they were seated and quiet" (ROT, p. 189). The researcher also observed that when a male "asks to go to the bathroom he had to ask 2-3 times before the teacher responded positively to the request" (ROT, p. 190).

The researcher concluded that the interactions used by the teacher to manage the numbers in the class as well as the paperwork, did not allow for much interaction between the teacher and students, but were teacher initiated.

Instructional Management

The researcher observed interactions between the teacher and students when the teacher was organizing and delivering curricular instruction. The most observable theme was that teacher-student interactions during instruction required students to facilitate their own learning. To accomplish this the teacher used strategies such as partner share and group work. The teacher used many directives related to sharing of curriculum information among students. "When you were studying last night, what kind of questions did you have?" and then "asks quietly for 'hands up.'" She then followed up with: "Look in the book and find the answer. What happened then?" and then asked students to discuss the answer among themselves (ROT, p. 166).

The teacher used a large amount of partner-share of information that was not always fed back to the teacher. "Teacher asks more questions, a female calls out, and a male calls out. She tells them both to talk with their partner" (ROT, p. 172). The

researcher also observed that frequently the "teacher lectures as she narrates from her notes" (ROT, p. 187). Occasionally, during these lectures, students raised their hands and asked for clarification about something she said. The frequent requests for partner-sharing and discussion among themselves limited the amount of teacher-student interactions to those times when there was going to be specific class discussion. Intermittently the teacher would walk among students as they shared; "walks to two males and talks to them, compliments third male for using good resources" (ROT, p. 166).

In addition to partner-share, the teacher also used group work and class participation activities that required the students to move around the classroom and talk among themselves. For these activities the teacher would give directions, model, and then observe. During a class simulation on African music, the teacher "modeled how call-and-response will work and then told class, 'I don't care if you feel dorky [*sic*] while doing this'" (ROT, p. 169). She then played a tape of African music for them. Student responses to this lesson ranged from females participating in the call-and-response to two "male students [who] mug for each other but don't respond" (ROT, p. 169). During this lesson she asked a male student to hit "stop" when the song ends and then again asked students to talk with their partners to answer three questions related to the song (ROT, p. 169). The researcher observed, "At this time the teacher begins to ask more questions, and students call-out responses to which she then asks them to 'talk with their partner'" (ROT, p. 172). This type of teacher direction limited the amount of interaction between the teacher and the student and directed instruction more toward student-student-type interactions (ROT, p. 169).

To manage the information students needed to learn, the teacher gave a direction as to how they were to self-facilitate their knowledge. “Teacher discusses the importance of a study guide to which a male and female student both ask questions about the guide.” She then asks the class to “just do the assignment.” The researcher noted that there was a “lot of seat work in this class” (ROT, p. 190). At times the teacher designed an activity that required students to move about the room to observe something. Again, the interactions were more in the nature of teacher direction and then student interactions among themselves:

> Teacher is telling the class they will be working in their notebooks. She points at hanging placards on the wall around the room and tells them they are to fit the placards into categories. She asks general questions to which the kids respond in unison to one about gunpowder and one male student asks for clarification and she asks him if he understands it now. (ROT, p. 192)

During activities like this, students worked independently or with each other with limited teacher interaction:

> A female asks a male by the door to read a placard to her so she doesn’t have to get up and look at it. The male reads it to her . . . while three other students near me [the researcher] help each other supply answers. During this time the teacher patrols the room. (ROT, p. 194)

During a class simulation about Ancient China, the teacher gave direction as to how students were to proceed, then they appeared to be on their own to complete the task which was accomplished without teacher interaction or intervention.

> Students are free to move around . . . a female sits on a desk directing the others in the group . . . three females seem to lead the group . . . a male gets up and begins to write on her desk . . . she [student] stays quiet and observes what they are doing. (ROT, p. 175)

There were some incidents of instructional management where there was classroom discussion as a whole. During those times the interactions between teacher and

student were characterized by less teacher direction and more student participation. These are described in a later section.

Questioning Behaviors

The researcher observed teacher-student interactions when the teacher was asking for student input or participation during whole class instruction. The observed theme in this category was that teacher-student interactions during question asking resulted in the teacher either reflecting questions back to students or ignoring student questions entirely. For example, the researcher observed that the teacher would question students about their learning by initiating a question student might ask of her back to the whole class and then appearing to look around for students she thought might either know the answer or who were not paying attention. When the teacher would ask a question about a topic, instead of engaging students, she would ask them to talk among themselves to answer it. This was rarely followed up by student feedback to the teacher about what they found. The researcher noted:

> Calls on students but doesn't always comment on their response. Or "Female student answers. Teacher doesn't comment [to her] but says to class in general, 'What else are you curious about?' and then a male student answered her." (ROT, p. 164)

During questioning the researcher also observed that the teacher would open a topic and make encouraging comments like "What else?" to keep the conversation moving, but if there was no response, she would drop it.

Additional examples of questioning behaviors where students were questioned but feedback was not often solicited, would occur after the teacher initiated a general question, such as "What do you guys think?" When no one responded, the teacher would provide a long explanation (ROT, p. 165). Therefore, it appeared that interactions during

class discussion consisted of open-ended questions that were not often responded to or the teacher would fall into a lecture mode where students just listened. These teacher-student interaction behaviors then appeared to be mostly one-sided in favor of the teacher or very brief if it involved a student or student feedback.

The researcher observed a few instances of back-and-forth interactions between the teacher and students during class discussions. More frequently, but not always, during interactions between the teacher and student, the teacher would suddenly direct questions back to the students by telling them to tell their partner what another student had just said (ROT, p. 165). In one instance the teacher asked the class, "Tell me about call-and-response [African music]," and asked a male student to read from the text and then another female and then two more students. At the end of this particular lesson she then asked, "What can you tell me now?" She interrupted herself to admonish a student who was off task and then, without allowing for answers to her original question, demonstrated call-and-response and how it will work when students do it. Later in the same lesson the teacher asked a female a related question and, when the student gave a lengthy response, the teacher asked the class if they agreed with her and asked several students to share aloud what they had written down (ROT, pp. 168-169).

Throughout her observations, the researcher noted additional instances of questions being directed back to the students: "Teacher asks more questions, female calls out, male calls out, and she tells them to talk with their partner" (ROT, p. 172). The students were aware of this type of questioning behavior on the part of the teacher and during focus groups; one female commented on it: "I like it when we have class

discussions because I think we learn more from what we have to say [to each other] than what Mrs. Jensen has to say" (FGT2, p. 216).

The researcher also observed many instances of the teacher ignoring students who appeared to want to answer her question:

> Teacher asks students to share—hands are up—students share randomly like "popcorn" but no popping up. After each speaks they call on the next one. An assertive male student says "need more hands up" and calls on a student. The teacher comments that this "sounds like it could be any classroom" and relates the lesson to China, but does not comment on student responses. The teacher asks "What do you call a domestic animal that starts with an 'l'?" When the class doesn't respond—a female finally raises her hand—the teacher ignores her and a male calls out the answer. (ROT, p. 182)

However, during focus groups, some students expressed a different view of this type of interaction with the teacher, other than being ignored:

> Interviewer: When Mrs. Jensen is talking to you during class discussions and you are interacting with her and she responds back and you respond back, how does that feel?
> Male 2: It makes you think about it more because she like asks me questions to expand my answers.
> Interviewer: Has that been your experience Male 2?
> Male 2: Yes.
> Interviewer: Does she probe and try to get information?
> Male 1: And then sometimes she just tries to have conversations about, you know, random stuff.
> Interviewer: You or with the whole class?
> Male 1: The whole class.
> Male 3: When she is doing one on one it feels like you are having a conversation with her and everyone is just looking.
> Male 2: Then after that she may call on somebody else 'cause you got the wrong answer like "Does anybody want a second on that?" (FGT1, pp. 198-199)

The researcher observed that the level of inquiry from the teacher to the student in this classroom was questions that required simple responses: "What is porcelain?" "What were bound feet?" Students often gave long answers in response that would lead to a new discussion between the teacher and different students. During those more lengthy

discussions, the teacher occasionally admitted that she did not know something and would tell a student to look it up and tell her. Upon occasion students would spontaneously correct errors made by the teacher in discussion: “Male student corrects her,” to which the teacher responded, “Sorry I can’t be more expert.” The researcher observed that the interactions during these instances were casual and nonconfrontational, and the teacher appeared open to admitting errors and students felt comfortable correcting her. “Teacher tries to answer but doesn’t know and admits it” (ROT, p. 185). During focus groups, students commented on these occasions and also appeared to confirm that students would talk among themselves to answer the questions posed by the teacher when the teacher did not appear to know the answer:

> Female 1: Well let’s say that some people in our classes—like say like they are not—I am going to say smarter than the teacher but they know more stuff so they might tell us stuff to help us understand better. (FGT2, p. 216)

The researcher observed the teacher using incentives to get students to respond during questioning and appeared to call on students who were not participating. “Teacher asks for response from ‘someone I haven’t heard from’” (ROT, p. 182). The researcher’s observation was supported by student feedback during focus groups that discussed receiving points for participating.

> Male 1: Sometimes I don’t want to get called on because I don’t know the answer.
> Interviewer: Okay so sometimes you don’t want to be called on because you don’t know the answer?
> Male 1: Yeah.
> Interviewer: Anybody else?
> Male 2: Sometimes she just calls on you and then its kinda [sic] weird like you don’t know what to say.
> Male 1: Like she puts you on the spot.
> Male 2: Yeah
> Male 1: As long as you get picked because you are going to get points—‘cause she gives us 50 points.
> Interviewer: So she gives you participation points?

Male 1: Yeah. (FGT1, pp. 197-198)

The researcher found during focus group interviews that students also felt that the teacher had strong expectations for student participation for other reasons, something the researcher was not aware of during observations:

> Female 2: When she calls on me I feel like she just wants me to talk because like I had her a year ago and she hated me—she didn't like me very much because I didn't participate and she always wanted me to participate.
> Interviewer: Did she tell you she didn't like you?
> Female 2: No—she told me that she liked me but she told me she didn't like me how the way [sic] I am not participating.
> Interviewer: What do you mean by how the way you are?
> Female 2: Interacting.
> Interviewer: Oh! Were you having interactions with your classmates that bothered Mrs. Jensen?
> Female 2: No but I think I know what she was talking about because the way I mostly don't talk during when we are doing these groups [sic] things. I just sit there and be quiet.
> Interviewer: But you get the impression she wants you to speak up more?
> Female 2: Yes.
> Interviewer: Does she ever say to you in front of the class, "I want you to speak up more?"
> Female 2: No. She tells me privately. (FGT2, pp. 219-220)

Other students appeared to recognize and comment during focus groups that the teacher's goal was to have students participate who did not usually do so:

> Interviewer: Are there times Female 3 when you raised your hand and she didn't call on you but you wanted her to?
> Female 3: Yep.
> Interviewer: So what usually happens then?
> Female 3: So I don't usually mind because she will call on a student who doesn't participate a lot. (FGT2, p. 222)

Students also commented that the teacher would call on students to keep them focused:

> Interviewer: Have you noticed who it is she [teacher] calls on?
> Female 4: Well it is usually people like [names one] and other people who are off task and not paying attention because she wants them to be able to learn and get with the flow. (FGT4, p. 268)

The researcher observed an additional and pervasive characteristic of teacher-student interactions during class questioning and discussion: students (frequently male students) often called out without being chosen, and this appeared to be all right with the teacher, as she didn't make any effort to change the behavior:

> Male 3: I don't know if it is competition, but sometimes you are just trying to get the answer out.
> Interviewer: Why are you trying to get the answer out?
> Male 3: 'Cause [sic] you know it.
> Male 4: And you want her to know that you know what you are talking about.
> Male 3: Eventually she will call on you.
> Male 1: Sometimes you are just thinking out loud and not even realizing it . . . or you are gazing off like you are not paying attention and you have to get back into it so she will like call on you.
> Interviewer: It sounds like she is someone you want to please in terms of answering questions.
> Male 1: Yeah. (FGT1, p. 204)

As a characteristic of teacher-student interactions during questioning, the researcher was interested who the teacher tends to call on during discussion:

> Male 2: I volunteer a lot but I don't really get called on a lot.
> Male 3: She calls on students throughout the class.
> Interviewer: So she is pretty even as to who she calls on? Have you noticed that too, Male 4? Do you think she is pretty even?
> Male 4: Yes.
> Interviewer: Is this something you have thought about because Male 2 popped in right away and said [she calls on] the smart kids?
> Male 2: Yeah. (FGT1, p. 207)

The researcher observed that the primary characteristics of teacher-student interactions when the teacher was questioning students about their learning was that the teacher would ask questions generally but then tell students to discuss the answers among themselves. She would ask questions but often ignore students who raised their hands to answer; she appeared to ignore students who called out. The teacher was willing to admit to the students when she herself didn't know the material, encouraged participation by

giving points to those who answered, and would frequently not respond positively to a student who gave a correct answer but would continue by asking another question of the class in general. Student comments during focus groups confirmed these observations. Students also added that they felt the teacher was fair about whom she called on most of the time and that she distributed her questions fairly among all students in the class.

Admonishment Behaviors

In the course of normal classroom activities, one clearly observable characteristic of the teacher's interactions with her students was the way in which she corrected student behavior errors. Such corrections were associated with either behavior in general in the classroom or behavior during instruction. The researcher noted that the interaction behaviors used by the teacher were infrequent, casual, and appeared to be more often directed at male students. The most obvious theme to emerge from this category was that teacher-student interactions to correct student behaviors were infrequent and often directed as male students

This latter observation is discussed in a subsequent section under gender differences in classroom interactions. This section focuses on the nature of any observable admonishment interactions exhibited by the teacher and the students' responses to them.

The researcher observed that many admonishment interactions between the teacher and the students were one-sided with little student response. Often they were designed to keep students on task: "Admonishes student [male] to be quiet as another student [female] is trying to work" (ROT, p. 169). "Follows up with a male to get his

work out and a pencil and, when he doesn't, says 'then I don't care' abruptly" (ROT, p. 169) or "Reprimands male but I am not sure what he was doing wrong" (ROT, p. 169).

Because the teacher was pregnant at the time of the researcher's observations, she was occasionally absent. Apparently there were difficulties (not observed by this researcher) between the students and the substitute that the teacher needed to address upon her return.

> Teacher now reviewed what happened with the sub using a low key demeanor and continued to reprimand the class for their off-task behavior in a low calm voice and then said, "Do you know what I am talking about?—[directed to a male student]. Yes?" but does not wait for a response from the student. (ROT, p. 171)
>
> [The teacher] continues to ask the class to be "cooperative with the sub" and to warn them about the next time she will be out "[to] behave . . . do not try to trick the sub" and asks for buy-in from the class. This is apparently after they all coughed while the substitute was present. (ROT, p. 176)

The researcher observed that these interactions were calm, no response from the students was encouraged or allowed, and that students listened in silence (ROT, p. 176). However, as the researcher continued to observe the class over 4 weeks, the teacher's tone with the students, when discussing substitute behavior, became more insistent and less friendly. "'If you look bad—I look bad because I am your regular teacher' then discussed proper substitute behavior" (ROT, p. 179).

At a later time the teacher again warned students with an even stronger tone that she will be out for 2 days, and "I hope I don't have to put up with this [poor behavior] again. If you don't like the sub—it's just too bad" (ROT, p. 180). The researcher observed what appeared to be a progressive level of fatigue and frustration with students who were not working while the substitute was present; hence, the teacher's possible change in tone when discussing their behavior with them.

The teacher would also often remind students to control their behaviors in terms of classroom noise level: “Noise level is getting higher” and the researcher observed that immediately the class settled down (ROT, p. 186). Sometimes the teacher would direct questions to students who were supposed to be working independently but who had gotten off task and had become noisy: “Teacher directs an inquiry to two male students who are noisy . . . ‘What did I say to do when you are done?’” (ROT, p. 189). Or to another student who is talking instead of working, “Don’t speak or you will lose points . . . good job staying silent . . . keep it up . . . where is your pen?” (ROT, p. 191).

Sometimes the teacher’s efforts to admonish behavior were done in a friendly and positive way and allowed for more interaction between her and the students: “Four males in the back near me are working well but becoming increasingly louder than others and start horsing around when the teacher appears to be not looking. Teacher eventually jokingly admonishes them and they laugh back with her” (ROT, p. 179). The teacher commented to the researcher as she passed by after this incident that that sometimes the students can be “rowdy.” But for the most part the researcher observed that admonishment behaviors were authoritative and allowed for very little student response.

In addition to admonishing the class or individual students who were noisy, the teacher would use her physical presence to interact with students in such a way as to keep them focused on their work as she moved around the room during seatwork.

> Stops at a male’s desk to correct him. (ROT, p. 173)
>
> Stops at another male’s desk to correct him and then reclarifies for the entire class based on male student not doing the work right. Pulls class back—interrupts herself to tell male to put book away. (ROT, p. 175)
>
> At one point the teacher said indirectly to a male student, “I hope [name] is prepared,” then makes a laughing threatening tone. A male student shouts out an

> answer and the teacher ignores him but tells the class they have 15 more minutes to work. As she continues to patrol the room she tells a high-achieving male to move his papers which are in the aisle. He apologizes to her and moves them. (ROT, p. 188)

Additional admonishing behaviors included asking students to get their pencils out (when they were not working), asking students where their work was (when they were not working), and asking students, "What did I say to do when you are done?" (ROT, p. 189). The researcher observed that often these comments and questions appeared to be rhetorical in nature since the students were not required to respond. Often they would either do what was asked silently or ignore the teacher. "Teacher asks male who is not doing work if he has it. He says no. She says 'Okay' and walks past him" (ROT, p. 190). Teacher later tells the researcher that this student usually does not have his homework. She appeared to have accepted this as normal and did not choose to say anything further. The researcher observed the student in question sucking on his pencil but not attempting to do any work after the teacher walked away.

The teacher did have some interactions with students who were not working however. On another occasion, "The teacher goes back to a female who had not done her homework and spends one-on-one time with her about why the work was not done" (ROT, p. 193).

Admonishment During Instruction

The teacher-student interactions described above focused on student behaviors that occurred during the general course of the day when students were working on assignments or behaving in general in the classroom. This section focuses on the specific interactions between the teacher and students during whole-class instruction and discussion when the teacher was correcting errors in student learning. The primary theme

to emerge from the researcher's observations was that interactions, when the teacher was correcting errors, were characterized by the teacher generally ignoring errors as a group or working with students one to one.

The researcher noted many instances of the teacher ignoring student comments during instruction. For example, she would ask a question and when students either raised their hands to answer or simply called out, if the answer was incorrect, the teacher would often not comment but continue to the next student until the correct answer was given: "Ignoring him she says, 'anyone else?'" (ROT, p. 164). Once a male student called out to the teacher "Didn't we already study this?" and the teacher appeared to again ignore the question (ROT, p. 182). The researcher was not sure if the teacher was simply trying to extinguish those types of comments so that no further interactions between them would take place or if she had a different reason for not admonishing them.

On other occasions if a student's answer was not what the teacher was looking for, the teacher's response to that student was more direct. For example, the teacher would say to them, "Where are you getting this from? I can't follow it." And then the female student reads the answer to her (ROT, p. 165). Sometimes the teacher would engage with a student or groups of students who were struggling with some aspect of the text and "help [them] with the vocabulary" (ROT, p. 167). If students were not paying attention to the whole-class lesson, the teacher would directly admonish them for either not learning or listening by commenting, "What did I just say to you?" (ROT, p. 167).

Some forms of reprimand, when students were not responding correctly during instruction, were casual and directed to the class as a whole: "Are you [the class] sure you don't have questions about this or are you just out of it today? . . . It's creepy." No

response to this question from the students was heard or appeared to be required. However, at other times when the discussion was livelier, the teacher directed students to "stop calling out" (ROT, p. 177).

Generally the researcher observed that there was not a great deal of negative interaction in the form of reprimands when students were learning. However, during focus groups, some students expressed a different view that contrasted with the researcher's observations.

> Interviewer: Were there any other situations where you went back and forth with the teacher about something you were learning?
> Male student: It only happened a couple of times.
> Interviewer: Can you tell me about that?
> Male student: She would usually win.
> Interviewer: She would win?
> Male student: Well sometimes there would be like . . . well in the context of an argument. . . . I thought this was what happened [referring to something they read in the textbook].
> Interviewer: Based on something you read or studied?
> Male student: Yeah
> Interviewer: So you would have a conversation with her but she would win?
> Male student: Yeah—like it would kind of be in the context of an argument like she would say it happened this way and you read it and maybe misinterpreted it and think it happened another way.
> Interviewer: Is it possible you think she could have misinterpreted it?
> Male student: Possible. (FG3, p. 242)

In this case the student did not feel ignored during this interaction, but indicated that he had had experiences with lengthy interactions with the teacher over content. Other students in the focus groups didn't express feeling ignored, but instead reported that when the teacher felt she wasn't getting the correct answer she would say, "I need more hands" (FG3, p. 263). Other students observed that during instruction, if students were not answering correctly, "she expands on the answers because you didn't complete it or something" (FGT1, p. 199). The researcher observed that most of the interactions during

group instruction where the teacher had to correct or guide students were minimal.

During focus groups, students related a few instances where she helped them one on one:

> Male: Like if you go up for questions like you were working on a project or something, she'll make us go through our books to find it and if you can't find it then she will tell us to come back, but she wouldn't normally tell us the answer.
> Interviewer: So she works with you to figure it out?
> Male: Yeah. (FGT 1, p. 201)

In response to a question from the researcher about how students know during class discussion, if they are answering correctly:

> Interviewer: How do you know during class discussion or when you are working with the teacher one on one if what you are doing is okay or not?
> Male 2: If she doesn't yell at you.
> Male 1: Or give you that look like [demonstrates a facial expression the teacher uses]. (FGT1, p. 199)

In this case the students referred to both verbal and nonverbal interactions from the teacher to let them know if they were working correctly. Other students were positive about their interactions with the teacher when they were working or contributing answers during class work:

> Interviewer: Do you worry about the teacher judging you?
> Female 6: No.
> Interviewer: Why don't you worry about the teacher judging you?
> Female 6: I don't [worry] because I know that if she judges—well if I get the answer wrong—she won't tell me what's right but she won't say like you are like not the smartest—like she doesn't compare us. (FGT2, p. 218)

> Female 3: I am uh not really worried about if it I get it wrong because she will just tell me.
> Interviewer: So you are like [Female 2]—you aren't worried or concerned?
> Female 3: No.
> Interviewer: That Mrs. Jensen would not make you feel bad if you had the wrong answer?
> Female3: No. (FGT2, p. 219)

Other focus group comments about interactions with the teacher when she is correcting their work:

> Interviewer: Have there been times when you have raised your hand and given the wrong answer? If so what happens then?
> Female 6: Yep—she will just tell me that isn't right and then she will pick on another person to see if they know it.
> Interviewer: So she doesn't correct it with you?
> Female 6: No—she just goes to a different person. (FGT2, p. 222)

The researcher concluded that the basic characteristics of teacher-student interactions during instruction when corrections were needed was that the teacher was casual, ignored wrong answers rather than reprimanding students or, if she communicated with students about their work, she was low key, positive, and helpful with them.

Encouragement Behaviors

The researcher observed interactions between the teacher and students that encouraged student learning. When the researcher observed the class for this study, she looked for instances of teacher praise. However, during the times the researcher observed, there were only a few occasions when students received direct praise or encouragement from the teacher. "Female student starts to speak and stops. Teacher encourages her to 'go ahead.'" On another occasion the teacher was engaged in follow-up questioning with two female students and says, "Sorry to interrupt—you are doing great." And then to the rest of the class, "Do you see what [student] is talking about?" as if to make an example out of a student who has given a correct answer (ROT, p. 165). During another class discussion, the teacher said simply, "Good job [student]—you are an excellent direction-follower" or "Good job [student]" to another student who answered a question (ROT, p. 168). The praise was always short and to the point in all instances. Sometimes teacher praise was to the class in general for doing a good job (ROT, p. 167). Therefore the primary theme that appeared in this category was that teacher-student

interactions to encourage students and praise individual students were infrequent, and usually general to the class with only a few exceptions.

The researcher observed several instances of one-to-one encouragement when students were working in groups: "Teacher comes to group near me where one of the boys is too loud. She encourages the female in the group to 'jump in here' to apparently encourage participation" (ROT, p. 176). There were instances where the teacher used grades to encourage students to work or participate. "Those of you who don't participate should, since it is part of your grade" (ROT, p. 182). This type of encouragement was not specific to any one student about his/her work, but appeared to be more of a general statement to get the class motivated to do the assignment.

The teacher confided to the researcher her frustration trying to encourage some students to work. She gave the example of a female with high test scores who had skipped a grade but rarely does her work. The teacher told the researcher that the student never sees her father and that her mother has no problem with the student's lack of good grades. The teacher said that while she recognizes the student is bright, but disorganized, she is not able to make any progress with her (ROT, p. 191).

There was an additional incident of the teacher telling a male student that even though she didn't understand the questions he was asking her, she would take time to look at his paper separately. The researcher saw this interaction as encouragement rather than criticism (ROT, p. 192).

During focus group interviews, some students commented on ways in which the teacher encouraged them to do well in her class:

> Male 1: She tries to help you. If you need help with the grade she will tell you to do something about your missing assignments.

> Interviewer: Okay—so she is helpful to you?
> Male 2: [joining in] Yeah.
> Male 4: She understands like if you were safe or something or if there is a big project in science . . . she will give you an extra day. (ROT, p. 200)

Other students discussed ways they felt the teacher encourages them in a way that appears to protect their feelings:

> Male 3: Like if you give an answer that is way wrong, she won't like make fun of you.
> Interviewer: Okay—she will be like . . .
> Male 3: No—what are you looking for? [as an attempt to help him]. (FGT3, p. 245)

In terms of praise, students shared the way in which they would be praised even if it appeared to the researcher to be indirect:

> Interviewer: How did your interactions work with her? [teacher]
> Female 4: I think she usually liked it—when it was one of those days when no one understood it and then when I finally got it.
> Interviewer: [laughs] She's relieved?
> Female 4: [laughs too] Yeah.
> Interviewer: How did you know that she liked it? Anything you can tell me? Anything she said or did?
> Female 4: Well she would sometimes be like "yes—finally!" (FGT4, p. 268)

> Female 2: Well I always felt like if we tried to say things we weren't sure about she kind of like hummed a song or something.
> Interviewer: So you thought she supported you. Anything you want to add? (FGT3, p. 269)

> Interviewer: So if I asked you to give me an adjective . . . to describe your interactions with Ms. Jensen not just during class but anytime you ask about a grade or an assignment . . . what kind of adjective would you say?
> Female 2: Well I guess positive.
> Interviewer: Positive? Okay.
> Female 2: She is always like helpful like if you were wondering something she would tell you where to look or help you figure it out.
> Female 4: I would have to say that she was more cordial. Like if I really didn't understand she is patient with me and she helps me figure it out and doesn't get mad at all. (FGT4, p. 270)

The researcher concluded that students generally appeared to feel supported in their efforts to learn or respond to questions in this class. The majority of the interactions between the teacher and the student were low key and positive based on observation and what the students reported.

Non-verbal Interactions

The last finding was a behavior the researcher did not observe but was raised in every focus group. During focus groups, students referred repeatedly to a non-verbal behavior exhibited by the teacher that students termed "the look" (FGT1, 2, 3, & 4). It appeared to be a non-verbal interaction used by the teacher to control behavior, during class work, and general class discussions. This non-verbal cue appeared to have a pervasive and negative effect on students. The researcher found student descriptions of this behavior and students reactions to it, to be a very clear theme in this category. The first focus group that reported the look to the researcher consisted of five male students who were average to below average achievers. The researcher believes the achievement level of these students may be related to their experiences reported here:

The first focus group that reported this to the researcher consisted of five male students who were average to below average achievers based on STAR test scores and grades as reported by the teacher. The researcher believes their achievement level may be related to their experiences here.

> Interviewer: How do you know during class discussion or when you are working with the teacher if what you are dong is okay or not?
> Male 2: If she doesn't yell at you.
> Male 1: Or give you that look [he demonstrates a facial expression the researcher interpreted as negative].
> Male 3: Like if you are chewing gum or something or talking she just gives you the look.
> Male 4: Or a warning.

> Male 3: If you keep doing it then . . . she'll say, "Are you still chewing gum after I gave you the look?"
> Others laugh and agree.
> Interviewer: Does she know the kind of look she gives you?
> Male 2: [Demonstrates the "look"] (FGT1, p. 201)

A second focus group of females that consisted of high and average achievers also commented on this behavior when asked about why they do or do not participate in class.

> Interviewer to Female 2: I am just trying to figure out if there is anything in this history class that keeps you from participating . . . that could be changed.
> Female 2: It's not my classmates.
> Interviewer: It's not your classmates?
> Female 2: No.
> Interviewer: It's just that you are shy?
> Female 2: No. I am not shy. I talk loud in my classes.
> Interviewer: Oh, you do? So . . . what in this class is keeping you from talking?
> Female 2: Mrs. Jensen.
> Interviewer: Oh okay.
> Female: She gives me this weird look every time I want to participate.
> Interviewer [Drawing on information from the previous focus group]: The Look?
> Female 2: Yeah.
> Interviewer: So when you get the look you feel a little . . .
> Female 2: Like I don't want to say anything.
> Interviewer: Okay . . . so what does that look, look like?
> Female 2: Kind of serious.
> [All members of focus group laugh.]
> Interviewer: Can you do it?
> Female 4: It's a really funny look.
> Interviewer: Well the boys mentioned the look too . . . "the look" . . . It's funny. (FGT2, pp. 230-231)

A focus group of middle achieving boys also referred to "the look."

> Interviewer: How does that make you feel when you know you have your hand up and you have the answer but she won't call on you?
> Male (unidentified voice): It's kinda [*sic*] like you have the urge to say it out loud, but you don't or she will get mad at you.
> Interviewer: If she gets mad at you—what does that look like—when she is mad at you?
> Male 3: She gives you the look.
> Interviewer: She gives you the look? What does "the look" look like . . . can you tell me? Male 4, what does it look like?
> Male 4: [Makes unintelligible comment.]
> Interviewer: Does she stare at you?

> Male 4: No.
> Interviewer: Not a friendly look?
> Male 4: Yeah.
> Interviewer: An unfriendly look. Okay . . . she doesn't have to say anything; she just gives you the look?
> [They agree.]
> Interviewer: Did she tell you in the beginning of the school year . . . when I give you the look, watch out or something?
> Male [unidentified voice]: No. (FGT3, pp. 243-244)

The last group of high-achieving females also discussed "the look" but the researcher noted they did not emphasize it to the degree the previous groups had. The researcher guessed that maybe this was due to the fact that these students are good students overall and the teacher had less reason to control with any kind of negative body language.

> Interviewer: How would you know when she [teacher] was mad [at a student]?
> Female 2: She would give you "the look."
> Interviewer [laughing]: Everybody tells me that.
> Female 2: The look is evil like "I want to murderize [*sic*] you."
> Interviewer: Oh . . . okay.
> Female 2: Just like you are not paying attention and you just continue doing that [not paying attention].
> Interviewer: During the school year does she say to you, "If you guys are acting out I am going to give you the look?"
> Female 2: No . . . but it is just kind of an unspoken thing that everyone knows . . . that a lot of teachers . . . that if you keep doing something you get . . . the look, and everyone is like "mmmm."
> Interviewer: Well okay. That is funny because everyone has brought "the look" up so I gotta [*sic*] call Mrs. Jensen and ask her about "the look." (FGT4, pp. 269-270)

Later, in the same group, the issue of "the look" arose again:

> Interviewer: So what happens if someone calls out in this class . . . what happens. Let's start with you Female 4.
> Female 4: So [teacher] would definitely for sure give you the look.
> Interviewer: [laughs]
> Female 4: Yes and she would give signals like through her eyes and body language [that] it's okay if you just talk out and then sometimes when she is asking you to raise your hands she like gets mad at you if you don't . . . do that.
> Interviewer: When she gets mad what does that look like?

> Female 4: Well . . .
> Interviewer: Does she raise her voice and scream and yell?
> Female 4: Yeah—she kind of raises her voice a little land then she gives you the look.
> Interviewer: The look . . . but the look does it . . . right?
> Female 4: Yeah. (FGT4, pp. 271-272)

The researcher was interested in the fact that this last group of students had observed and was aware of "the look" but had not experienced it personally. This may have been due to the fact that these students were high-achieving females who did well in the class and did their work. The researcher inferred that this may mean that the teacher did not need to use negative body language to get them to participate, work, or be motivated. This group and one other also referred to other forms of body language used by the teacher when the students were learning or behaving well.

> Interviewer: How would you describe your interactions with her [teacher] either in class discussion or other times?
> Male 2: She is always nice about it.
> Interviewer: Okay Male 4, what about you?
> Male 4: Yeah.
> Interviewer: Male 5?
> Male 4: Yeah—she is pretty nice about it.
> Interviewer: What does it look like when the teacher is nice about something?
> Male 5: She smiles.
> Male 4: Yeah she smiles.
> Interviewer: Nods her head? Or just smiles?
> Male 2: Just smiles and nods.
> Interviewer: Okay . . . have any of you ever had a situation when she did not smile and nod when you went to talk to her? Yes? Okay tell me about it.
> Male 2: Well occasionally I crack jokes and she doesn't like that so . . . if she . . .
> Interviewer [interrupting him]: Are you cracking them by calling out?
> Male 2: [No response.] (FGT3, pp. 244-245)

And then this group focused back again on what they termed "the look" after they were describing other types of nonverbal cues from the teacher.

> Male 2: Like when we are doing something we might go off the subject with something humorous and then she might not like that if she was trying to teach something . . . then I would get "the look."

> Interviewer: So you get the look . . . even close up face to face you get the look?
> Male 2: No usually she just stands behind the overhead and then she walks down the aisles while you are taking a test. (FGT3, p. 245)

> Interviewer: How did you know she liked it [a correct answer]. Anything you can tell me she said or did?
> Female 4: Well she would sometimes be like, "Yes . . . finally!"
> Interviewer: [laughs] You mean she might smile or nod her head?
> Female 4: Yeah. (FGT4, p. 269)

The researcher concluded that the teacher in this study used frequent and significant facial expressions to send signals to students about their behavior or progress. Students seemed focused on "the look" as the most frequent and significant form of admonishment and the fact that the teacher would occasionally smile and nod when students are responding appropriately. The researcher did not observe "the look" herself, but did note smiling and nodding as a part of daily routine although not documented. The researcher began to wonder if "the look" was not apparent on the days the researcher observed or that as an adult, the researcher wasn't as sensitive to it as the students were.

Summary

This section of Chapter IV addressed observable characteristics of teacher-student interactions in a seventh-grade classroom. The researcher noted eight distinct interaction behaviors in that classroom as shown in Table 2: classroom tone, classroom management, instructional management, questioning, admonishment behaviors, admonishment during instruction, encouragement behaviors, and body language.

The researcher realized there was a possible overlap of behaviors that could be categorized or described in more than one way. However, the most significant finding was the impact of teacher nonverbal body language on students since this was mentioned by every focus group and corroborated by all students interviewed. It appeared to the

researcher that this characteristic was definitely observed and experienced by the students and was significant enough for them describe it repeatedly to the researcher.

Observable Gender Differences in Teacher-Student Interactions

During observations in this seventh-grade classroom, the researcher observed two themes related to gender differentiation. The first theme was the differential treatment of males and females when the teacher asked for help around the classroom. The second theme related to student call-outs. During focus group interviews, student comments and observations about how they were treated by the teacher during classroom interactions (male or female) provided insight for the researcher, but did not always support what the researcher observed. These are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Observed Types of Gender-Differentiated Behaviors

Theme	Types
Gender-differentiated interactions between student and teacher during general classroom activities	Clerical, errands directed toward females Mechanical tasks given to males Casual conversations more common with male students
Gender-differentiated behaviors during classroom discourse	Predominance of call-outs from male students

Gender-Differentiated Interactions Between Student and Teacher During General Classroom Activities

The researcher observed that when the teacher needed an errand or task completed that was not academically relevant, she selected females for simple clerical tasks, such as

making copies and getting supplies from cabinets. However she selected males for tasks that might require strength and mechanical ability, such as opening windows, moving furniture around, and operating musical equipment. The researcher observed repeated instances of these types of teacher-student interactions appearing to be gender based. The researcher drew no conclusions except to make the observation and the teacher was not asked about it.

The researcher also observed that the teacher appeared to spend more time in casual conversation with male students than females. During times when students were working independently or in groups, and the teacher would circulate, the researcher observed many instances like this:

> Teacher jokingly admonishes four male students; Teacher discusses hiking boots for upcoming Yosemite Trip with three males; Teacher is joking with a low achieving male asking him if he'd ever seen a clown car when all these people come out of it. (ROT, pp. 172, 179, & 194)

The researcher observed only one instance where the teacher engaged females in a similar type of casual conversation, although it did not involve humor as it had with the males:

> Teacher engages two females about shopping trips with back and forth conversation and then asks one specifically about her eye color. The teacher then follows up quickly with two males about what they did this past weekend. (ROT, p. 171)

During normal classroom discourse when the teacher was instructing and requiring feedback from students, it appeared that direct questions were fairly evenly divided between both genders when initiated by the teacher and not interrupted by student call-outs.

> Teacher calls on male, he answers, and she says "good connection." Female student starts to speak but stops. Teacher then encourages her to go ahead so

> female student continues and teacher acknowledges her with "yes, yes." (ROT, p. 164)
>
> Another common example:
>
> Teacher asks, "What's the first thing?" [directed to a male student]. A female responds. The teacher ignores her and says, "Then what?" to same male again. Female responds instead. Teacher again asks same male "Then what?" Finally, male responds. Teacher then turns to female who was responding and helps her with the vocabulary. (ROT, p. 167)

The teacher appeared to keep other interactions during class discussion evenly balanced among male and female students. If she called on or was detained by a student of one gender, she would call on a student of a different gender the next time. The researcher also observed that instances of teacher-student interactions, where the teacher took extra time to explain something or extend the discussion, occurred fairly evenly between both genders.

There were also many instances of the teacher giving extended feedback to enhance learning to students of both genders: "Male student continues to question her (teacher), and she says 'yes' and gives a long response and asks several follow-up questions" (ROT, p. 165). Or "Teacher asks a question of female and they go back and forth" (ROT, p. 173).

The teacher appeared to be cognizant of trying to be fair to students of both genders. She would frequently tell students to sit "boy-girl-boy-girl" and the researcher once heard students mumbling to each other that it always has to be "boy-girl-boy-girl" (ROT, p. 168). During partner work or group work, the teacher paired students up so each pair consisted of one female and one male student. "Students are moving around the room in male/female partners" (ROT, p. 171). The researcher concluded that in most, but

not all, instances when the teacher had control over the learning situation, she was careful to treat both genders fairly. However, there was one exception.

Gender-Differentiated Behaviors During Classroom Discourse

The last and most pervasive observation the researcher made in relationship to teacher-student interactions and gender was in the area of student call-outs. A call-out is a behavior exhibited by students where they call out answers or make comments during class discussion without first being acknowledged by the teacher. The researcher in this study observed a large number of call-outs during class discussion, and all students commented on them during focus groups. The researcher observed that in this classroom, call-outs in response to teacher questions appeared to be greater in number for male students than female students. This researcher also observed the teacher responding two ways to call-outs when they occurred: asking students of either gender to raise their hands, or ignoring the call-out completely:

> Male calls out, teacher ignores the call-out but follows up with class [comment]. Teacher is asking questions, males call-out. Teacher asks what "mystical" means, males call-out but she does not acknowledge them. (ROT, p. 171)

> Teacher reviews vocabulary—a male calls out . . . "Didn't we already study this?" Teacher ignores the remark. (ROT, p. 182)

The researcher noted fewer instances of female students calling out than males and that they were also ignored in most instances. Occasionally the teacher responded indirectly to a female call-out:

> Female calls out. Teacher responds with "Tell your partner what (female) just said." In this case the teacher did not respond to the student directly but used the answer provided during the call-out to continue class discussion. (ROT, p. 166)

The researcher also observed that when male students called out to the teacher during class, if they were not acknowledged, they would often persist in getting an

answer to their question even if ignored by the teacher at first. However, females would tend to not persist nor repeat the call-out.

> Teacher—rotates [around class]—stops at male desk—male calls out to her—they have a social conversation back and forth about being duct taped to a well. Male—calls out—back and forth [with teacher] takes some issue with her. Another male keeps at it also. (ROT, p. 174)

These were the primary gender differences in teacher-student interactions observed by the researcher: males called out more than females, and the teacher responded to them only slightly more thoroughly than to females who called out.

The researcher wanted student perspectives on what she had observed about call-outs, so during focus group interviews, students were specifically asked, "What happens if someone calls out in this class?" The first group, five male students, responded this way acknowledging the call-outs and giving various reasons for them:

> Interviewer: During a discussion and she [teacher] throws out a question—tell me what happens if students call-out without raising their hands?
> Male 1: She ignores it.
> Male 2: Sometimes.
> Male 3: She gets pretty mad at you.
> Male 1: [Teacher] says, "Raise your hand."
> Male 3: Yeah.
> Interviewer: Has she ever said—to any of you—has she said when you have called out—for you to raise your hand?
> Male 2: Plenty of times.
> Interviewer: A couple of you but not all of you.
> Interviewer: How many of you with the five of you here have ever called our in class?
> Male 2: I have—I called out once.
> Chorus: I have.
> Interviewer: So four out of the five of you say you do call-out sometimes—do you know why you call-out?
> [They all talk at once—the answer is unintelligible on the tape.]
> Interviewer: So you say it is easier to get it out before you forget it?
> All: Yeah. (FGT1, p. 203)

> Male 3: I don't know if it is competition—you are just trying to get the answer out.

> Interviewer: Why are you trying to get the answer out?
> Male 3: ‘Cause you know it.
> Male 4: And you want her to know that you know what you are talking about.
> Male 3: Eventually she will call on you.
> Male 1: Sometimes you are thinking out loud and not even realizing it.
> Interviewer: So if you call-out you kind of figure that keeps her from calling on you when you are not really ready?
> Male 3: Um hmmm.
> Interviewer: Am I saying it right?
> Male 3: Yeah. (FGT2, p. 204)

These same male students raised other issues about call-outs aside from trying to get the answer out. They based their comments on their observations that “smarter kids” call-out more. The researcher did not have access to the test scores or grades of all students so this was not something she specifically observed:

> Interviewer: I did see a lot of incidents where kids were calling out—would you say it is always the same kids that call-out or different kids?
> Male 3: Same kids.
> Male 1: Same kids.
> Male 2: Same kids.
> Interviewer: And what kind of kids is it usually? Do you call-out Male 1?
> Male 1: I do.
> Interviewer: Male 2?
> Male 2: Yes.
> Male 3: Not too much—it’s the smarter kids.
> Interviewer: The smarter kids call-out?
> Male 2: Pretty much.
> Interviewer: How do you know they are smart?
> Male 3: [Ignores the question] some kids are shy sometimes so they don’t call-out.
> Interviewer: So shy smart ones don’t call-out but other smart ones do?
> Male 2: Female 1 does [This is a reference to a very bright female who the teacher told the researcher has skipped a grade and is knowledgeable but rarely does her work].
> Interviewer: What happens when she [Female 1] calls out? If you called out and she called out who is going to get called on?
> Male 2: She ignores it [meaning she would ignore Male 2].
> Interviewer: She will ignore the call-out? Did she train you the first week of school to raise your hands?
> [All shake their heads.]
> Interviewer: So you just know after all these years in school?
> [They all nod]. (FGT1, pp. 205-206)

When the researcher asked the same question, "What happens if someone calls out in this class?" the first focus group of females observed that certain males in the class called out a lot:

> Interviewer: When Mrs. Jensen asks you a question—there are always a few kids in most classes that call-out without raising their hands—do you have call-outs in your class?
> [General agreement heard.]
> Interviewer: Okay—a lot of call-outs so I am going to go around and start with.
> Female 1. So you call-out? Or who calls out?
> Female 1: Well—umm. I think like [names a male] calls out a lot.
> Interviewer: Would you all agree that you notice [same male] calling out a lot?
> [General agreement heard.]
> Female 1: And like [names another male]
> Interviewer: Okay.
> Female 1: Yeah.
> Interviewer: Do you all agree?
> [General agreement heard.]
> Interviewer: So you all agree as to who calls out?
> Female 2: Yeah.
> Interviewer: So what happens when they call-out?
> Female 1: She ignores them.
> Interviewer: She ignores them?
> Female 1: Yes.
> Interviewer: So she doesn't acknowledge them when they call-out?
> Female 1: Yes.
> Interviewer: Does she ever ask them not to call-out?
> [General agreement that she does.]
> Female 1: But they still kinda [*sic*] do it.
> Interviewer: So how do you feel about it when they call-out—how do you feel?
> Female 1: When they call-out? Ummm—I am kind of annoyed sometimes—'cause like someone [if a person] actually knows the answer but usually doesn't raise their hand so when they raise their hand they are like, "Oh I want to [answer]" because they . . . know the answer but if someone calls out it is like "Oh I knew that."
> Interviewer: And so they call-out and you are thinking "darn," I had that answer but they called it out?
> Female 1: Yes. (FGT2, pp. 224-225)

The females in this group continued to express frustration over call-outs by other students, particularly the males referred to by Female 1.

> Interviewer: How about you Female 6? When the boys or anyone else is calling out like Male 1 and Male 2.
> Female 6: I really kind of feel annoyed by that because it is kind of—like me. I don't really raise my hand that often so if I really know it and someone calls it out it is like [sighs] 'cause they just ruined it and I just wanted to speak out for once.
> Interviewer: So when they ruin it does Mrs. Jensen say anything about it?
> Female 6: Yeah well sometimes she'll . . . stop the entire class and give us a little lecture about it because you shouldn't be calling out but people do it anyways.
> Interviewer: Well you mentioned Male 1 and Male 2—are there any girls that call-out?
> Female 6: Not really—not that I know.
> Interviewer: So it is the boys that call-out?
> [General agreement] (FGT2, pp. 225-226)

These females also admitted that occasionally females called out also. They mentioned two specific female students who call-out also, which supported the observations made by the researcher that, while more males may engage in more call-outs, there were some females in the class who did so also. The students in the focus groups at times appeared to have trouble being clear about whether it was the gender or personality of the student that determined whether they called out or not. When asked who called out a lot in class, they responded:

> Female 4: Sometimes [female] does and [female] [naming two females]
> Female 2: She [second female referenced] yells out a lot.
> General agreement.
> Interviewer: [second female referenced] yells out a lot?
> Female 2: Yes.
> Interviewer: What about you during calls-outs. Do you notice that it is [same males referenced above] and [same female referenced above] that are calling out?
> Female 3: Yes—they do call-out a lot but not really like [refers to new female]—she might call-out once in a while, but not a lot. If someone calls out once or twice or maybe a few times she [teacher] will usually be okay with it, but if they keep doing it, she will be like, "Stop calling out," and then they will usually stop.
> Interviewer: Okay . . . so why do you think these kids call-out . . . and not raise their hands?
> Female 3: Maybe they can't like wait—or hold on
> Interviewer: Okay—what about you [Female 2] —what do you have to say—you already said a little bit. Do you notice [males referenced above] calling out?

> Female 2: Well it's [she references the two males and the two females already mentioned]. I can't remember—yes and sometimes [new male]—sometimes he calls out, and he always makes jokes and everyone laughs.
> Interviewer: Okay so he's a clown [laughing].
> Female 2: Yes he's a clown. (FGT2, pp. 226-227)

At this point the researcher decided to seek students' opinions about what type of student they thought was most likely to be called on in this class.

> Interviewer: All right [refers to question #5)—so if Ms. Jensen throws out a question and students start raising their hands, which student is she the most likely to call on do you think . . . anybody . . . Female 4?
> Female 4: Of the students who call-out a lot? Well—probably [names a new male].
> Interviewer: So if [new referenced male] raised his hand and four girls raised their hands, who do you think she would call on?
> Female 4: Girls . . .
> Interviewer: Oh [female referenced above and male referenced above]?
> [No response.]
> Interviewer: Okay . . . so when you are sitting in the class and she [teacher] asks questions and you want to get your hand up, what do you think are your chances of getting called on?
> Female 4: Well it kinda [*sic*] depends who else has their hand up [not differentiating whether it is a male or female]. (FGT2, pp. 225-226)

One focus group of females briefly discussed their observations about call-outs, but had less to report than the first two groups. One student commented on the teacher's response to call-outs among students during discussion as being physical as well as verbal:

> Female 1: Well . . . if you call out while she is talking she might move your seat to somewhere else or have a talk with you
> Interviewer: Do you call out very often?
> Female 1: [Shakes her head.] (FGT4, p. 272)

Later in the same discussion this same female expressed frustration at not being called on and again referred to the teacher moving students who continued to talk among themselves but not those who call out:

> Female 1: Sometimes I get upset because she just won't call on me . . . I just give up and then sometimes if its not an open discussion and she gets mad . . . she moves you—like she only moves you if you are talking to your neighbor except she doesn't move you if you are talking in the discussion she just calls on someone else. (FGT4, p. 272)

As the discussion about call-outs continued, this last focus group became more animated and directed its focus to the physical location of students who call-out to get attention and the teacher's response to them:

> Interviewer: Think about the classroom for a minute—are there certain kids in the class that tend to call out more than others?
> Female 1: Me.
> Interviewer: You . . . are there others? [Female 2 is nodding her head.]
> Female 2: Like sometimes people in the back.
> Interviewer: What kind of people are sitting in the back?
> Female 2: I am not sure.
> Interviewer: You are not sure?
> Female 2: Usually it's mostly like the louder people. (FGT4, pp. 272-273)

The researcher continued questioning students' assertion that physical location in the classroom played a role in who called out more than gender:

> Interviewer: If several students have their hands up—say there are five students with their hands up, which students usually get called on—you have already told me the kids in the back—is that always true?
> Female 1: Well it's normally a few people like if there is [*sic*] a couple of people who always raise their hands and some who rarely raise their hands . . . at the side.
> Interviewer: Not front and center?
> Female 1: No not front and center but the outside rows . . . especially toward the back because if you are in the front and center you are in the teacher's view more. (FGT4, p. 275)

In response to those comments, the researcher followed up on another aspect of which students call-out: louder students or students perceived to be smarter. This group focused more on students who they felt wanted attention within the classroom for whatever reason; they did not explain their reasons except they commented that the majority of them were male students:

Interviewer: Uh huh—not necessarily smarter people just louder?
Female 2: Not necessarily calling out the answers but calling out to their friends or something like disturbing the class or something.
Interviewer: Like showing off? Anyone come to mind—any particular student?
Female 2: Yeah.
Interviewer: Can you tell me if it is a particular student? Can you tell me if it is a male or female?
Unidentified female voice: It's a male.
All members of the focus group: Yes it's a male.
Interviewer: Is it one person you are thinking of or several?
Unidentified female: It is a group of people.
[Everyone is heard agreeing]
Interviewer: And they are all male?
[Laughing around table . . .]
Female 3: Sometimes the quiet people get it but they don't really participate.
Interviewer: But if they have their hands up—like a quiet person and a noisy person both have their hands up—who is she most likely to call on?
Female 1: A quiet person.
Interviewer: Let me ask Female 2.
Female 2: A quiet person because they rarely talk. (FGT4, p. 273-274)

The researcher wanted to find out how these female students felt about students, particularly males, calling out even when these female students felt it was obvious they didn't know the answers:

Interviewer: So would it be fair to say that the kids that call out [the most] are the boys in the class?
Female 1: Yeah I think . . .
Interviewer: Do they know the answer?
All: No.
Interviewer: But they are calling out? I am glad you raised that Female 1 because when they do that how do you feel about it?
Unidentified female voice: Most of the time they are . . . trying to get attention and they are trying to draw more attention to themselves.
Female 2: And make other people laugh.
Interviewer: Like be the class clown?
Female 4: One time Mrs. Jensen was asking a question about the King of Korea because it was like one of those days when we were talking about random stuff.
Interviewer: Uh huh.
Female 4: And then one guy in our class was like "Ooh ooh, I know the answer, pick me," and she [the teacher] was like, "Yes?" and he was like, "Charlemagne!" and she [Female 4] laughs.
Interviewer: So it was just a name he wanted to get out there? So does it upset you when they are calling out—do you feel like you don't care, do you feel annoyed?

> Female 4: Sometimes it is just pretty funny—the answers they give.
> Interviewer: So you just sit back and watch?
> Female 2: Like toward the end [last] year it was funny but now it is getting old.
> Interviewer: Yeah okay so it gets old after a while.
> Female 3: It kind of gets predictable the stuff they pick [to say]. (FGT4, pp. 274-275)

At the end of this section on call-outs, the researcher looked for a way to summarize these females' views on male call-outs versus females. Their answers, after all of their prior comments, appeared to contradict what the researcher had observed and what earlier focus groups had stated:

> Interviewer: If a boy has his hand up and a girl has her hand up—who is she more likely to call on?
> Female 1: I don't think it makes any difference.
> Female 4: I don't think so either. (FGT4, p. 276)

Even though the researcher had observed male domination of classroom call-outs these last student comments did not confirm this.

Teacher-Student Interactions and Student Self-Efficacy Beliefs

The third research question addressed teacher-student interactions and how they might affect a student's feelings of self-efficacy in the classroom. This researcher found that classroom observations were not useful in determining a student's beliefs about his or her ability to perform a task well. The researcher also found that focus group interviews did not always provide clear information about how students viewed their own self-efficacy as they related to their interactions with their teacher. During focus groups, the researcher asked questions designed to elicit students' feelings of self-efficacy and how those might relate to their interaction experiences with the teacher. The researcher found that students often had difficulty identifying feelings of self-efficacy related to their ability to be successful students. The researcher also found that most students could

not connect those experiences to interactions with their teacher because student responses were often not directly related to the intent of the questions but were vague or off-topic. Sample question and response types are shown in table 4. Discussion of each question and findings related to it follow.

Table 4

Focus Group Questions about Self-Efficacy and Sample Student Responses

Question	Representative Sample Response
1. How confident are you about raising your hand to answer questions in this classroom?	"…I know that she (teacher) won't have the class make fun of you or something…" (FGT1, p.8.)
2. Are you learning anything in this classroom? Is it easy or hard? Explain	"The tests are hard – they are random and challenging…every week she gives us a test." (FGT2, p.8.)
3. If you don't understand something in this classroom, what do you do?	(Students said they preferred to ask another student) "It's more comfy [sic] talking to someone else than the teacher." (FGT2, p.19.)
4. How do you feel about yourself as a student in this classroom? Do you feel successful or unsuccessful? Please explain.	"I feel like I am a really pretty good student…because I am able to remember all this stuff." (FGT4, p.23.)
5. Is there anything that happens in this classroom that makes you feel like you can do the work no matter what?	Male focus groups said they did not understand the question. "…as long as I pay attention I do okay."(FGT, p.11)
6. Is there anything that happens in this classroom that makes you feel like you are not capable of doing the work?	The first focus group reacted to this question in silence. Then one student said, "it depends on how hard you want to succeed in life." (FGT1, p12.)

Question 1: How confident are you about raising your hand to ask questions in this classroom?

Students were asked how confident they felt about raising their hand in the classroom. The question was designed to elicit students' feelings of self-efficacy in terms of how they viewed themselves as able to contribute correctly during classroom discussions. The researcher found that students in all focus groups appeared to have

difficulty with the concept of academic ability. They focused instead on their own personal feelings about how they might be treated by other students if they volunteered to answer questions in class. The exception was one student who said she did not feel confident and attributed to that to nonverbal cues from the teacher:

Question 2: Are you learning anything in this classroom? Is it easy or hard?

The researcher was trying to find out what kinds of teacher-student interactions might make students feel that learning was easy or difficult in this class. The researcher found that students were not clearly able to tell the researcher if they thought they were actually learning. They focused more on her instructional methods; specifically her tests. Many students told about times when they failed tests and were upset and didn't understand the questions. The researcher observed one male student shrugging his shoulders during this discussion and then told her he didn't like the "stupid class."

Question 3: If you don't understand something in this class, what do you do?

When the researcher asked students what happens when they don't understand something in this class she found that students again gave answers that were off topic. For example, one student suddenly volunteered that he was autistic. Some students said they might ask the teacher, but would prefer to ask the person next to them. When the researcher asked who they would ask for help if they had a choice between asking the teacher and another student, some students said they preferred to ask another student. A few students mentioned the teacher working one-on-one with them if they needed help, but the researcher found this was not a common event in the classroom. The researcher also found that teacher-student interactions during help seeking appeared to be limited.

Question 4: How do you feel about yourself as a student in this classroom? What does a confident student look like in this classroom?"

The researcher was not certain she was getting a clear picture of student feelings of self-efficacy. Therefore, she tried to approach it in a different way. The researcher modified the next question based on Bandura's (1997) assertion that self-efficacy for a task may come from a student seeing other students being successful at the same task and then feeling he/she can do it also. Student answers up to this point seemed more related to their test results than any interaction they might have with a teacher. Therefore, the researcher added this follow up: "So what does a confident student look like in the classroom?" The researcher again found the answers were not related to the intent of her question. Many students gave answers they thought would seem funny: "They are triplets and they eat in class" (FGT3, p. 259), in reference to a group of siblings they did not like. One male student commented that they (confident students) wear weird clothes and have a big binder full of material and have really good posture (FGT3, p. 259). This student appeared to be very serious with his answer, but it was not what the researcher was looking for in terms of how a successful student might interact with the teacher.

Question 5: Is there anything that happens in this class that makes you feel you can do the work no matter what?

In looking for a connection between teacher-student interactions and self-efficacy the researcher asked students if there was anything that happens in the class that makes them feel like they can do the work. She found again that male students did not understand the question and answered randomly. One male said that as long as he pays attention and understands what he is learning, he could do any assignment (FGT1, p. 213). Another male student also said that sometimes he is just lazy and doesn't want to

do anything. Another male said he talks too much in class, and another one said he just dozes off.

When female focus groups were asked the same question, they answered in terms of the type of work that was assigned, but did not focus on their interactions with the teacher. They commented about how the teacher structures the assignments, how she uses the chapters in the book, and the amount of homework. One female commented, "Mrs. Jensen is very good at making me feel capable to do the work because she always gives me support and she would help me." But the researcher found that this student, like most, could not give specific examples of how Mrs. Jensen helped her.

Question 6: Is there anything that happens in this class that makes you feel like you can't do the work?

The last question was intended to examine how students might feel about teacher-student interaction behaviors that might make them feel less capable. The researcher found that students in general reacted to the question in silence. So the researcher followed up with: "Do you think you have control over your own learning or is it up to the teacher?" One male student replied, "It depends on how hard you want to succeed in life" (FGT1, p. 214). The researcher felt that this type of response did not address the question or what the researcher was looking for in terms of self-efficacy. Some students focused immediately on the type of work the teacher gives them that makes them feel less capable, but not on their interactions with her.

Summary of Findings

The researcher used classroom observation and focus groups to address the three research questions: the observable characteristics of teacher-student interactions in general, observable gender differences in teacher-student interactions, and teacher-

student interactions that might affect students' feelings of self-efficacy. The observations and focus groups produced data related to the first two research questions but not the third.

The researcher found a variety of observable characteristics of teacher-student interactions within the seventh-grade classroom she observed. Based on the observations of this researcher, teacher-student interactions were grouped into nine distinct categories of interactions. Each category appeared to play a different role in the relationship between the teacher and the students during instruction as well as general classroom management of behaviors.

Findings from the researcher's observations also determined that within this classroom, the teacher initiated gender differences in teacher-student interactions only when students were asked by the teacher to perform noncurricular tasks. The only other gender difference, which was initiated by students and to which the teacher was forced to respond, was in the area of student call-outs. More males than females appeared to call out during the classroom instructional periods, and the researcher observed that the teacher both responded to and ignored them at different times.

The third research question about self-efficacy proved problematic. The data were less clear and appeared to be less meaningful. An analysis of focus group interview transcripts suggests that students appeared to have trouble understanding what the researcher was asking and answered questions that had not been asked. The researcher also found the question stems did not elicit clear answers from students that would connect feelings of self-efficacy to their interactions with the teacher.

The researcher concluded that while classroom observation and focus groups were helpful in terms of characterizing teacher-student interactions for the first two research questions, they were less helpful in determining how students feel about their ability to be successful in a classroom environment. The researcher also found that student discussion during focus groups demonstrated that student perceptions of their academic ability were simplistic when compared with prevailing theory about self-efficacy. Most students could not clearly identify the factors that made them efficacious nor could they easily connect their feelings of ability to their interactions with their teacher.

CHAPTER V

The purpose of this study was to describe teacher-student interactions in a seventh-grade classroom, examine gender differences in the way the teacher interacted with students, and look for a possible link between those interactions and students' feelings of self-efficacy. Thirty-two students and their teacher were observed during instruction over 4 weeks. Twenty-two students agreed to participate in focus group interviews. In those interviews, students discussed their experiences during classroom interactions. This chapter contains a summary of findings, a discussion of each, limitations, conclusions, and implications for further research.

Summary of The Study

Teacher-student interactions have been studied by a wide variety of researchers: Brophy and Good (1970), Brophy et al. (1980), Jones and Wheatley (1990), Canada and Pringle (1995), Duffy et al. (2001). Researchers have reported similar patterns of interactions between students and teachers. Most have focused on interaction types related to student ability, the sex of the teacher, time of year, classroom discipline, and instructional questioning techniques. The data from this study resulted in identification of eight distinct themes of teacher-student interactions.

Researchers have also studied gender differences in classroom teacher interactions: Brophy and Good (1970), Jones and Wheatley (1990), Streitmatter (1997), Altermatt et al. (1998), Duffy et al. (2001), Patchen (2006), Beamon et al. (2006). The data from this study suggest that gender differences in teacher-student interactions were, in most instances, student generated and not initiated by the teacher.

Researchers have also studied self-efficacy in the classroom: Bandura (1997), Bandura et al. (1992), Pajares and Urdan (2006). This researcher used focus group interviews to determine how students felt about their own self-efficacy. The data from those interviews suggest that focus groups were not useful in determining how students felt about their self-efficacy in the classroom. The three research questions are:

1. What are the observable characteristics of teacher-student interactions in a seventh-grade classroom?

2. What are the observable differences between the ways males and females are treated during teacher-student interactions in the seventh-grade classroom?

3. How do those interactions affect the self-efficacy beliefs of male and female seventh-grade students?

In this section, the initial research questions are discussed as they relate to the findings of this study.

Discussion of Findings

Teacher-Student Interactions

The first research question focused on the observable characteristics of teacher-student interactions in a seventh grade classroom. To explore this question the researcher observed a teacher and her interactions with her seventh-grade students over a 4-week period during routine classroom instruction and activities. The researcher also conducted focus group interviews with students in the same class. Data were based on observation and focus group transcripts.

Data supported some of the characteristics of interactions that earlier researchers have found (Altermatt et al., 1998; Brophy & Good, 1970; Brophy et al., 1980; Jackson &

Lahaderne, 1966). Whereas this researcher identified eight distinct types of interaction themes, most researchers like Jackson and Lahaderne (1966), isolated interactions into three broad groups. These groups were: classroom managerial interactions, instructional and learning interactions, and interactions used for classroom control. In addition to those categories, Jackson and Lahaderne also reported that interaction patterns for all students were based on how they used their energies in different classrooms. Jackson and Lahaderne found that settings where teachers initiate the interactions have a stronger managerial emphasis than those where students initiate interactions because of their own instructional needs. Jackson and Lahaderne also concluded that the quality of life for any student at school depends on the type of classroom they find themselves in and what goes on there.

The researcher found it difficult to condense the eight interaction types she identified into the three broad categories defined by Jackson and Lahaderne (1966). Some interactions just did not seem to fall easily into one broad descriptive type. This researcher observed that the teacher had different ways of interacting with students depending upon her goal at any given moment. For example, if she was interacting with students between activities she was relaxed and casual, but when she was establishing routines she was authoritative. The researcher found that students adapted easily to these various types of interactions. The one exception was the non-verbal interaction students called “the look.” Most students reported this non-verbal interaction cue to be intimidating. This researcher also observed that even though the classroom observed for this study was organized for instruction, many interactions took place that were not

instructionally related such as casual conversation at the start of class or when students worked independently.

Jackson and Lahaderne (1966) also examined the communication patterns between teachers and students as the teacher moved around the classroom and based their three categories of interactions on those observations. Jackson and Lahaderne reported that, as a result of those interactions, at the end of the school year some students would be more familiar to the teacher than other students, even though they had all been in the same room for the same number of days. Since this researcher only observed this class in the early months of the school year, she could not confirm or expand on Jackson and Lahaderne's observations.

Classroom Tone

The researcher observed that the tone in the classroom was a result of the teacher's interactions with students during a variety of non-instructional activities. This finding expanded research done by Brophy and Good (1970). Brophy and Good observed that teacher expectations for student behaviors had a direct effect on students' response to the teacher. The researcher observed interactions during activities that included casual classroom conversation, how the teacher greeted students at the beginning of class and how she interacted with them when asking for help around the classroom. Like Brophy and Good the researcher observed that when the teacher expected to have positive experiences with students, students would respond to her in a positive manner.

Positive classroom tone in the classroom as well as between teacher and students was also established during those interactions. This explained the positive feelings most

students had for Ms. Jensen. Students were able to cite specific examples, during focus group interviews, of the teacher being “patient” and “polite” to support their feelings about her. Students also commented about the positive way the teacher talked to them in general, not just during learning. The researcher thought that the respect the teacher showed students during these interactions influenced how students felt about their teacher. The researcher found that the teacher-student observations of Brophy and Good (1970) was evident in this classroom also but went beyond the academic relationship between the teacher and student.

This researcher observed a variety of other interactions that established a positive classroom climate. These occurred when: materials and supplies were organized and disseminated, students were assigned seats for independent and group work, student book numbers were recorded, students were told how to enter and leave the classroom, as well as teacher expectations for students when they received any type of direction. The nature of the interactions between the teacher and students during those times was part of the positive feeling tone experienced by students in the classroom.

Classroom Management

Brophy et al. (1980) found that earlier in the year teachers had frequent private contacts with students. The observations for this researcher’s study took place during the beginning of the school year and confirmed Brophy and Good’s (1970) research about frequent personal contact with students by the teacher during those early months. Brophy and Good theorized that such teacher interaction behaviors were an attempt to “socialize students into expected patterns of behavior” (p. 374). Brophy and Good also suggested that the giving or withholding praise might be a classroom control mechanism. This

researcher agreed with Brophy and Good that teacher praise could, at times, be considered a managerial tool used by the teacher. In the class observed for this study, teacher praise was less frequent than might be expected. The teacher might praise the class as a whole if they were quiet or all got their homework in, but praise for any individual student was usually private and the researcher observed, did not appear to be frequent.

Beamon et al. (2006) also reported that among the different management strategies employed by teachers, the way teachers interacted with their students is a control mechanism used to manage large numbers of students at one time. Like Brophy and Good (1970), Beamon et al. saw personal conversations with students as a way of managing students. This researcher confirmed the work of Brophy and Good and Beamon et al. that the teacher's personal positive connections with students in this classroom enhanced her ability to control the learning environment by establishing a positive rapport with her students.

Instructional Management

In addition, to instructional interactions identified by Jackson and Lahaderne (1966) and Brophy and Good (1970), this researcher noted additional interaction themes, such as how the teacher corrected student errors during instruction. The researcher observed that the teacher would circulate around the room as students were working and privately correct their work as she engaged in discussions with them. This type of teacher-student interaction expanded the research of Jackson and Lahaderne, Brophy and Good, Beamon et al. (2006), and Majoribanks (2006) because it examined more closely the type of personal interactions the teacher used to help students learn. During focus

group interviews, students commented that they felt they could always get individual help from the teacher if they didn't understand the assignments. The teacher in this study appeared to prefer giving students help individually, rather than during general class discussions. Her reasons were not given but the researcher speculated that she might have felt student errors were less public if handled one on one.

Majoribanks (2006) examined the relationship between students' cognitive perceptions of their learning environment and their interactions with their teacher. Majoribanks found that the more structured the interactions, the more students felt cognitively able to participate in learning. This means that the teacher would create a structured instructional environment within which to interact with students rather than one that was unpredictable. The teacher in this study interacted with her students to prepare them to learn by asking them to prepare their desks and materials, and would follow up with any student who did not seem to be focused. This researcher confirmed Marjoribanks' findings since the students in this study commented during focus groups that they felt their learning environment was pleasant and helpful. The way in which the teacher consistently reminded students to begin assigned work was observed by the researcher to be positive and casual. During focus groups, students confirmed this when they said they felt respected by the teacher.

Admonishment Behaviors

Researchers who have studied teacher student interactions when students behave inappropriately have not specifically addressed teacher interaction style in relationship to admonishment behaviors (Hughes, 1973; Patchen, 2006; Ryan et al., 1998; Whitehouse, 2002). This researcher observed that this teacher's admonishment interactions with

students actually had a positive affect on their feelings about her, despite the potential that always exists for negative reactions when students are being admonished or corrected. The researcher concluded that this was because this teacher rarely admonished a student publicly. She admonished the class as a whole, for example, in the case of their poor behavior when a substitute had been present. But if an individual needed admonishment for behavior, she dealt with that student privately. If an individual needed admonishment about their behavior during class discussion, the teacher would defer it until later or ignore the student completely. The positive comments given by students during focus groups supported this researcher's observations that students felt positively about their admonishment interactions with the teacher. Therefore, this researcher's study expanded the work of other researchers on admonishment during classroom activities since most researchers did not examine how students feel when their behavior was corrected.

Admonishment Instruction

Researchers (Brophy & Good, 1970; Canada & Pringle, 1995; Caruthers, 2000; Jackson & Lahaderne, 1966) reported on general teacher behaviors during learning and instruction. They focused on how teachers interact with students during class discussions and whether or not those behaviors intimidated students. Many of their studies differentiated between admonishment toward males and females but not types of admonishment situations. This researcher observed that the teacher in this classroom did not admonish students for learning errors publicly. If a student gave an incorrect answer, the teacher would ignore him/her and move on to the next student. In this way, this study expanded the work of other researchers about admonishment during learning and

instruction but did not confirm previous research, since none of that research identified this specific type of teacher admonishment style described here. The researcher was curious about the teacher's tendency to ignore errors and address them later. The researcher wondered how students felt about being ignored. During focus groups one group raised the issue of raising their hand and not being called on, or the teacher moving past them when they gave an incorrect response. But they did not state how they felt about these teacher-student admonishment interactions one-way or the other. The researcher interpreted this to mean that students were used to those types of interactions and they had little effect on them.

Questioning Behaviors

The researcher observed teacher-student interactions when the teacher questioned students during whole class instruction. This researcher noted not only the types of questions asked, but also how those questions were asked. Researchers have focused primarily either on whether questions are directed to males or females or whether or not the questions are higher-order or basic-level thinking questions (Altermatt et al., 1998; Beamon et al.-2006; Egan & Perry, 2001; Wimer et al., 2001). Wimer et al. observed that higher-order questions were asked infrequently and that more than half of the students in any classroom were asked lower-order-type questions. This researcher's study supported Wimer et al.'s research because she did not observe many higher-order thinking questions being asked of any student in this class.

However, the researcher observed that the teacher's questioning strategies also did not fall into any category previously studied by any researcher. This related to the style of this teacher. For example, the teacher would often ask a general question to the

class as a whole, but not follow up if students did not answer. Instead the teacher would direct students to discuss possible answers among themselves. The teacher also did not later engage with students to see if their answers were correct. In this way, the teacher limited her interactions with students during classroom questioning and discussion. Researchers who have examined teacher-questioning styles have not reported this technique of "partner-share" response to teacher questions. Patchen (2006) noted that many teachers expect students to participate in classroom discussions, but few define what they expect, and students do not always know what the rules are. The researcher for this study confirmed the observation made by Patchen because the teacher in this class did not state any ground rules or guidelines to students about how to respond to questions other than asking them to share their ideas and answers with a partner.

Encouragement Behaviors

Researchers who have studied teacher-student interactions frequently report on the use of praise in the classroom (Beamon et al., 2006; Blythe & Traeger, 1983; Brophy & Good, 1970; Brophy et al, 1980; Bursik & Martin, 2006; Jackson & Lahaderne, 1966). They have also reported on the types of praise, the time of year teachers are most likely to give praise to students, and whether there were gender differences as to which students teachers praised. What emerged from this study was that encouragement interaction behaviors included instructional behaviors of all types. While the teacher in this study refrained from public admonishment, she encouraged students publicly during learning and instruction but refrained from being effusive with praise. The teacher praised students privately as she circulated around the room. This was an observation made by the researcher but rarely mentioned by students during focus groups. Students did

mention feeling good about the teacher and the class in general, but did not give examples of how they felt when praised or encouraged. This researcher's findings expanded those of earlier researchers about the use of praise and encouragement in the classroom. Brophy and Good and Bursik and Martin all reported consistent gender differences in praise with males receiving more than females. However this researcher did not observe that in this classroom. The teacher in this study, while conservative with her praise, appeared to apply it fairly evenly to students of both genders.

Non-Verbal Interactions

Caruthers (2000) reported that the nature of teacher-student interactions in the classroom could be complex. She also speculated that teachers engage in unconscious behaviors that may be damaging to students. Caruthers further stated that these behaviors might affect the future behavior and success of students. The non-verbal cues of the teacher may be one of those unconscious behaviors. Some researchers have commented on the non-verbal cues of students that might trigger responses in their teachers toward them (Wimer et al., 2001). However, none have discussed how specific types of teacher non-verbal behaviors may play a role in the interactions teachers have with their students or the subsequent effects on students or even identifying non-verbal cues as an interaction within itself. In addition, there has been little research about how non-verbal cues may send messages to students about their progress behaviorally or academically.

The data that supported this non-verbal interaction theme did not come from the researcher's observations, but appeared during focus group interviews. Every student who participated in a focus group discussed a facial expression made by the teacher that most students found noticeable if not threatening. Students characterized it by the term

"the look." The look was a facial expression the teacher used to control behavior without speaking. During focus groups, students occasionally commented on more common forms of the teacher's non-verbal cues: smiling, nodding, and frowning, but their primary comments during focus groups were on the look.

The researcher did not observe the look during her 4-week observation period. However, it appeared to be a significant type of nonverbal teacher-student interaction that had an intimidating effect on student comfort level. The researcher speculated that this student observation might be idiosyncratic to this classroom. Aside from this finding about non-verbal cues, the researcher's observations of teacher-student interactions generally supported and expanded on what other researchers have found. Non-verbal cues may have significant effects upon students and the teacher may not be aware of them. The researcher did not ask the teacher in this study about the look because she was concerned about creating negative bias on the part of the teacher toward the researcher and the study.

Educators might be able to expand their instructional techniques in the classroom by knowing how their own interactions with their students affect their students' learning. It was clear in the classroom observed that the positive culture and feeling tone, engendered by the teacher, created respect for her and a positive attitude of students toward her and their learning. Implications for educators could easily relate to strategies for helping teachers manage classrooms to engender this type of positive feeling tone.

Educators might also benefit from research knowledge and training on effective strategies of instruction that rely on students' knowledge rather than that of the teacher. In this study students felt their best source of information was their fellow students, rather

than the teacher. This appeared to be a direct result of the teacher's teaching and questioning style. Teaching implications for educators might focus on the conditions under which students are their own best source of information. The teacher in this study used simple partner or group share to answer questions. Educators need to know if such strategies are effective and, if so, how to implement them. In addition, model programs and educator training about positive interactions strategies that may help students feel the classroom is a safe place to learn, could also be useful.

Gender Differences During Classroom Interactions

This study also addressed the observable differences between the ways males and females are treated during teacher-student interactions in the seventh-grade classroom. Brophy and Good (1970) observed that teachers initiated more contacts with male than female students. They also observed that teacher contacts with students appeared to favor males. Other researchers have also studied gender differences in classroom interactions: Good et al. (1987), Dillon (2001), Morin (2003), Beamon et al. (2006). These studies reported that teachers favor males during classroom interactions. This researcher's observations supported some aspects of those findings, but not all. Despite research (Altermatt et al. 1998) that found that teachers called on males significantly more often than would be expected based on the proportion of males to females in the class, this researcher's findings did not support this. This study also did not support Streitmatter's (1997) hypothesis that females receive less attention from teachers than males, both positive and negative.

Gender-Differentiated Interactions During Noninstructional Classroom Activities

The researcher for this study did not observe Brophy et al. (1980) and Altermatt et al.'s (1998) observations that teacher contact favored male students. In this classroom, the teacher appeared to evenly divide her time during instruction, questioning, and other contacts between male and female students. The teacher also asked questions equally among students of both genders and spent extra time with students of both genders fairly equally. This also did not support Streitmatter's (1997) study that females receive less teacher-initiated attention of all types due to teacher preference. The researcher in this study observed that the teacher appeared to make a conscious effort to be fair to both male and female students even to the point of seating them alternately. This last observation was supported in focus groups when students "complained" about such "boy-girl-boy-girl" seating arrangements.

However, the researcher did observe a gender disparity not covered in the literature. These interaction differences were requests made directly by the teacher to students when the teacher needed help outside of curricular instruction. The teacher would frequently ask female students to run clerical errands for her and male students to adjust windows or run recording equipment. The researcher was not sure if such differences in treatment were significant for students, but they were clearly observable. Patchen (2006) asserted that gendered forms of classroom participation exist that give females and males different understandings of educational access and opportunity. The observations the researcher made about gender-based classroom tasks might fall into Patchen's description of different understandings.

The researcher in this study also observed that the teacher had more casual conversations with male students and joked with them. Duffy et al. (2001) observed that female teachers showed a greater tendency than male teachers to interact with male students. Duffy also suggested that teachers interact more with male students because male students initiate interactions with teachers more than female students. This researcher's observations supported Duffy et al.'s conclusions that male students may interact more casually with female teachers than female students.

Gender-Differentiated Behaviors During Classroom Discussion

The researcher observed teacher-student interactions that supported the findings of earlier studies (Jones & Wheatley, 1990); males participate more in classroom discussions than females. The researcher asked students about male and female participation during focus group interviews. The difference between what this researcher and others have observed was that in this classroom the teacher did not initiate such participation. Earlier studies have pointed to teacher-initiated student contact that favored males. This researcher found that male students initiated teacher-student interactions in terms of "call-outs" (incidents where students call out questions or answers without raising hands or being recognized by the teacher). Student-initiated call-outs were the most significant gender differentiation, related to teacher-student interactions, observed by this researcher.

The researcher observed that in this classroom, like the observations of Jones and Wheatley (1990), call-outs in response to teacher questions were more common among male students. However, Jones and Wheatley also observed that when males called out, teachers were more inclined to accept their answers, and when females called out,

teachers asked them to raise their hands. The teacher in this study responded to call-outs in such a way that type of difference was not observable.

The observation of differing call-out behaviors for male and female students had several facets. First, as Jones and Wheatley (1990) observed, it was clear that, during class discussion, when the teacher would ask a question of the class in general, male students would call-out with far more frequency than female students. In fact, very few females ever called out. Most raised their hand. Second, the male-dominated call-outs were pervasive and seen during the course of every lesson the researcher observed. Third, while call-outs were observed by the researcher and supported by student comments during focus groups as belonging primarily to male students, the interaction potential between the teacher and student was not there. This was because the teacher in this classroom did not respond to the call-outs. She did not acknowledge the students who called out, accept their answers, or even act like she heard them. This type of teacher behavior in response to call-outs was not reported in the literature and in this classroom it eliminated any possible interactions that might result.

Male call-outs then became part of the "white noise" of the class, and did not appear to contribute positively or negatively to the teacher-student interactions in the classroom. The researcher felt that the teacher's response to these call-outs might be considered a type of interaction within itself. It might be her way of extinguishing the call-outs or it might be that she just didn't care one way or the other if students called out.

The researcher asked students about call-outs during focus groups. Some students said they thought call-outs made the teacher mad but they couldn't be sure. Other students said that it was only the smarter students who called out. Some students said it

was just the boys who called out: “the same ones who called out in all their classes.” Some students said that there were also a few females who called out, although the researcher did not observe that. Students who admitted calling out said they did so just to get the answer out. They stated that they did not care if the teacher responded to them or not. Students did not seem to attribute anything to the call-outs other than something that just existed. One student stated that if students call-out too much, the teacher simply moves their seat. Other students commented that students who called out were usually closer physically to the teacher. Several female students commented that it was amusing to watch male students call out with the wrong answers. Therefore, the researcher was not sure what the effect might be on students who engage in call-outs or the students who have to listen to them.

The researcher looked for evidence that call-outs were part of the interaction process between teachers and students. When students were asked who the teacher was most likely to call on (males versus females) during class discussion (if both males and females had hands raised), students responded that it did not matter. Therefore, the researcher’s observation of male-initiated call-outs was clearly gender differentiated, but this was not attributable to teacher behavior.

A better understanding of the phenomenon of male-initiated call-outs would be useful for educators. The researcher realized, before conducting this study, that call-outs existed and were more male oriented. However, the researcher had not realized the extent of the behaviors and how other students viewed them. This study indicated that male students often initiate such behaviors and that the teacher may not be the source of such favoritism as the literature has indicated. If male-initiated call-outs are pervasive in many

classrooms, teachers may need strategies for dealing with them so that students are not negatively affected.

Self-Efficacy and Teacher-Student Interactions

The third research question examined how teacher-student interactions might affect the self-efficacy beliefs of male and female seventh-grade students. This researcher found that classroom observations alone were not helpful in determining students' beliefs about their self-efficacy. Students might appear confident by the way they conducted themselves in class, but simple observations were not an accurate way to determine a student's belief about him or herself as a student.

Therefore the researcher used focus group interviews to ask students about their feelings of confidence in the learning environment. However, the researcher found she was not always able to obtain student responses specifically related to student feelings of self-efficacy arising from any interactions with the teacher. Student responses to questions were often nonspecific and off-topic. Many students made reference to their comfort in consulting their fellow students for help and other learning issues. The researcher thinks this may be the result of the teacher's instructional style that frequently referred student inquiries back to student to help each other.

Most students also did not seem clear about the concept of "confident," even though the researcher often reframed the term in different ways. Some students specifically stated they didn't understand the question or they remained silent. The general answers and vagueness of student responses did not clearly address self-efficacy in this classroom as it relates to teacher-student interactions, which was the third research question.

The researcher found that most students felt the teacher kept the classroom atmosphere safe for them to ask questions, but when asked about this they could not give specific examples. When asked how they felt about themselves as learners, most students were not able to answer clearly. However, the higher achieving females did state that the thought they were confident about learning in the class and were doing well. In response to questions about their learning, most students critiqued the way the teacher taught and discussed such things as doing their homework and the difficulty of the teacher's tests. Students did not mention any specific interaction with the teacher that made them feel successful or not successful. Overall, student answers were general and the researcher thinks that while they did not answer exactly what the researcher wanted to know – they did give insight into their learning. For example, most students commented that they felt more comfortable asking other students for help than the teacher although they admitted the teacher was approachable. When they were asked students could not identify teacher-student interaction behaviors that either deterred students from feeling confident or helped them. The result was that the while the researcher did not feel that her questions revealed students' feelings of efficacy in the classroom, the questions did allow students to express other feelings about how they navigated the learning in this classroom.

Self-efficacy theory has been studied for many years. How it applies in the day-to-day life of a classroom could be useful knowledge for educators. However, more specific studies need to be done, particularly in the case of adolescents, to determine what precise teaching methods and interaction strategies might build efficacy in students. This study fell short of making a meaningful connection between interactions and self-

efficacy, but it is certain that one is to be made; researchers just need to find a better way to assess student perceptions of efficacy and how it affects them

Implications

Research Implications

The researcher's study suggests five possible implications for further research. First, earlier research identified three general categories of teacher-student interactions. This researcher identified eight additional themes of teacher-student interactions in this classroom. The researcher suggests that it would be useful to further examine these smaller themes of interactions. For example, students discussed the body language of the teacher at length in focus groups. It appears that more research should be done on types of teacher body language that may have a significant effect upon students.

Second, the teacher in this study used partner-share activities to answer curriculum questions rather than direct instruction and feedback. This teacher behavior required students to turn to each other for answers during class discussion. Additional studies might be useful to determine the level of achievement and comfort among students in classrooms where these strategies are used.

Third, in this study the researcher observed student-initiated behaviors that resulted in gender differentiated treatment by the teacher. However, the issue of teacher initiation versus student initiation of gender differences has not been studied and should be further explored. Further studies to understand the basis for those behaviors and how students experience them might be useful.

Fourth, researchers who have observed gender differentials in the classroom have not studied the possible effects of frequent male-initiated call-outs. The researcher

observed that all students accepted call-out patterns in the classroom she observed. The researcher also observed that the teacher in this study ignored call-outs in this classroom. How such call-outs impact individual students in terms of their learning experiences might require further investigation. Therefore, this researcher suggests that the issue of call-outs in the classroom should be studied further from all aspects: behaviorally, psychologically, and educationally. The researcher felt that male call-out behavior had the most significant implications for further study.

Fifth, further studies should be done to determine the best way to understand the self-efficacy of adolescents. Pajares and Urdan (2006) referenced surveys and questionnaires as a possible approach. It is important to continue to examine how adolescent students experience self-efficacy in the classroom. The researcher thinks that self-efficacy as it relates to student interactions with all those in the learning environment should be more carefully examined to determine how varying aspects of teacher-student relationships might influence feelings of self-efficacy in students.

Methodological Implications

The two methods used in this study were observation and focus group interviews. These methods were useful in determining student experiences during their interactions with their teacher. They were also useful in examining gender differences in classroom interactions with the teacher. However observations and focus group interviews proved less useful in determining how the interactions between students and their teachers might affect the self-efficacy feelings of students. There are three methodological implications that might provide additional information about teacher-student interactions in the classroom.

First, the qualitative aspects of the study could be expanded. For example, in the future, classroom observations repeated after the focus group interviews might provide more insight. It could be helpful to take the comments and observations made by students during focus group interviews back to the classroom and see them in action or even to see if they truly exist. Focus group discussions of "the look" are an example of how follow-up observations might be useful. Perhaps it was exaggerated by students or did not even truly exist. A chance to circle back and observe in class later might provide added insight to those student observations.

Second, the results from this study suggest that purely qualitative methods alone may not produce useful results. Focus groups are dependent upon the skill of those conducting them. Since questioning must be consistent to allow for variation, the researcher is limited in obtaining information. Therefore, another method or combination of methods may be more valuable. For this study, it might have been helpful to combine questionnaires with observations and interviews. Carefully worded surveys or open-ended student written responses also might be useful in future studies. Bandura (1997) has suggested the use of Likert-type scales with a wide range of steps, such as 0-6, to insure a better chance of capturing fine distinctions among individuals' efficacy beliefs. Bong (2002) also found that mistakes occur when assessing adolescent self-efficacy. Asking students if they can recognize their own abilities and use them to accomplish a task may be the best measurement of self-efficacy since adolescents tend to develop skill-specific or task-specific beliefs (Bong). Additional studies that use more skill-specific or task-specific questions with more understandable targets may be needed.

Third, students in this study were asked questions over a period of 30 to 45

minutes. Responses at or near the end of this period were less focused and less useful, reflecting possible fatigue or boredom at the conclusion of the focus group session. Therefore, in the future, conducting several shorter focus group sessions, each designed to discuss different issues, might eliminate the fatigue factor.

Limitations

There were four possible limitations to this study. The first one was the participant selection for this study that consisted of one classroom of 32 students. This may be a limitation for this study in that this was just one class with one teacher. The sample was purposeful in terms of grade level and convenient in terms of location within the researcher's own school district. Therefore, generalizability to other student groups and classroom is decreased, which is a common finding in qualitative research (Krathwohl, 1988). The students were representative of any school in a middle- to upper-income neighborhood, but the characteristics of the teacher may have been unique. In addition, out of 32 students, only 22 were able to participate in the focus groups due to parental consent issues. This may have had an effect on the type of student in those groups if they represented a particular type of characteristic parent group.

The second limitation may have been the researcher's grouping of students into focus groups that may have influenced the types of answers and discussions that resulted. The teacher provided a coded seating chart indicating student ability levels. This gave the researcher information about student achievement. This also allowed the researcher to arrange focus groups by achievement level and made the selection of focus group participants nonrandom. The groups were designated by gender because of the

researcher's experience with male-female intimidation in middle school settings. Other researchers might have used mixed-gender groups with a different outcome.

The researcher found that teacher-student interactions, as they may relate to the self-efficacy of students, was the most problematic part of her study. This was the third limitation to obtaining good results in this study. Part of the weakness may have been the difficulty of questioning students about a term (confidence) they did not appear to understand fully. The focus group questions and pilot testing on other middle school students was designed to eliminate confusion on the part of students. Nevertheless, it was clear that the self-efficacy questions were not understood by the students in a way that matched the intent of the researcher. This may have contributed to a possible lack of information that would more closely match the research question on self-efficacy.

Last, because the study was qualitative, researcher interpretations and observations might be different than those of another researcher looking at the same data. It is also possible that a different researcher may have chosen different coding categories. These interpretative differences were addressed by the use of extensive direct quotations throughout Chapter IV so that the reader would have the opportunity to draw his/her own conclusions separate and apart from the researcher.

Summary

This research study examined teacher-student interactions in an average seventh-grade classroom and had three parts: basic classroom interactions between students and teacher, possible gender difference in those interactions, and whether those same interactions contribute in any way, positively or negatively, to students' feelings of self-efficacy.

The data indicated that there is a large variety in types and nature of interactions between a teacher and his or her students. It also indicated that interactions could appear to have an influence on how students feel about themselves as they relate to the teacher and about their contentment in general when functioning in a classroom setting. The data also indicated that the most significant aspect of gender differences in the classroom was related to male students' tendencies to orally participate in discussions without being called on by the teacher. The data also demonstrated that other students were very aware of these behaviors the researcher termed "call-outs" and appeared to accept them as part of a normal classroom setting.

The researcher's data did not clearly indicate a connection between teacher-student interactions and student's feelings of self-efficacy. There appeared to be possible problems with question formulation used during focus group interviews. This was a major limitation of the study for the researcher but also provided the impetus to find better ways to measure self-efficacy in younger students who may have more limited vocabulary skills.

In summary, this study was a qualitative study conducted in one small classroom of students to observe and report interactions between a teacher and her students. The results appear to indicate a need for more investigation into teacher-student interactions. Current research is showing a trend toward more females achieving at higher rates than males and going on to college in greater numbers than their male counterparts. Whether this current phenomenon relates to those moments when a student interacts with his or her teacher is not clear but provides an area where researchers may want to focus attention.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

SAMPLE FOCUS GROUP PROMPTS

Possible General Question Types Not Related to Specific Scenarios

Interactions:

1. What is your experience in this class when the teacher is calling on students?
2. How do you think the teacher decides whom to call on?
3. What is your experience when you interact with the teacher?
4. What is your experience when you volunteer or raise your hand?
5. How do you feel during your interactions with the teacher in this classroom?
6. If any of you could, would you participate more or less during class discussions? Why?
7. Are there some students who are called on more than others? (Why do you think this happens?)
8. How confident are you about raising your hand in this classroom?

Self-*efficacy*

9. Describe for me what helps you learn in this classroom?
10. Describe for me what things make it hard to learn in this classroom?
11. How do you feel about trying to learn in this classroom?
12. How do you feel about your learning during classroom discussions?
13. Describe your confidence feelings when learning something new in this classroom.
14. How do you learn in this classroom?
15. Describe for me your feelings of academic ability in this classroom?
16. What are you learning in this classroom and what makes it easy or hard?
17. How do you feel about yourself as a student in this classroom?

Possible Hypothetical Specific Question-Types Based on Classroom Scenarios

1. Yesterday during class I noticed that when John raised his hand he was always called on first. What do you think about that?
2. This morning I noticed that when Jane kept trying to respond to Mrs. B's questions, she was never called on? What do you think was happening there?

APPENDIX B

PARENTAL CONSENT LETTER

To the parents of_____

The purpose of this letter is to introduce myself. My name is Katherine Barg and I am a doctoral candidate at the University of San Francisco. My area of interest is classroom interactions in seventh grade. Ms. _____ has kindly allowed me to observe her English and History classes for a period of 6 weeks from April 1, 2008 through May 15, several times each week. During that time I will be observing students in order to observe how they interact with each other and the teacher. At the end of that time, selected students may be asked to participate in focus groups where they will tell me about their experiences interacting in the classroom.

At no time will any child's name be used, nor will student records or student work be used. The results of this study will be read only by my dissertation committee at the University of San Francisco and will not be published in any other format.

There is no risk involved for any student. These observations will be no different than those that already occur frequently in classrooms each day by teachers, administrators, parents and other visitors. There will be no direct benefit to me for doing this study other than the culmination of my dissertation for the purposes of obtaining a doctoral degree.

If your child is selected to participate in a focus group, a separate letter of consent will be sent home.

Thank you for your time in reading this letter. Please sign below to indicate that you have read and understood the content of this letter.

Sincerely,

Katherine S. Barg
Doctoral Candidate
University of San Francisco

_____ _____
Signature of Student Parent/Guardian Date

Student's name_____

APPENDIX C

PARENTAL CONSENT LETTER FOR FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPATION

To the parents of_____

As you know, I have been observing the classroom interactions in your child's classes with Ms._____. This project has been part of my dissertation research at the University of San Francisco.

` Your child has been randomly selected to participate in a focus group of six students. During the focus group, I will ask general questions and allow open conversation to hear what students say about how they experience interactions in the classroom. The focus group will be tape-recorded and transcribed, but no child's name will *ever* be used and all participants' names will be *completely anonymous*. For purposes of transcription, students will be assigned letters, such as "student A," to maintain anonymity.

The results of the focus group will be part of my dissertation and will be read only by my dissertation committee. It will not be published. The contribution that your child may make during the focus group will add to the current body of research on classroom interactions and may give insights into how students in seventh grade interact with each other and the teacher.

Questions and prompts during the interview will be open-ended to allow students to speak freely, no questions of a personal or sensitive nature will be asked and student integrity and respect will be maintained at all times.

Please sign below if you give consent for your child to participate. Thank you for allowing me to complete my dissertation.

Sincerely,

Katherine S. Barg

Doctoral Candidate
University of San Francisco

_____Yes – my child (name) _____ has my permission to participate in focus group described above.

_____No – I am sorry but my child (name) _____ may not participate in the focus group described above.

_____

Signature Date

APPENDIX D

OBSERVATION TRANSCRIPT EXCERPTS

Transcribed from notes recorded in 10-minute segments during 60-minute class periods.

Day 1

Teacher: "How are you doing?" [asked as students enter the room]. "Please. Sit where you did yesterday. How are you guys doing?"

Teacher: To a specific male, "Are you chewing gum or food?"

Teacher: Anyone have answers about that? [responding to a student's question].

Teacher asks quietly for hands up.

Memo: Calls on students but does not always comment on their response.

Teacher asks question . . . calls on male; he answers and she says, "Good connection. When you were studying last night . . . did you have any questions? Female answers. She does not comment but says to class in general, "What else are you curious about?"

Male answers. Ignoring him she says, "Anyone else?" Then answers his question.

Sits on stool . . . office aide comes in with note, teacher nods, she leaves.

Calls on male. He answers.

Teacher: "Good connection."

Female starts to speak . . . stops. Teacher encourages her, "Go ahead."

Female continues. Teacher acknowledges, "Yes, yes."

Teacher: "Does anybody else remember? Have a look at Section 4 . . . why was Islam so popular then . . . ?" No response from class

Teacher calls on male. He responds.

Teacher says, "What else?" No response from students. Female calls out answer.

Teacher: "Right" what united them? . . . calls on female. Female answers. . . . Teacher follows up with her.

Teacher: Any other questions?

Male . . . talking off to the side. Teacher interrupts him.

Teacher follows up with two females, "Sorry to interrupt . . . you are doing great."

Male calls out. Teacher ignores the call-out but follows up with whole class.

Teacher says to class, "Do you see what male student is talking about? What do you think?"

Male student answers . . . then teacher calls on different male student . . . no answer then female, "Go ahead then we'll wrap it up." . . . and female then gives a long explanation to clarify and teacher asks him, "Where are you getting this from? I can't follow it." Female student voluntarily reads to teacher from textbook.

Female student (different) asks a long question.

Teacher responds to her and then addresses class, "What do you guys think?"

Teacher: "Leave your homework out . . . please I will check in a moment"

Male student calls out . . . refers to page in textbook and asks questions about assignment.

Teacher responds: "Yes."

Male continues to ask for clarification.

Teacher gives male long response and asks follow-up questions.

Teacher: "What do you think?" [To class in general?] Then provides long explanation that seems based on her conversation with male student.

Teacher: "Be honest here . . . who did the reading last night?"

General mumbling among students in response.

Teacher: "I am going to ask a simple question . . . talk to your partner please about it."

Teacher . . . aside asks male if he did the work.

Teacher asks female a question about her work and she answers.

Teacher has one-to-one with female student, "Look in the book and find the answer . . . what happened? Laughs with female, and class laughs with her.

Teacher asks question. Female raises hand . . . is ignored and instead told, "Tell your partner."

Teacher asks male a question . . . females respond out loud. No comment from teacher.

Teacher asks same male again . . . class calls out answer to her. No response from teacher.

Teacher . . . persists with same male, but class responds and he does not answer. Female raises hand. Teacher responds to her answer. Male hand goes up . . . ignored. Female calls out.

Teacher responds by telling class, "Tell your partner what (female) just said."

Teacher asks for discussion among themselves . . . walks to two males and talks to them . . . compliments third male for using good resources.

Impression . . . teacher is having fun with the discussion . . . kids are all on task.

Teacher checks homework while students work on cube project . . . male calls out about dice.

Teacher explains, calls to female who is not looking up.

Teacher asks female to get tape from back of the room [she sits in the back].

Kids now allowed to run around, getting supplies, and work in groups.

Teacher: I am going to check homework . . . if it is not out . . . you get a zero.

Groups in this class are mixed sex.

Teacher walks among them casually checking homework.

Teacher tells students to start cleaning up.

Teacher tells students what to do with cubes, “Let me give directions . . . then you can talk.”

Female calls out.

Teacher acknowledges her then proceeds with directions.

Teacher asks questions.

Male responds.

Teacher asks general question.

Teacher gives directions.

Students call out in response.

Teacher asks, “What’s the first thing?” to a male.

Female responds.

Teacher: “Then what” to a male student again.

Female responds.

Teacher asks male student, “Then what?”

Male responds.

Female responds reading aloud . . . Teacher helps with vocabulary.

Teacher asks male student . . . no answer . . . same one before who did not answer.

Teacher asks again . . . no answers.

Students call out to answer.

Teacher . . . admonishes them . . . what did I just say . . . as she continues discussion.

Teacher asks for answers . . . then asks students to roll dice and share with partner.

Teacher asks class to read silently.

Day 2

Teacher: "Please remember to sit boy/girl" [students filing in to sit where they want].

I hear students mumbling that it has to be boy/girl.

Students settle in fast.

Teacher: Good job [to a male student], you are excellent direction followers.

Teacher: Good job, male student.

Teacher talks to class about when she won't be there Friday . . . then introduces lesson and announces test: Any questions . . . "[to a male student] just hang onto that for a second."

Teacher asks one female and three male students to open the windows.

Teacher admonishes students . . . male that another student is working [female].

Teacher: Students asked to work independently . . . male asks for help.

Teacher circulates . . . asks who is familiar with copier. Three hands go up, all female.

Chooses one, gives her detailed instruction on copying . . . student rolls eyes at me same time.

Teacher tells them they have 6 minutes left.

Teacher tells them their notebook is homework . . . if you waste class time.

Male asks her question privately.

Teacher tells student to put stuff away . . . student returns with copy work.

Teacher: "Tell me about call and response" [African music], asking male student to read and another female and then a male and female . . . "What can you tell me?"

Teacher addresses female who made copies . . . tells her to put that away.

Teacher is showing class . . . call response activity.

Teacher models how call and response will work . . . "I don't care if you feel dorky," she tells class . . . two male students make faces at each other.

Teacher plays African music tape, female quietly participates, males mug for reach other.

Teacher: [To a male student] "Hit stop when the song ends" [male student is running tape recorder].

Teacher tells them to talk with partners to answer three questions.

Teacher: "Thank you for getting quiet."

Teacher asks questions of a male student, then another male, does he agree, Teacher asks questions of female, the same thing, and says, "Good job."

Teacher calls on copy girl that gives long response obviously one of the brightest students she relies on.

Teacher asks kids if they agree with girl . . . mostly male students, follows up with one of them.

Teacher asks various students to share what they have on their sheet, some males, some female . . . follows up with male student to get his work and a pencil . . . when he does not, "I don't' care," said abruptly.

In front of class . . . girls are standing . . . appear self-conscious . . . hands in the sweatshirts, boys look resigned.

Teacher asks male student to turn music up.

OBSERVER NOTE: During call and response some males are sitting down, some hamming it up, one female barely speaking . . . looks shy, one female acting up . . . with females using arms to act it out.

Teacher asks them to sit and gives kudos to all . . . one male still talking, asks them to open text to look at visual art . . . what did you notice . . . calls on with female and one male . . . thanks both female, but to male gives extended discussion of his answer and follow up.

Teacher calls on female and follows up but corrects male, "You are right . . . like female student said."

Teacher asks question . . . hands go up . . . one female, two male students.

Teacher calls on male and then female student.

Teacher discusses and says but [male student] is right . . . addresses another male student?

Second male student responds . . . Teacher says, "Good [to male student], "Do you see what he is talking about?"

Teacher discussion . . . tells female student to hurry up.

Teacher passes papers out and smile and jokes with male students.

Teacher discussion . . . male calls out when teacher discusses today is someone's birthday and teacher responds to him.

Teacher points out art on the back wall.

Superintendent appears in the room—teacher keeps teaching, but he blocks my view.

Teacher asks questions . . . males call out. Superintendent leaves . . . students ask what he was doing there.

Teacher says he probably wants to know what they are learning . . . discussion continues, allowed by teacher lots of questions about superintendent.

Teacher then gives direction about artwork they will be looking at.

Teacher asks what mystical means . . . males call out . . . she does not acknowledge them.

Teacher reprimands male student, but I am not sure what he was doing.

Teacher asks question . . . male student raises hand. Teacher calls on him and he answers . . . teacher gives positive response . . . male student gives look to other male student near him.

Students are not moving around the room in male/female partners. I move to table by the door to listen in . . . then decide it is too early so I walk around there is a female student working alone and a male working out of the room alone. Two males near me tease female student who is one of their partners . . . superintendent passes by and gives me a smile . . . students working on task.

Students appear to work well but boys who are near to each other talk among themselves.

Teacher later told me having the superintendent come in rattled her.

Teacher: "Will you get silent please?" Thank you for female student and thank you to another female student. Asks who is not happy with where they sit? Two male students respond.

Teacher now reviews what happened with the sub . . . using a low key demeanor . . . continues to reprimand class for their behavior in a low calm voice . . . then says, "Do you know what I am talking about [to male student]? Yes?" Then asks if anyone has anything else to say about Friday? Asks them if they had a good weekend? What did they do . . . engages two females about shopping trips with back-and-forth conversation. And

specifically one female's eye color . . . then asks what else they did, directing it to two male students.

Teacher discusses hiking boots for upcoming Yosemite trip . . . talks to three male students, and then decides to move on.

Day 3

Teacher begins by introducing lesson . . . class if very quiet "open text to pp." . . . female asks to sharpen pencil. Teacher tells her quickly. Admonishes male with a Look.

Teacher allows them 10 minutes to work alone on text assignment.

Teacher is very pregnant and very tired.

Teacher roams around room as they work . . . females are working; one is socializing . . . males are working some socializing with a female.

At break teacher tell me she has had some of them for 3 years . . . glad to have them in Grade 7 again.

Teacher asks questions . . . anything you don't understand . . . female calls out, male making a face while female is talking.

Teacher asks another question . . . three males put their hands up . . . one calls out . . . Teacher acknowledges them.

Class gets rowdy lots of milling around for a moment getting ready.

Teacher asks more questions, female calls out, male calls out . . . she tells them to talk with their partner.

Teacher asks female what she thinks. Then another female who is one of the brightest students.

Teacher uses overhead calls on me . . . good she really doesn't know what I am doing so this is good.

Teacher asks question . . . no responses . . . tells them to put their pencils down.

Teacher asks another question . . . female hand goes up along with one other she calls on and then male . . . he receives short praise.

Teacher asks another question . . . gets no response says, "So get this done . . . finish the work from Monday and get the work tool and read the directions."

Teacher asks another question . . . a male answers . . . then with a female a short back and forth.

Teacher: "It's okay to talk."

Teacher helps female with something.

Teacher rotates around to talk to a female student . . . lots of back and forth regarding the work . . . also talks to a male student . . . but less.

Teacher stops at a male desk to correct him.

Teacher stops at another male desk to correct him then reclarifies for the class based on male student not doing work right.

Teacher stops at other male desk . . . lots of back and forth.

Class is quiet now.

Teacher stops at female desk . . . encourages class to ask if they don't get something.

Teacher calls out to male student, "How are you doing?"

Teacher continues to rotate around stopping at male desk.

I noticed the students are working independently . . . a female goes to the teacher's desk for help.

Male gets up and comes back near me to get water . . . second time today . . . long hair, baggy sweatshirt.

Teacher rotates . . . stops at male desk . . . male calls out to her . . . they have a social conversation back and forth about being duct taped to a well.

I notice most students *are on task.*

Day 4

I am late today.

Teacher has provided seat chart for me because I keep asking for roster but I can't read it.

Students working quietly as I enter.

Teacher clear off your desk stay off [Unintelligible].

Teacher where are the "chancellors?" Three females and two males.

Teacher divides class into provinces.

Male student says, "I have two papers."

Teacher: "Gosh . . . let me see"; class is very quiet.

Teacher has chosen a female as empress; chancellors are to bow to her.

Teacher reviews the object of the activity.

Teacher appears to have randomly assigned roles to males and females evenly.

Teacher asks a question . . . male student answers.

Teacher get into groups . . . she has trouble finding groups.

Group nearest me is five males and one female.

Teacher comes to group near me . . . one of the boys is too loud . . . she encourages the female to "jump in here" . . . female stays silent the group near me . . . boys keep talking

in second group near me . . . has three males and two females . . . one female does most of the talking.

Teacher meets with group of three females and three males . . . seems to focus on them . . . asks one female to move back out of the circle.

Teacher comes to tell me the directions for the activity they are doing.

Teacher pulls class back . . . then interrupts herself to tell male, "put book away"; male raises hand . . . ignored first . . . then asks . . . still ignored.

Teacher puts them back into their groups.

Teacher [during simulation]: "Chancellors are coming to visit . . . be on best behavior now . . . students now free to move around . . . only one male gets up in one group a female gets on the desk direction the group male voice says, "Are you dissing me?"

Next group . . . three females, two males talk to each other . . . three females seem to lead the group . . . one in particular . . . another group near me . . . has three males and one female who keeps back to rest of the group . . . male in group gets up to come around to front of the group . . . three males talk together . . . the female is quiet . . . does not participate . . . male writes his paper using her desk . . . she stays quiet but appears to observe what he and other male are doing.

Teacher: 15 seconds . . . "get silent please" . . . "no tapping," "all of you need to listen while the chancellor speaks" . . . calls to a male by name as a reminder.

Empress starts reading her scripts . . . appears shy . . . chancellors are females, very soft spoken . . . three male chancellors take turns.

Teacher to female: "Remember everyone needs to hear you."

While students read at in front of room three males in back made faces at each other and then behind their backs . . . the teacher does not see.

Teacher return to your regular seat . . . thank you (to male) then calls on same male and asks female to add to his answer and praises female for making a good point . . . calls on male and says, "good point," and then another male "sure"

Teacher asks question of female . . . they go back and forth . . . she then praises class in general for a good job.

Teacher now tells class to use the last 5 minutes of class to start their homework . . . she will be absent Friday . . . introduces the sub . . . asks class to be cooperative with her . . . warns them behave . . . do not try to trick the sub . . . asks for buy-in.

Lots of students come back for water . . . and glance at me.

Teacher gives 5 minutes for homework . . . and asks to see study guides . . . then dismisses.

Day 5

Teacher standing at door and shaking each kid's hand and greeting them . . . even though it is freezing out.

Teacher: "Please get silent."

Teacher asks students to review what they did Friday with sub.

Teacher stands in center of class.

Teacher asks students to clean up desks and books lying around room and other things left by the sub . . . one male gets up to help . . . she praises him for taking responsibility . . . he continues to put things away and walk around room also other male does the same. Class now very quiet.

Teacher uses overhead while students take notes on China.

Teacher asks male to close door (cold) even though a female is closer to it.

Kids now working quietly . . . room is very silent.

Female with hands up asks questions . . . Teacher nods.

Teacher: "Are you sure you don't have question or are you just out of it today . . . it's 'creepy.'"

Teacher calls on male . . . gets simple response, but "good question . . . do you understand?" Two males say yes.

Female has head on arm on her desk.

Teacher asks questions . . . gets random responses.

Teacher asks general question . . . class answers . . . says, "Stop calling out."

Teacher assigns homework to be done in class.

Male asks question (same male who cleaned up the room).

Male asks clarifying question.

Male asks another question.

Teacher responds to each one.

Teacher assigns seatwork . . . male asks question out of and teacher jokes around with him.

Male asks teacher getting up out of seat.

Male asks teacher to leave class . . . teacher says too windy . . . engages with one says he needs to be allowed to leave.

Students now working quietly as desks

Male who cleaned room comes back near me and sits on beanbag to work . . . seems to be okay with teacher.

Male sharpens pencil.

Male student who left, comes in from outside.

Male plays with the cord on the blind. Teacher asks if he "gets it." He says he did.

Female leaves the room???

Teacher comes over to male and engages for a long time . . . can't hear what they are saying.

Teacher comes back to me and discusses how quiet the class is. Male on beanbag tries to explain to us why kids are so quiet . . . Teacher engages with him.

Male brings work back to teacher . . . she checks it over.

Female who left re-enters room.

Male brings work back again.

Female asks teacher about the book . . . teacher confirms and says it is very good.

Male asks for clarification and the talks to me for a while.

Teacher tells female student to wake up.

Teacher "needs to check on Justin" (kid outside . . . later found out is autistic); she leaves.

Three males get up and look out the window at them.

Female enters room.

Male student leaves.

Teacher visits with another teacher who comes in . . . seems like a constant parade of students in and out today.

Male comes in from patio.

Female approaches teacher from behind . . . not looked at by teacher very quiet, finally calls for teacher's attention . . . they engage in discussion back and forth.

Four males in back near me working pretty well, but louder than others and horsing around when teacher not looking.

Male on bean bag is watching me . . . finally gets up and goes back to seat.

Teacher jokingly admonishes the four males.

Teacher discusses the four males with me . . . says they can be rowdy.

Day 6

I enter late.

Teacher is lecturing class because apparently someone wore her maternity sweater when she was gone.

Male makes a wise crack.

Teacher says, "Why are you saying that right now?"

Teacher: "If you look bad . . . I look bad because I am your regular teacher . . . then discusses proper sub behavior.

Male calls out . . . back and forth takes some issue with her.

Another male keeps at it also.

Teacher referring to the male, "He doesn't know what he is doing."

Teacher, male volunteer that they all coughed at the sub.

Teacher "So you cough when she teaches? That does not seem nice." Male student keeps at it with her.

Females all stay quiet.

Male raises hand . . . asks if sub is insulted with when you are more respectful to others.

Teacher continues to discuss respecting a sub back at the male who called out.

Teacher tells them she will be out 2 more days . . . I hope I don't have to put up with this again. If you don't like the sub . . . it's too bad.

Male . . . same as before wants to know who the sub is on Friday.

Two males are whispering at the back while she is talking.

Teacher asks them to get out student guide.

Female leaves class because she forgot study guide.

Teacher passes out test . . . tells them to put name date or they will lose points.

Gives test directions. Reviews test questions . . . calls on male to make sure he is listening.

Continues directions . . . to student who is not listening. "Is something missing there?"

Asks about any other questions . . . singles out one male and two females to see if they understand . . . "I will check notebooks while you are taking the test so have then out please."

Teacher circulates around checking work . . . talks to female a long time as she checks her work.

Female asks for help . . . Teacher spends a long time with her.

Classroom culture here . . . quiet, pleasant, studious, likes the teacher . . . she likes them by the way she speaks to them . . . by their respect for her . . . there is freedom to enter and leave **. . .** *go to locker, get water . . . teacher says, please inside voices, patient, organized, but room is messy, stuff scattered all over, is pregnant . . . maybe why . . . large plant some student work up, lots of bare walls, something falling down.*

Day 7

Teacher is returning test for review.

Male enters late . . . nothing said to him.

Class is silent while she reviews test.

Teacher keeps changing seats so seat chart doesn't work for me.

Teacher raise hand if you don't get what I am saying . . . one male, one female raise their hands.

Teacher: "Male . . . take a point off"

Male raises hand and asks question.

Two males start to whisper while she reviews test.

Female asks for clarification . . . class is quiet now.

Female also asks question.

Female and male have hands up . . . male jumps in with comment.

Male raises hand and teacher says, "Hang on."

Female asks question.

Female enters room . . . teacher tells her to sit down.

Teacher asks, "Was test hard? Other class thought so too . . . "raise hands . . . did I tell you would need to know how each dynasty chose leaders?"

Class responds, "Yes."

Teacher asks students to bring test up to her by last name, "Thank you for staying silent"

Female approaches teacher with question . . . short back and forth discussion and she returns to seat.

Teacher introduces lesson . . . what makes this classroom unique?

Calls on male . . . they go back and forth, then female no back and forth, Male . . . yes, female . . . no. Class now responding as a whole, “If you want to dispute anything on the test this is the right time” . . . male student goes up to her.

Teacher sits at front drinking from thermos.

Male approaches her.

Male says, “copy cat” to other student.

Teacher comes back near me and fills up water thermos.

Male says, “Start us out.“

Teacher asks kids to share . . . hands are up . . . students share randomly like popcorn but no popping up. After each speaks they call on next one randomly.

Male assertive says, “Need more hands up . . .” calls on a student.

Teacher: “Sounds like it could be any classroom . . . relates lesson to China.

Teacher: “Open texts to p. 187” . . . still in front with thermos in hand. “I’d like you to look at he graphic organizer at the bottom of the page . . . those of you who don’t participate should since it is part of your grade.”

Teacher calls on female . . . another student buts in, “Don’t worry about that now”; back to the female . . . no response, calls on another, Emily . . . then back to first female . . . what do you call a domestic animal . . . starts with “L” class doesn’t know . . . female raises hand . . . teacher ignores her . . . male answers question.

Teacher reviews vocabulary . . . some male calls out . . . one male, “Didn’t we already study this?” Teacher basically ignores the remark.

What are some of the cities around here? [Various call outs]

Teacher asks . . . “Someone I haven’t heard from,” . . . tells male . . . “Put that away.”

Teacher asks question . . . male answers . . . class laughs teacher says, “Are you going to make fun of that?” Teacher continues to call on male . . . female volunteers right answer related to European history . . . teacher praises her.

Teacher assigns text reading and circulates and asks, ”How are you and (other male) doing?”

Students are reading and talking among themselves

Teacher tells them to “wrap it up.”

Asks question . . . male volunteers.

Asks class to draw conclusion.

Three females and two males raise hands . . . calls on same bright female she often calls on.

Teacher asks other questions and says “good one!”

Teacher: “What did Marco Polo think of that?“ [no class response]; “talk among you” then male student volunteers . . . teacher goes back and forth with him.

Teacher then asks female . . . no response.

Calls on bright female again who gives a long answer.

Teacher follows up with female and male.

Calls on male . . . tries to engage him . . . no luck.

Teacher lectures . . . . . male student argues with her when she admonishes them for fooling around

Teacher uses overhead projector “ male . . . do I really have to ask a second time?”

Teacher gives text assignment . . . kids start to work with partners

Day 8

Researcher Comment: Today I changed my seat . . . sat in the back row behind students rather than table in the far back . . . when I came in one girl turned and looked at me . . . then went back to what she was doing.

Teacher giving directions for today's activity . . . class is quiet.

Teacher: "If you didn't do well . . . why not?" A male and female both raise their hands.

Teacher discusses the importance of a study guide.

Male and female also ask questions.

Teacher asks class to do assignment . . . [lots of seatwork in this class] . . . kids begin moving around to get adjusted . . . teacher pulls them back . . . now working silently.

Teacher is working at her computer . . . kids are quietly on task—amazing!

Teacher tells them to finish so they can talk about their work.

Teacher begins discussion . . . "How big was Hang Chow compared with . . . " tell your partners.

Teacher asks question of high-achieving female . . . male answers.

Teacher asks question . . . high-achieving female gives a short answer.

Teacher interrupts herself to female, "Don't keep writing."

Teacher asks high-achieving female a question and asks another high-achieving female a question and says "good," as they answer "Yep," "uh huh," "very good," . . . "yeah good."

Lots of praise.

Teacher asks question . . . "What is porcelain?" High-achieving female gives long answer.

Teacher asks question of female, male, and female, “Not clothes,” they answer.

Teacher asks question referring to high-achieving female’s prior answer.

Teacher asks question . . . of male . . . long discussion about bound feet . . . many males volunteer . . .

Teacher asks why there were bound feet . . . low-achieving female answers.

Teacher: “Any questions?” Class is silent . . . then female asks the difference between Confucius and neo Confucianism.

Teacher when asked a question by a student, “I don’t know . . . look it up and tell me.”

Male student corrects her . . . teacher doesn’t really know . . . high-achieving female tries to help her . . . long discussion ensures.

Teacher: “Sorry . . . I can’t be more expert”

Male asks, “What was the question?”

Teacher tries to answer but doesn’t know and admits it.

Teacher: “Finish interactive notebook and I will call you up here to check your work.”

Teacher: “Use your fingers . . . how many things am I asking?” Achieving female raises hands, “Good Christa.”

Teacher: “You may work together.”

I observe a group of four, two males and two females talking . . . working . . . one female seems to be in charge. High-achieving female turns and smiles at me.

Teacher is calling students up by last name.

Another group . . . two females and two males . . . one male one female do all the talking. One female uses two beanbags to make himself a nest in the corner to do some work. I like the vantage point I have now . . . I can see well.

Teacher: “I am only going to change Emperor’s letter . . . all I am going to collect now.”

Male with hand up asks for clarification.

Teacher calls alphabet and students turn papers in with corresponding last names.

High-achieving females leaves and comes back to sharpen pencil.

Noise level in class rises . . . teacher says is low tone, “noise level is getting higher”; class settles down. In front of me a high-achieving female and high-achieving male talk briefly.

I take a break . . . class goes back to doing quiet seatwork.

Teacher circulates . . . a male is off task . . . she smiles and walks over to him.

Male asks if they got a good report from the sub.

Female low achieving argues with teacher about their behavior with the sub.

Teacher is sitting with a student . . . high-achieving male asks her question.

Below-basic male off task . . . talking to student near me.

Day 9

I enter . . . class is fairly quiet . . . kids shuffling in their folders. Teacher giving directions I am sitting behind a proficient female and a below-basic male. Female raises hand –teacher gives quick answer.

Teacher using overhead . . . male raises hand . . . teacher responds to him and entire class asks questions. Four to five males respond.

Teacher asks question. Five males raise hands . . . two females raise hands . . . choral response.

Below-basic male asks question . . . teacher gives extended answer to question about vibraphones.

I observe kids respect and have affection for teacher . . . by way they behave and talk to her.

Male hands up make comment. Teacher says, “Why are you doing that? I don’t understand what happened there?”

Teacher lectures as she narrates her notes below and proficient male asks for clarification.

Teacher why did the Chinese use paper money? Three females raise hands. Teacher calls on proficient female.

Female gives follow up with teacher. Teacher gives short response.

Teacher asks student randomly, “Do you have a question for me?”

Below-basic male asks clarifying question

Class is still taking notes . . . she requires choral response to finish sentences.

Teacher asks if any questions . . . no answer.

Male asks if test is really hard.

Teacher has eye contact with proficient female . . . “Any questions?”

Student says no but smiles . . . teacher gives her playful look.

Teacher gives them 8 minutes to work on notebook . . . class is quiet and working.

Teacher collects an assignment by sitting as her desk and calling students up . . . all students appear on task except below-basic male.

Below-basic male not working . . . seems to be fooling around.

Teacher calls on students randomly to come up and have work checked.

Advanced male and advanced female talking . . . not working . . . male has 1/2 Easter egg in mouth playing with it and showing others rather than working.

Students pay no attention to me at back.

Teacher telling story about a time when she was embarrassed. I am too late to know why but male asks if she is still friends with the person she is telling about.

Teacher says, “I hope (to below-basic male) is prepared,” then makes a laughing threatening tone. Below-basic male shouts out answer . . . teacher ignores him. Gives them 15 minutes to work. (Below-basic) male up out of seat . . . same student as in beanbag on different day.

Teacher patrols room . . . tells proficient male to move his papers, which are in the aisle . . . he apologizes and moves them.

Teacher asks (below-basic) male first question . . . calls him “Mr.”

Next questions to female.

Then proficient male.

Next proficient male . . . hand is up, she call on him. Advanced male interrupts to question answer given by male . . . has male repeat it . . . again proficient female raises hands and answers.

Teacher calls on female who read but leaves numbers out. Teacher says, “Say the number.” Teacher . . . Oh “great “ to female . . . back to male . . . “Did you get your question answered?”

Teacher calls on female, “Do you know?”

Female says she can’t find . . . teacher says, “Give me an answer.” Teacher is checking work. Two females don’t have it . . . no follow up

Researcher Comment: Across aisle . . . proficient female is having trouble with male who has taken her pencil and wont’ return it. Same male I have observed to be off task a day earlier.

Teacher to basic male . . . “Are you chewing gum? Don’t do this to me . . . Who has a dirty desk? Male does so. Teacher says, “Okay [to him] . . . you will be after school cleaning desk until it shines. She spends 2-3 minutes on hygiene. Male who was in trouble spits out gum and washes hands . . . seems okay with being in trouble.

Teacher assigns seatwork . . . tells them they can talk. Teacher walks around (below-basic) male is loud. Asks proficient male to read to them. Advanced male turns around, asks below-basic female to not talk . . . in loud voice. *Researcher comment: Lots of small conversations . . . I observe only 1/2 class really working . . . period is almost over . . . teacher at desk then up and walking around . . . helps below-basic female then below-basic male, but long engaged conversation with last below basic male . . . she spends 1–2 minutes with him*

Teacher directs inquiry to two males who are noisy, “What did I say to do when you are done?”

I am so sleepy, I have to leave . . . hard time of day for me to observe.

Day 10

Researcher Comment: I got to class early to see class dynamics at the start . . . class was excited and talking but when the bell rang . . . they were seated and quiet.

Teacher begins talking about fund raiser for cancer patients . . . trying to pump up Grade 7 to win something.

(Below-basic female) says she should give them extra credit for this . . . another below-basic male agrees, “You should” . . . 3–4 students start to talk and support first boy . . . females are silent

Teacher asks students to get their work out . . . below-basic male says to other below-basic male that he left it at home . . . makes no attempt to get anything out . . . sucks on his pencil.

Teacher: “I am checking . . . don’t talk all at once . . . any questions? Below-basic male asks to go to the bathroom and asks two times, but is only responded to on second try.

First below-basic male who did not have work out is looking at papers . . . not sure what it is.

This class does a lot of silent seatwork as teacher comes around to check . . . not much chance for interactions as in other classes.

Teacher talking one-to-one to below-basic male who asked about extra credit earlier.

Below-basic male who left room comes back . . . below-basic smiles at me.

Substitute teacher comes in and sits at back making notes.

Teacher asks male who did not do work if he has it . . . he says no . . . she says okay . . . walks past him.

Teacher talks to advanced female for a minute one to one.

Teacher talks to different below-basic male for a while . . . maybe no work?

Teacher questions proficient female about how she did her work . . . correct an aspect of it.

First below-basic male who did not do it stops and looks around . . . not really working

Below-basic male who has sat on beanbag earlier classes and roamed around room gets up and gets a drink of water.

Teacher stops to talk to him.

Teacher tells me that below-basic male usually does not have homework . . . that the other below-basic male usually does.

Teacher and I work out best dates for focus groups, as students will be out of town October 4–9.

Loud screams heard outside class.

Two males . . . proficient . . . laugh and look at me . . . no one else reacts.

Proficient female gets up to get paper and comes back and give me a skeptical glance . . . I smile at her . . . no reaction . . . her expression doesn't change.

Below-basic female doesn't come to school . . . is very low . . . has medical reasons . . . cramps weekly two to three times a week.

Teacher tells me proficient female rarely has her homework . . . skipped a grade . . . one of triplets . . . brothers in Grade 6. Dad hasn't seen her since October. Mom is okay with her lack of grades . . . teacher says she is disorganized but really bright.

Teacher tells me below-basic male is allowed to wander the room as part of his IEP . . . needs lots of breaks.

Environment . . . back to school night coming . . . walls on partially covered . . . school schedules tacked up randomly . . . large, half-dead potted plant . . . a few posters taped to windows.

Teacher: "Don't speak or you will lose points . . . take out a highlighter . . . good job staying silent . . . keep it up." She reviews test and stops, "Zach . . . where is your pen?" Deals with him for only a few seconds.

Teacher calls out test answers . . . interrupts to correct female.

Teacher asks for questions? Each answers quietly . . . female, male, female, male, latter getting feedback. Calls on advanced female and advanced female . . . proficient male, "No not right."

Proficient female, "Yes."

Advanced female gives long answer.

Male . . . basic . . . answers yes and there is a back and forth discussion with him.

Teacher tells basic male she doesn't get his questions but will look at his paper separately.

Day 11

Teacher is reviewing Friday's work with sub . . . says they were good except for one [below-basic] male asks who . . . she just laughs. [Advanced proficient] male is in wrong seat . . . she says, "Do you know you are in the wrong seat?" and he moves.

Teacher [advanced proficient female]: tells me privately this student is amazing . . . has all the answers . . . but not liked . . . says she has to work that with that so the teacher isn't always calling on her.

Teacher tells me [advanced proficient] female also knows everything [more than the teacher].

Teacher is telling class will they working in their notebooks . . . points at hanging placards on wall around room [that they are to fit the placards into categories], asks general questions to which the kids respond in unison to a question about gunpowder. [Basic-below] male asks for clarification . . . teacher does and asks him if he understands it now.

I have told her about focus group permission slips . . . she offers to require points to ensure they are returned.

Kids are now in pairs . . . moving around . . . some have trouble getting into groups . . . one placard is near me. Difficulty between below-basic female and others as to who to pair with. Teacher resolves it . . . tells below-basic male to and thanks below-basic female for being flexible. As kids work she asks below-basic male and a female to show her the work. She reprimands a female for not having done prep work at home

This student is bright but rarely does work. Parents don't seem to care (same female who always has hand up).

Teacher asks proficient female where her partner is. Student says she doesn't know and turn out is below-basic male who left room for a minute. Teacher comments to her that he needs to take a break

Below-basic male sitting near me . . . not doing work but asking everyone else for answers . . . sits sideways on desk . . . banging pencil into chair . . . doing little.

Three males near me appear to be working hard on the assignment.

Teacher asks me if she can leave the room for a minute to copy something . . . I say okay.

Five students near me all appear to be working on placard project. Two males and two females.

Teacher asks below-basic female if she can see her for a minute.

Teacher goes back to a female [who had not done homework] to spend one-to-one time with her about why work isn't done.

One female near me has sat there for 10 minutes appears to be moving slowly (this is the one whose partner below-basic male left room

Teacher calls below-basic male up who previously had done not too much and is lingering at the back of the room. I stay put . . . the kids are moving around.

Teacher asks students near window to open blinds because it feels stuffy to her. Female near me who has now moved now talking to female about another girl who is not in class.

Teacher asks students to stop and listen . . . she repeats directions . . . as she does some students keep writing . . . one below-basic male is horsing around. Class quiets down . . . seems to be working harder.

A female asks male by door to read placard to him so he doesn't have to get up to look, "Smallpox inoculation" Male reads it to him. Three students near me . . . two female and one male . . . help each other supply answers. Teacher patrols room.

Five students near me are trying to read and understand work "saltpeter." One male decides its time to move in and tells others to come here . . . they ignore him.

I wish I could ask them how they feel about working in mixed sex groups?

Basic-Proficient male mentioned earlier who sat near me tapping pencil has moved near female but is not working . . . just staring

Teacher is joking with below-basic male (who earlier needed a break) asking if he'd ever seen a clown car when all these people get out of one.

Teacher seems to really like the kids.

Day 12

Class is quiet

Teacher is giving directions for today's activity

Below-basic male is late

A male asks why no class and she responds and he keeps asking and she responds

Below-basic male talking while she is talking.

Proficient female asks question . . . teacher responds w long explanation about STAR tests and what are on it for history.

Proficient female asks for more clarification.

Teacher answers her.

Proficient male asks quick question . . . she answers.

Teacher calls on one female and two males we have to work now [they have their hands up[.

Female calls out.

Female continues to ask for clarification.

Male calls out.

Male hands up . . . teacher acknowledges.

Male calls out regarding STAR test skills . . . teacher keeps asking questions.

I had focus group permission slips today . . . I waited because once I explained why I was in the room . . . students might behave differently so these will be my last 2 days of observation so it was a good time. I had then printed on grey paper so they would not be lost and the teacher said she'd give points for anyone who returned it.

I asked, "Who has noticed me in the back of the room? And almost all hands went up. I explained what a doctorate is and what focus groups are and everyone seemed interested. I passed them out due Friday. Next week students will be in a focus group. All students were happy about getting their name on the blank.

Teacher asks again to leave room for copies and I say okay . . . kids are working well and are comfortable with me.

I see pairs and triads of students filling out their notebooks and helping each other. Noise level is moderate groups seem to be mixed gender.

A male behind me is a squeaking shoe on the floor. He would probably not do that if I was in the class . . . I ignore it and he stops.

A group to my right . . . two females, one male discussing smallpox . . . male joins group . . . tries to get female attention . . . to her students . . . ignores him and he goes back to writing.

Teacher comes back in and looks at male who was squeaking his shoes . . . gives eye contact to him and not appropriate . . . he has already stopped.

Teacher checks in. “How are you doing?”

Male asks for bathroom break.

Teacher asks about his folder.

APPENDIX E

FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT NUMBER 1

Group A . . . 5 Boys . . . BB, PB, B (Below-Basic, Proficient Basic, Basic)

I = Interviewer

Male = Male seventh-grade student

I introduced myself, explained my interest in Grade 7, my experience teaching Grade 7 and how seventh graders interact with their teachers. You saw me observing. Now I want to hear what you guys have to say . . .

Look at first question. I will explain it. When you are sitting in class and Ms. Jensen calls on you, what does that feel like for you? [Student has asked me to explain first question they do not understand.]

Male 1: Sometimes I don't want to get called on because I don't know the answer.

I: Ok so sometimes you don't want to be called on because you don't know the answer.

Male 1: Yeah.

I: Anybody else?

Male 2: Sometimes she just calls on you and then it's kinda weird like you don't know what to say.

I: Like she puts you on the spot?

Male 2: Yeah.

Male 1: And sometimes it feels kinda like . . .

Male 3: Sometimes it makes you feel smart when you do know the answer and other times you want to . . . because you do know the answer.

Male 1: As long as you get picked because you are going to get points . . . cause she gives us 50 points.

I: So she gives you participation points?

Male 1: So sometimes you really want to and sometimes you are just not in the mood.

I: It's just not your day.

Male 1: Yeah.

I: [Unintelligible] . . . of the topic.

Male 1: Yeah.

Male 3: Yeah like how well you understand the topic.

I: Okay [Unintelligible] all right, it sounds like you guys are telling me that whether or not you experience [Unintelligible] has a lot to do with how confident you are whether you know the answer. . . on the back of the sheet we are going to get to that issue later.

I: I wanted to tell you that a lot of these studies have been done in math and science so I am glad you are in a history class and I am happy about that. Okay so when Ms. Jensen is up in front of the class . . . (#2 on here) talking to you during class discussions and you are interacting and she responds back and you respond back . . . how does that feel?

Male 2: It makes you think about it more because she like asks me questions to expand my answers.

I: Has that been your experience Male 2?

Male 2: Yes.

I: She does probe and try to get information?

Male 1: And then sometimes she just tries to have conversations about you know random stuff.

I: With you or the whole class?

Male 1: With the whole class [Unintelligible].

Male 3: When she is doing one on one, it feels like you are having a conversation with her and everyone else is just looking.

I: Okay, do you feel, and I am not trying to put words in your mouth, but do you feel excluded when that happens?

Male 1, Male 2, Male 3: No.

I: It's just okay with you?

Male 4: I don't mind.

I Or maybe you feel good she is not bugging me right now?

All agree except Male 5 who is silent so far throughout.

Male 3: When she expands on the answers, it is because you didn't complete it or something.

Male 2: Yeah when she . . .

Male 3: [Unintelligible]

Male 4: Or there's more she wants or if you completely got it wrong.

I: If you get it wrong she helps you?

Male 2: She will.

Male 3: Helps you figure out your answer.

Male 2: Then after that she may call on somebody else cause you got the wrong answer like "Does anybody want a second on that?"

I: I see . . . okay . . . [to Male 5] . . . do you want to add anything at all or so far have they said everything you agree with? [Male 5] has been silent the entire time)

Male 5: I don't have anything to say.

I: That's okay . . . you don't have to say anything if you don't want to but I want to reflect that there were five of you here and one of your didn't want to say anything [Male 5] . . . so will say that one boy was hesitant to speak . . . is there any reason that you don't want to say anything or is it because . . .

Male 5: I just don't like talking.

I: You just don't like talking so okay so maybe . . .

Male 2: [Unintelligible] in class.

I: Are you shy or are you just not interested [Male 5 shakes his head . . . not clear what he is meaning].

I: All right lets look at #3 when you have interactions with Ms. Jensen not only during class discussion but when you go up to her to ask about a grade or ask to go to the bathroom, can you describe how those interactions work for you?

Male 1: She tries to help you. If you need help with the grade she'll tell you to do something or about missing assignments

I: Okay, so she is helpful?

Male 2: Yeah.

Male 4: She understands like if you were "safe" or something or if there is a big project in science or math she'll understand and she will give you an extra day . . . like there's a test in science.

I: Okay, okay.

Male 3: Like if you go up for questions like you were working on a project or something she'll make us go through our book to find it and if you can't find it then she tell us to come back but she wouldn't normally tell us the answer

I: So she works with you to figure it out

Male 3: Yeah.

I: How do you know during class discussion or when you are working with the teacher if what you are doing is okay or not?

Male 2: If she doesn't yell at you.

Male 1: Or give you that look like [demonstrates a look].

Male 3: Like if you are chewing gum or something or talking she just gives you the look.

Male 2: Or a warning

Male 3: If you keep doing it then you are chewing gum and she'll say, "Are you still chewing gum after I gave you the look?"

Others laugh and agree.

I: Does she know the kind of look she gives you?

Male 2: Demonstrates the "look" and says, "She might go like [Male 2], and she will grab the gum that is under the desk and put you on the spot she tries to embarrass you because you don't really get it and s . . .

Male 4: She tells everyone to look under the desk.

I: Do you find that embarrassing?

Male 3: No.

Male 2: She is trying to embarrass you when she does that?

Male 3: Yeah.

I: When she is trying to embarrass you what do you think is the goal is?

Male 1: For us to stop doing what we are doing like [Unintelligible].

Male 5: She doesn't want you to do it again? [First time he has volunteered.]

I: You said yell . . . does she raise her voice?

Male 2: Not really.

I didn't observe that she raised her voice too often . . . all our voices go up and down but I didn't hear her really screaming . . . maybe I missed it.

Male 3: She will usually be . . . say whatever.

Male 1 Or she just doesn't care and will move on to something else.

I: Okay.

Male 2: Sometimes there will be talking in class and she will say something like, "I appreciate you not talking." [Unintelligible] . . .

I: What are you thinking when she says that to you?

Male 3: Sarcasm

I: Do you think sarcasm is a good way to get you to stop doing [Unintelligible] . . . how do you feel after she is sarcastic?

Male 1: I just [Unintelligible] . . . it doesn't hurt me at all.

Male 3: You should just be polite.

I: Do you have any good feelings, bad feelings . . . when she is sarcastic?

Male 4: "No comment."

I: Sounds like maybe bad feelings? What about you [Male 5], do you have feelings about her being sarcastic with you?

Male 5: No

I: No . . . okay . . . so lets go on here . . . um . . . during a discussion and she throws out a question . . . tell me what happens if students call out without raising their hands?

Male 1: She ignores it.

Male 2: Sometimes.

Male 3: She gets pretty mad at you?

Male 1: Says, "Raise your hand."

Male 3: Yeah.

I: Has she ever said . . . to any of you . . . has she said when you have called out . . . to you to raise your hand?

Male 2: Plenty of times.

I: A couple of you but not all of you.

I: How many of you with the five of you here have ever called our in class?

Male 2: I have . . . I called out once.

Chorus: I have.

I: So four out of the five of you say you do call out sometimes . . . do you know why you call out? They all talk at once . . . [Unintelligible] . . .

I: So you say it is easier to get it out before you forget it?

All: Yeah

I: Do you feel competition a little bit?

All: Yeah.

I: Is that fair [Male 1]?

I: If I say a word that is not right you have to say "Mrs. Barg . . . that word is not right."

Male 2: The person next to you sometimes.

I: [Male 5] . . . competition calling out?

No answer (Male 5 will not talk)

I: [Male 5], so you are a quiet guy and don't say too much?

No answer.

I: Well . . . okay.

Male 3: I don't know if it is competition . . . you are just trying to get the answer out

I: Why are you trying to get the answer out?

Male 4: Because you know it . . . and you want her to know that you know what you are talking about.

Male 3: Eventually she will call on you.

Male 1: Sometimes you are thinking out loud and not even realizing it.

So if you call out you kind of figure that keeps her from calling on you when you are not really ready?

Male 3: Um hmmm.

I: Am I saying it right?

Male 3: Yeah.

Male 1: If you re gazing off like you are not paying attention and you have to get back into, she will like [Unintelligible] . . .

I: Okay.

I: It sounds like she is someone you wanted to please? In terms of answering questions, I am just reading between the lines but I could be wrong with that . . . I did see a lot of incidents where kids were calling out . . . would you say it is always the same kids that call out or different kids?

Male 3: Same kids,

Male 1: Same kids.

Male 2: Same kids.

I: And what kind of kids it is usually? Do you call out, [Male 1]?

Male 1: I do.

I: Male 2, do you?

Male 2: Yes.

Males 3 and 4: Not too much.

I: The smarter kids call out?

Male 2: Pretty much.

I: How do you know they are smart?

Male 3: Some kids are shy sometimes so they don't call out.

I: So shy smart ones don't call out by smart ones do?

Male 2: Female does.

I: Which female you have two [same name]

Male 2 [Identifies female by last name]

I: What happens when she calls out?

I: If you called out and she called out who is going to get called on?

Male 2: She ignores it.

Male 5: The person that didn't call out.

I: She will ignore the call out?

I: Did she train you the first week of school to raise your hands?

All shake their heads

I: So you just know after all these years in school?

I: All right.

I: Let's look at #5 . . . I think I just covered this one if several students have their hands up which students will get called on . . . you said the smart ones . . . anything else?

Male 2: If a bunch of people are waving their hands in the air and a bunch are just sitting there waiting . . . then a person who doesn't normally get called on raises their hands to see if they will call on them . . . so . . .

I: So [Male 5] . . . you know that if you raise your hands you are going to get called on . . . do you do it very often?

Male 5: No.

Male 4: You need to feel confident.

I: So you heed to have some confidence before you get that hand up? Is that what I am hearing [heads nodding]

I: Am I putting words into your mouth?

All: No.

I want to get away from that because it has got to be from you and not me.

I: Let's look at #6 . . . would you like to participate more in this class or would you prefer to not have to participate at all?

I: Is there anybody here who would like to raise their hand and volunteer more often?

General "no"

Male 2: I volunteer a lot but I don't really get called on a lot.

Male 3: She calls on students throughout the class.

I: So she is pretty even as to who she calls on?

I: Have you noticed that too, [Male 5], . . . do you think she is pretty even?

Male 5: Yes.

I: Is this something you actually have even thought of . . . do you notice who is and who is not . . . because [Male 3] popped in right away and said the "smart kids."

Male 3: [Unintelligible] . . .

I: Okay . . . is there a situation in which you wish she would not be calling on you?

Male 5: Yes, when I don't know it.

I: When you don't know it?

Male 5: Or I am dozing off.

I: Dozing off? Yeah . . . it's hot in the afternoon.

Male 4: Sometimes she calls on you 'cause you are zoning out.

I: Yeah.

I: So let's flip over onto the back side of the paper.

Pause while I retrieve a new sheet.

I: Now we want to know a little bit more about your confidence . . . or your lack of feeling confident as you try to learn history in that class and I am going to start

by asking you . . . I already think we have covered #1, but I am going to ask it again since it is on my list . . . how confident are you to raise your hand in class . . . Male 5 said he is not confident unless he knows he has the answer.

No response.

I: How confident do you feel, [Male 1], about volunteering in this class? [Male 4 chimes in].

Male 4: Lots of times I will know the answer . . . just to see if she calls on me.

Male 3: I am pretty confident because I know that she won't have the class make fun of you of something . . . there's no pressure if you get it wrong.

I: Okay so when you got it wrong . . . nothing horrible is going to happen to you?

All: NO!

I: No one is going to make fun of you at recess or lunch or whatever?

Male 3: They will laugh . . . sometimes kids make jokes . . . trying to be funny

I: If you are trying to be funny and you are funny then that works out.

Male 2: Yeah. [Unintelligible] . . .

I: So let's look at #2 . . . are you learning anything in this history classroom?

Several: "Yes."

I: Learning a lot?

I: Is this an easy class for you?

Male 3: Sort of hard.

Male 2: Yeah.

B$ The tests are hard . . . they are random and challenging.

Male 3: Every week she gives us a test.

Male 5: Mumbling about [Unintelligible] . . .

I: So you would say that you are learning a lot but the tests are hard.

I: What could happen to make you feel more confident about tests

Male 4: Go over it more.

Male 3: She rushes through the chapter sometimes so it is hard to learn it thoroughly. Some classes are on chapter 14 . . . we are on 21.

I: [Male 5] was trying to talk, and it is so rare . . . I want to hear what he has to say.

Male 5: We are ahead of Ms. [names another teacher] class? in chapters . . . they probably understand the chapters better than we do.

I: Interesting observation.

I: I get criticized for going too slow.

Male 2: So you can understand the topic more.

I: Yes . . . there is so much to race through . . . you don't get to retain it much. So I get in trouble around here for not going faster. So I understand the problem.

Male 5: Last year they went too slow Ms. Jensen went too slow . . . we did China in one day.

I: So it looks to me that looking at #2 as if you are learning a lot, but the tests are hard and the teacher goes too fast.

Some: Yeah.

I: So if we look at 2a where it says, "Describe what things make it hard: it sounds like too much homework, . . . what is it that makes it hard?

Male 3: Going through the chapter is pretty easy . . . but when it comes to the test . . .

I: Okay, the tests are hard.

I: If you don't understand something in this class, it could be a homework assignment or a chart . . . what do you do?

Male 4: You raise your hand and say you don't understand it or go up to her after class or after school and she will help you.

I: Okay, . . . how would you go after school rather than raising your hand in class?

Male 4: Because it is one-to-one attention.

Male 3: If you are trying to understand something and you want to get back to it . . . she looks at you like you weren't paying attention.

I: So you would fee like you . . . [Unintelligible] . . .

I: Think about yourself now in school and in this classroom . . . how do you feel about yourself in this classroom? Do you feel confident you are learning? Do you feel confident you know how to learn? Is there anything that happens during classroom discussions that make you feel more confident or less confident? What can you talk to me about? What happens in the class? How do you feel about yourself as a student? Let's go around the table.

Male 1: Well I feel confident to learn in class and know about all that stuff.

I: You don't have [Unintelligible] . . .

Male 1: Sometimes like in one chapter the dynasties . . . I completely failed the test and I was upset and didn't understand it.

I: Is there anything that could have happened in class discuss to make it easier for you?

Male 1: Go a little more slower maybe.

I: [To Male 3:] How about you?

Male 3: It is easy to learn in that class, but it goes a little bit too fast. You can ask a question whenever you want but it does make you feel weird about it.

I: Do you both feel that you have the ability or whatever it takes to do well?

I: How do you feel about yourself as a history student? Hey I am pretty good or I am not so good? I don't really care.

[Male 5 shakes his head . . . he doesn't really care.]

Male 4: I feel okay like I understand stuff most of the time . . . most of the time I am kinda lazy about homework. I have a learning disability so it's hard.

I: What kind of learning disability?

Male 4: Aspbergers

I: Really? You would never know it.

Male 4: I just learned this about a month ago.

I: Well, I gotta tell you . . . I have been around a lot of Aspbergers and I would never know you had that . . . it must be very mild . . . you seem like a totally squared-away kid to me.

Male 4: It seems pretty easy except sometimes I can't remember stuff from the beginning . . . like if we have a STAR test.

I: Yeah that's hard . . . especially in history next year you get the history STAR test and it goes all the way back to 6th grade . . . It's crazy..

I: So what does the confident student look like in the classroom? If you had to describe the most confident student . . . I am not asking for a name . . . but what would a confident student look like?

Male 3: Smart looking.

I: Smart looking?

Male 4: Have glasses with tape on the nose.

I: [Laughs.]

Male 1: Participates.

I: Okay, when you say participates . . . I am glad you said that word . . . what does that look like?

Male 2: Like they are raising their hand and always trying to get the teacher's attention [Unintelligible] . . .

Male 3: They keep on asking questions until they get it.

Male 1: Most of the time they know what the answer is to the questions.

Male 4: Like if they get a bad grade on a test or something like they miss a question . . . they can study for a long time and they just like freak out.

I: So a really confident student freaks out when they don't do well? And the less confident students says, "Oh well"? Am I putting words in your mouth?

Male 4: You are not putting words in my mouth.

Male 3: You start out thinking you can do it, but with a couple of tests and you fail they don't really care that much anymore . . . as long as I can keep my grade up . . . so I get all these Ds on tests but as long as I do the extra credit and keep my grade up.

I: Okay, so would it be fair to say that . . . sounds like from talking to you is that how well you do on your tests has a lot to do with on how you feel about yourself as a student . . . more than how she treats you or your homework.

Male 1: She treats everyone the same.

Male 3: We are all treated the same.

I: Okay . . . so is there anything that happens in Ms. Jensen's class that makes you feel like you can always do the work no matter what? Not talking about tests now . . . but anything that makes you feel you can always handle this or that.

Male 3: I don't get that question.

I: Well the question is Is there anything that happens in the classroom either from the teacher or the other students that makes you feel like. . . I can do this it? I can do whatever assignment she gives me and be successful at it?

Male 2: Well as long as I pay attention in class and understand what we are learning about in class I can do any assignment . . . but not what am I going to do?

I: So it comes from you . . . not from somewhere else?

Two boys say "yes."

Male 4: Sometimes I am lazy and don't want to do anything so I will just do one.

Male 1: Or talk to much in class.

Male 4: Yeah or doze off.

I: What is the consequence of being lazy?

Male 1: You don't understand it.

I: But that is different from being lazy.

Male 3: You get a bad grade.

Male 2: You forget to do your homework.

I: Is there anything in that class that happens that makes you feel like I can't handle this?

Male 2: A big project when you have to write a lot.

Male 3: The thing that she gives us makes you feel [Unintelligible]

I: Is there anything the other students do that make you feel like you can't keep up?

Male 3: Yeah . . . those kids who turn their assignments in real fast . . . and how can I keep up with that?

Male 1: So you start rushing.

I: What kind of students are they . . . don't give me their names?

Male 1: They just rush though it to get it done.

Male 4: They don't get distracted like us.

I: Okay . . . all right . . . well is there anything else you would like to tell me about your interactions with the teacher and your ability to be successful in that classroom?

Group is silent.

I: Do you feel like you pretty much hit it?

Male 3: You hit the nail on the head.

I: I hit the nail on the head?

I: Wraps up . . . flatters them . . . you are a smart group of boys, you understand yourself and you are honest . . . you are blowhards . . . you say I don't get it if I don't study. Do you think you have control over your own learning or is it up to the teacher?

Male 4: It depends on how hard you want to succeed in life.

Male 3: **I** do.

APPENDIX F

FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT NUMBER 2

This is focus group #2 Sept 21

I: I am going to explain to you what this is all about. I am doing a special project at USF and I am doing a special project on seventh graders because I taught seventh grade for many years and what I am most interested in is how you interact with your teacher. And your ability to learn in your class; so when we are talking today we will mainly be talking about Ms. Jensen because she is your teacher this year for history, not the person who is currently subbing for you sometimes . . . because it is kinda different when you have a sub . . . right? So your answers today should be more related to Ms. Jensen than with Ms. Robbins (substitute teacher pseudonym)

And its not that I am here to evaluate Ms. Jensen because that is not it at all . . . but I just want to talk about seventh graders and how they relate to their teacher and they relate to their students . . . anyway . . . so what I have here is a list of questions we are going to talk about today and you can look at them as I go along . . . some kids are better off if they see them, okay?

[Unintelligible] Thank you!

I: You are welcome . . . so the very first question I will rephrase so you understand it and you are welcome to drink water and have some snacks whatever you want . . . when you are in your history class, can you tell me what your experience is when Ms. Jensen is teaching and you are going to have

a class discussion and she starts to call on different students . . . how does that work for you? What is your personal experience with that? Let's go around the room. yeah. Yes . . . you can start [Female 1]

Female 1: Well when we have class discussions she usually kind of makes jokes sometimes like we are focusing but she will make jokes. And gets us to laugh as we go into the subject so that makes it kind of fun

I: Okay, so how does that work for you when she is calling on students?

Female 1: Ummmm. I usually raise my hand a lot.

I: You do?

Female 1: Yeah

I: Can you tell me why?

Female 1: Well I like to share my ideas.

I: Okay . . . so [Female 2] what about you?

Female 2: I like it when we have class discussions because I think we learn more from what we have to say than what Ms. Jensen has to say.

I: Okay, so if I repeat something back wrong you have got to tell me . . . sounds like you are saying you learn more from listening to the other students than the teacher.

Female 2: Yeah

I: So can you explain that?

Female 2: Well lets say that some people in our classes . . . like say like . . . they are not . . . I am going to say smarter than the teacher but they know more stuff so they might tell us stuff to help us understand better.

I: Okay, . . . do you interact with them or do you just listen to them interact with her?

Female: We just interact all together.

I: You do? . . . you do oh, okay, okay, okay. . . so [Female 3], what is your experience with the teachers?

Female 3: I find it really good that people are talking a lot because sometimes I can get confused in the chapters we have been reading a lot and I don't like to enter the discussions because I don't like to.

I: You don't like to? How come you don't like to?

Female 3: I don't think my information is that useful.

I: You don't think your information is that useful . . . so . . . you just hope she doesn't call on your . . . you don't raise your hand?

Female 1: I raise my hand a lot.

I: You raise your hand a lot? Okay . . . good.

Female 2: So if you are working in a group you get to hear other opinions from your other classmates and I . . .

I: It is more helpful than if you just listen to the teacher?

I: So the [Unintelligible] interactions with the other students . . .

Laughing by all students.

I: Go get a Kleenex while you are there (laughing) . . . was it a fly?

Female 1: A tiny fly.

I: Like a little fruit fly?

Female 1: Yeah . . . laughing.

I: Well don't worry it will come out . . . so I want to go to the next one . . . during class discussion . . . like what I have heard you guys say is that you really learn from each other . . . but what has been your experience when you are interacting with the teacher? . . . she is calling on you and you are responding . . . lets start with you [Female 6] .

Female 6: Ahh, like when Ms. Jensen calls on me . . . like sometimes I won't have the right answer so I know I might be judged by that.

I: Who would judge you?

Female 6: Probably my classmates.

I: Your classmates . . . do you worry about the teacher judging you?

Female 6: No.

I: Why don't you worry about the teacher judging you?

Female 6: I don't because I know that if she judges . . . well if I get the answer wrong . . . she won't tell me what's right but she won't say like you are like not the smartest . . . like she doesn't compare us.

I: She doesn't compare you?

Female 6: No.

I: But you think the other students might?

Female 6: Yeah.

I: So have you ever experienced the other students making comments when you respond?

Female 6: No not really.

I: Just a feeling?

Female 6: Yes . . . just a feeling.

I: All right [Female 3] . . . how about you? . . . how do you feel about it when the teacher is calling on you during class discussion?

Female 3: Well I feel kind of confident about it because I uh am not really worried if I get it wrong because she will just tell me.

I: Do you, are like [Female 6]. . . you aren't worried or concerned?

Female 3: No.

I: That Ms. Jensen would not make you feel bad if you had the wrong answer?

Female 3: No.

I: So [Female 2] I would like to hear from you . . . since you said you don't like to volunteer . . . how do you feel when the teachers call on you? Or are calling on other students

Female 2: When she calls on me I feel like she just wants me to talk because like I had her a year ago and she hated me . . . she didn't like me very much because I didn't participate and she always wanted me to participate.

I: Did she tell you she didn't like you?

Female 2: No . . . she told me that she liked me, but she told me she didn't like me how the way I am [Unintelligible]

I: How the way you are what?

Female 2: Interacting.

I: Oh . . . interacting! Were you having interactions with your other classmates that bothered Ms. Jensen? Do you know what she was talking about?

Female 2: No, but I think I know what she was talking about because the way I mostly don't talk during when we are doing these groups things . . . I just sit there and be quiet.

I: But you get the impression she wants you to speak up more?

Female 2: Yes.

I: Does she ever say to you in front of class . . . I want you to speak up more?

Female 2: No.

I: Does she ever tell you privately?

Female 2: She tells me privately.

I: Okay . . . so she doesn't say it in front of class. So . . . does anybody else want to add anything? . . . No? Okay.

I: How would you describe interactions you have with Ms. Jensen, whether they be in the whole class or one on one? What would you say? Female 5, let's start with you.

Female 5: Ummm

I: How are your interactions?

Female 5: It's good.

I: It's good?

Female 5: Uh huh . . . cause she really doesn't have to tell me like to interact more or anything?

I: Uh huh

Female 5: And like whenever she asks a question I am usually the first one to raise my hand.

I: Uh huh

Female 5: Usually . . . but sometimes I don[‘t raise my hand but I usually do.

I: So after you raise your hand . . . does she call on you?

Female 5: Yeah . . . if no one else raises their hand.

I: Okay . . . so who does she call on?

Female 5: Probably the other kids.

I: Why?

Female 5 Because I usually raise my hand more than others.

I: So you think she wants to spread the wealth . . . shall we say?

Female 5: Yes.

I: So how about . . . have you ever had an occasion when you have had to talk with her when she goes around the room . . . just you and her?

Female 5: Ummm . . . no.

I: When she goes around . . . no . . . Ok . . . so Female 6, what about you?

Female 6: Cause I don’t really like to answer questions and I don’t really like to talk in front of the class.

I: Does that mean you don’t like it when she calls on you?

Female 6: Yeah a little.

I: Is that why you don’t raise your hand very often?

Female 6: I don’t raise my hand very often, but when I do she usually will call on me cause she knows I am confident with it actually.

I: So are you saying that when you do raise your hand you know it, so Ms. Jensen is going to call on you?

Female 6: Yep.

I: Okay . . . have there been times that you have raised your hand and given the wrong answer?

I: So what happens then?

Female 6: Yep . . . so she will just tell me that isn't right and then she will pick on another person to see if they know it.

I: So she doesn't correct it with you?

Female 6: No . . . she goes to a different person.

I: Well . . . how do you feel when that happens

Female 6: Well actually . . . I feel like I am actually learning something.

I: Like you are learning from the other student.

Female 6: Yeah.

I: Okay. . . so [Female 3], what about you . . . can you describe your interactions with Ms. Jensen when she calls on you or even one on one when you go up there to talk to her?

Female 3: I usually don't have to go up and talk to her because I am a pretty good student in class so she doesn't have that problem.

I: Okay.

Female 3: And so like if I have a question [Unintelligible] most of the time and then she usually calls on me.

I: Okay . . . Um are there any times [Female 3] when you raised your hand and she didn't call on you but you wanted her to?

Female 3: Yep.

I: So what usually happens then?

Female: So I don't usually mind because she will call on a student who doesn't participate a lot.

I: Like she is trying to be fair? Like for example, I am not trying to put words in your mouth, but she notices that Female 2 never raises her hand so she's gonna call on her.

Female 3: Yeah.

I: Okay, okay, so she kinda of distribute . . . so what about you [Female 2]? Has there ever been a time that you did volunteer . . . that you actually raised your hand?

Female 2: Yeah . . . a couple of times but it has been rare . . . probably twice.

I: So what happened when you did?

Female 2: I can't remember what it was but I answered it correctly.

I: Did you feel good about that?

Female 2: Yes.

I: But you were glad it was over?

Female 2: Yes

I: So I am not trying to put words on this tape that are not coming from you . . . so [Female 6] . . . does that kind of what I am hearing? (Female 6.) . . . does that seem right to you?

Female 5: Yes.

I: Because there is a big age difference between you and me . . . so what I may hear may not be what you really mean . . . so is it true of all of you? (that I am not putting words into their mouths) . . . Okay.

I: # 4 on there which is about call–outs . . . when Ms. Jensen asks you a question . . . there are always a few kids in most classes that call out without raising their hands . . . do you have call outs in your class?

General agreement heard.

I: Okay . . . a lot of call outs so I am going to go around and start with [Female 4] . . . so you call out? Or who calls out?

Female 1: Well . . . umm. I think like (names a male student) calls out a lot.

I: Would you all agree that you notice (male student) calling out a lot?

General agreement heard

Female 1: And like (male student).

I: Okay.

Female 1: Yeah.

I: Do you all agree?

General agreement heard.

I: So you all agree as to who calls out?

Female 2: Yeah.

I: So what happens when they call out?

Female 1: So Ms. Jensen calls on someone who . . . she ignores them.

I: She ignores them?

Female 1: Yes.

I: So she doesn't acknowledge them when they call out?

Female 1: No.

I: Does she ever ask them not to call out?

General Agreement that sometimes she does

Female 1: But they still kinda do it.

I: So how do you feel about it when they call out . . . how do you feel Female 1 when they call out?

Female 1: Ummm . . . I am kind of annoyed sometimes . . . 'cause like someone actually knows the answer but usually doesn't raise their hand so when they raise their hand they are like, Oh, I want to. . . because they like know the answer but if someone calls out it is like, Oh I knew that.

I: And so they call out and you are thinking "darn," I had that answer but they called it out?

Female 1: Yes.

I: Okay, so I got that right?

Female 1: Yes.

I: How about you, Female 6? When the boys or anyone else are calling out like (male student) and (male student) and anyone else?

Female 6: I really kind of feel annoyed by that because it is kind of . . . like me I don't really raise my hand that often so if I really know it and someone calls it out it is like (sighs) 'cause they just ruined it, and I just wanted to speak out for once.

I: So when they ruin it, does Ms. Jensen say anything about it?

Female 6: Yeah well sometimes she'll like stop the entire class and give us a little lecture about it because you shouldn't be calling out but people do it anyways.

I: Well you mentioned (male student) and (male student) . . . are there any girls that call out?

Female 6: Not really . . . not that I know.

I: So it is the boys that call out?

General agreement.

Female 4: Sometimes (female) does . . . and (female)

Female 2: She yells out a lot.

General agreement

I: (Female) yells out a lot?

Female 2: Yes.

I: Remember, I am not using your names here so you are safe.

Female 3, what about you during call outs. Do you notice that it is (male student) and (male student) and (female) that are calling out?

Female 3: Yes . . . they do call out a lot but not really like (female) . . . she might call out once in a while but not a lot if someone calls out once or twice or maybe a few times she (the teacher) will usually be okay with it but if they keep doing it she will be like, stop calling out and then they will usually stop.

I: Okay

Female 3: So then we can start again.

I: Okay so why do you think these kids call out . . . and not raise their hand?

Female 3: Maybe they can't like wait . . . or hold on.

I: Okay . . . what about you Female 2 . . . what do you have to say . . . you already said a little bit.

Do you notice (male student) and (male student) calling out?

Female 2: Well its' (male student), (male student), [Female 5] and sometimes (female) . . . I can't remember . . . yes and sometimes (male student) . . . sometimes he calls out and he always makes jokes and everyone laughs.

I: Okay so he's a clown? (laughing)

Female 2: Yes he's a clown.

I: Okay . . . all right . . . #5 . . . so if Ms. Jensen throws out a question and students start raising their hand . . . which student is she the most likely to call on do you think . . . anybody . . . [Female 4]?

Female 4: Probably the student who doesn't raise their hand a lot.

I: Okay . . . but I am saying . . . if five students have their hands up . . . or four students . . . of those four who is she most likely to call on?

Female 4: Of the students who call out a lot?

I: Well there at #5 . . . if students have their hands up . . . which students usually get called on?

Female 4: Well . . . probably . . . (male student)?

I: Yeah . . . why?

Female 4: Because…..umm . . . I don't know . . . Think maybe because he doesn't raise his hands a lot but just calls out . . . raises his hand and she calls on him?

I: Trying to reinforce it with him to get his hand up? So if (male student) raised his hand and four girls raised their hands, who do you think she would call on?

Female 4 [hesitates] A girl or something?

I: Could be

Female 4: [Unintelligible] girls . . .

I: Oh [Female 5] and a male student?

I: Why is that do you think?

Female 4: ‘Cause [Female 5] whenever she does a question she does this: and then they would be kind of mad blah blah blah blah blah [lots of commentary from the others [Unintelligible]

I: Oh, because she goes on and on?

Female 4: Yeah.

I: So you think maybe Ms. Jensen doesn’t want that going on do you think? Gives too much information? Is it possible to give too much information?

Female 2: It’s really a lot.

Female 4: Like she overstates it.

Female 2: She [Female 5] makes it sound like is a really big deal.

I: Okay . . . so when you are sitting in the class and she asks questions and you want to get your hand up . . . what do you think are your chances of getting called on?

Female 4: Well, it kinda depends who else has their hand up.

I: Give me an example.

Female 4: Like just whoever doesn’t participate enough . . . like she won’t ever call on me.

I: Cause you participate a lot.

Female 4: Yeah.

I: So . . . Ms. Jensen seems to be focusing on the nonparticipants?

Female 4: Yeah.

I: Okay.

Female 4: Like if you participate it is a big deal like she gives you extra points for it.

I: Oh . . . she gives you points for participating?

Female 4: Yeah.

I: Ah . . . would you participate less if she were not giving you points?

Female 3: Not really.

I: Do the points make a difference to you? (Interviewer asks two females) Does it make a difference for you . . . or do you either participate or you don't?

Female 3: Yeah.

I: At least for you.

Female 3: At least for me.

I: So make a note so what I am getting is you either participate or you don't. the points don't make a difference?

General consensus.

I: Okay for #6. This is a good one for you [Female 2]. You have said that you don't participate very much and Ms. Jensen doesn't seem to like that. Would you like to participate more? Would you like to have a circumstance where you participate more?

Female 2: Well . . . it kinda of depends on what topic we are on and what the discussion is.

I: Okay.

Female 2: Like the history chapters we have been doing is what I don't know.

I: Um hmmm.

Female 2: I will raise my hands for the ones I really know well.

I: Okay . . . did you lose your train of thought? Are you choking over here? No? Okay umm. Let's think about your history class for a minute and the kids that are in there because I sat in the back of that class and I observed for about a month . . . is there anything about the students in that class that make you want to say more . . . or less.

Female 2: Less.

I: Less . . . Okay what is it?

Female 2: I feel like they should raise their hands more because I am not the only one who doesn't participate.

I: Okay . . . okay but I mean if we changed who the kids were in that class would you participate more? Does it make a difference who the kids are? Or the fact that they are shouting out?

Female 2: Well probably . . . could you repeat the question?

I: Well . . . I am just trying to figure out if there is anything in that history class that keeps you from participating? That could be changed . . . like who the kids are . . . that are in the room . . . or how they call out . . . or how they raise their hands.

Female 2: It's not my classmates.

I: It's not your classmates?

Female 2: No.

I: It's just that you are shy.

Female 2: No I am not shy. I talk loud in my classes.

I: Oh you do? So . . . what in that class is keeping you from talking?

Female 2: Ms. Jensen.

I: Oh, okay.

Female 2: She gives me this weird look every time I want to participate.

I: "The look."

Female 2: Yeah.

I: So when you get the look you feel a little . . .

Female 2: I don't want to say anything.

I: Okay, . . . so what does that look look like?

Female 2: Kind of serious.

All laugh.

I: Can you do it?

Female 4: It's a really funny look.

I: Okay . . . well the boys mentioned the look too . . . "the look." It's funny . . . Okay so if you wanted to add anything to this one . . . what would you like . . . to participate more ore less in the class?

Female 6: There's nothing really.

I: So you are okay with it.

Female 5: Uh-huh.

I: How about you Female 6 and Female 1

Female 1: I am pretty much okay with it.

Female 6: Since we have a grade for participation now you can tell if you participated enough or not enough?

I: Well talk to me about that because how does she do that? Does she make a mark by your name?

Female 2: I don't really know.

Female 4: I don't know how she grades it but somehow she does.

I: Do you get a grade printout that shows how much you have for participating?

Female 1: Well it shows on schoolloop and once in awhile she will upgrade it so it will just say like it will say 35 out of 50 or something like that.

I: All for participating

Female 1: Oh okay . . . so you actually get to see what you grade is for participation? So it is possible to get a zero for participation?

Female 1: Yes.

I: Okay . . . like it would be 50 out of 100?

Female 1: Yes.

I: How about you Female 2 . . . what would you have in there? What do you usually have in participation?

Female 2: A zero.

I: Did you? Did anyone else get a zero?

Female 2: Nope.

I: Just you?

Female 2: Just me.

I: Were you surprised?

Female 2: I wasn't surprised because she told me and everyone else in the class that she will grade you for participation.

I: So you knew it.

Female 2: Yes.

I: Knew it going in . . . all right lets flip to the back now the back has to do more with questions about your confidence . . . now I am using the word confidence . . . do you understand what it means to be confident?

Female 5: I have a blank side.

I: Oh, I am sorry . . . here I will share with her sorry . . . my mistake. Okay so when we are talking confidence . . . can you see it?

Female 2: Yeah I can see it.

I: Yeah, so what does it mean to be confident? Yeah . . . go ahead.

Female 1: Well not being scared about what you are going to . . . say.

I: So then my first question is and I think we know where Elva is already on this . . . but maybe I can get you to say it again . . . how confident are you about raising your hand in the classroom. . . . Ms. Jensen comes and she says today we are going to talk about the Dynasties in China and we are going to have a discussion . . . do you feel confident to raise your hand . . . [Female 5] you do, [Female 1 or 6]? You do? (they are nodding). [Female 3] you do, but [Female 2] you do not . . . okay you do not because . . . can you be clear with me?

Female 2: Most of the time when everyone raises their hand, most of the time when she looks at me she gives me that look that freaks me out.

I: Okay so you . . . if you raised your hand she might give you the look?

Female 2: So like before if I was going to raise my hand . . . so looks at everyone and then she gives me this weird look.

I: So you want to back off.

Female 2: Yes.

I: Okay . . . so #2 . . . are you learning in this classroom? And is it easy for you to learn there? Or is it hard for you to learn there? Let's start with you [Female 2].

Female 2: It's easy.

I: What makes it easy for you?

Female 2: Because like Ms. Jensen . . . she makes everything really enjoyable [ringing noise is heard].

I: That means the end of the period is coming, but I will give you passes.

Female 2: It means that it is enjoyable how Ms. Jensen might make the discussion . . . but other kids make jokes about it [Unintelligible].

I: Okay . . . so can you give me an example of what makes the discussion enjoyable?

Female 2: Well, like sometime she say . . . like . . . I can't remember . . . like they say some things . . . but I pay attention when she does that though and then the next thing is she jokes about it.

I: Okay . . . so it's kind of like clarifying it.

Female 2: Clarifying it.

I: Okay . . . [Female 3] what about you? Are you learning in the class?

Female 3: It's pretty easy because like she makes everything like really funny, but like I don't know like history is an easy subject for me.

I: Okay. . . . So what about you [Female 6]?

Female 6: For me its actually really easy well . . . it's not super easy but it's easy because Ms. Jensen, she knows how to teach us and make it fun at the same time.

I: Uh-huh.

Female 6: Like we will do these activities and everything that make it fun for us.

I: Yes I noticed you were doing activities where you get up and walk around and look at the board . . . stuff like that . . . or someone was emperor and you had to go up . . . I can't remember exactly all of that. So [Female 5] what about you . . . are you learning anything in the class? Is it easy or hard for you?

Female 1: In the beginning of the year it was hard for me.

I: What made it hard for you.

Female 1: Because like we would read out of a book and then those things like when we would walk around the classroom.

I: Yes . . . activities.

Female 1: Activities . . . and I don't learn that much because it didn't help me, but not it is getting easier for me but at the beginning of the year it was hard.

I: What was hard about it? What about those activities?

Female 1: I just didn't like the concept of them . . . like why we did it.

I: You would rather have discussions?

Female 1: Yes . . . maybe it is more boring but.

I: You are more comfortable with it.

Female 1: Yeah.

I: Okay I would like to ask a couple more questions related to your confidence . . . ummm if you don't understand something, in the class, it could be anything, maybe you don't know what the assignment is of what the pages are or whatever . . . what do you do . . . . [Female 2] what do you do?

Female 2: I ask Ms. Jensen.

I: Okay is she helpful?

Female 2: Yes.

I: How about you?

Female 4: I ask Ms. Jensen and she will like explain it to me even if I like don't need explaining or I just ask the person sitting next to me to tell me.

I: So sometimes you call on another student to help you?

Female 4: Yes.

I: Have you ever done that [Female 2]?

Female 2: Yes.

I: Yes . . . Okay, thank you. What about you?

Female 5: When I don't understand something I will just ask Ms. Jensen or a friend . . . but if I am at home and I want to know what the homework is I usually go on to schoolloop or I will call up one of my friends.

I: Okay, so if you had a choice about something you didn't understand between asking the teacher or asking another student who would you ask?

Female 4: Student

Female 5: Student

Female 3: Student

I: So three of you said student . . . so why wouldn't you ask the teacher?

Female 1: You said teacher?

I: No you said student, she said student and [Female 3] said student.

Female 1: Oh you did?

Female 2: Yes.

Female 1: No, she said Ms. Jensen.

I: Okay so who said student? Okay so why would rather ask a student than the teacher?

Female 1: I don't know I'd just rather ask the students.

I: Okay how about you?

Female 5: It's kind of just more comfy talking to someone else than the teacher.

I: You are not afraid that she isn't going to say how come you didn't know this?

Female 1: Female 5 Yeah

Female 1: She does that sometimes.

I: So you are a little bit worried about being in trouble for not knowing? Okay, okay. So as a history student I don't know what your grades are in your classes because I don't have access to that but how do you guys end up performing? How do you feel about yourself as student in that classroom? Do you feel like you are a really good student, a not-so-good student a so-so student? How do you feel about yourself?

Female 1: Good.

I: Good?

Female 1: Yeah.

I: Can you give me an example or a reason?

Female 1: Ah, because I, ah . . . what's the word . . . participate more in the discussions.

Female 5: I also think I am a good student in her class because I always have my homework and since I have a brother in that class he needs me to find out and I participate or not as much.

I: How about you [Female 2]?

Female 1: I feel like I am doing okay in that class . . . I am a good student because I mostly get good grades on my tests, but my participation isn't too good.

I: Ok so you feel like you are doing okay in history?

Female 1: Yeah.

Female 3: I am a pretty good student because I usually get good grades on my tests and homework assignments so I [Unintelligible]

I: Okay so you [Unintelligible]

Female 3: Yes.

I: Is there anything that Ms. Jensen does in the class that makes you feel like you can do this work no matter what happens? What is it [Female 5] . . . can you tell me about it?

Female 1: Well . . . because she doesn't give us that hard of homework and its usually like previews for the chapters, so just write down things we are thinking about the next chapter or what we see in the pictures.

I: You are saying that the things that make you feel like you can do the work is that she structures assignments . . . it is user friendly?

Female 1: Um-hmm

I: How about you?

Female 4: Well we do that for every chapter so we are kind of getting used to it. I feel like I can do that.

I: Anything else?

Female 4: In our interactive notebooks we usually do the geography page for it and usually do that so we know how to do it.

I: So what is there about that that makes you feel you can handle it?

Female 4: Because we do it a lot in her class . . . the first time she actually taught us we got a lot of time to do it so we learned how and now we keep improving.

I: Okay, okay . . . is there anything in the class that makes you feel like you can always do the work? Or is there times when you think, "I can't really do this"?

Female 2: A lot of the time I feel like I can do the work like sometimes Ms. Jensen helps us in the class . . . [Unintelligible] that's pretty much it.

I: So discussion is helpful to you?

Female 2: Yes.

I: [Female 3] what about you?

Female 3: I usually . . . what?

I: The question is . . . is there anything that goes on in the class that makes you feel that you can always do the work?

Female 3: Yes . . . I usually pay attention a lot in class like I don't like the feeling she gives me if I don't do my home work . . . she won't say she is disappointed in me but like I'll know it.

I: And

Female 3: I don't really like that [laughs] [Unintelligible]

I: You can't take a breath and breathe deeply like . . . .oh I hear the time is up. I will let you go back to class. Thank you for today.

Students are heard pushing in chairs and saying goodbye.

APPENDIX G

FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT NUMBER 3

I: We are going to start with #1 and go right through including what is on the back. Feel free to say whatever you want. So let's look at the first question . . . we are talking about class discussion with Ms. Jensen where you were in the class and she was having a lesson and she is calling on different kids . . . how did that work for you? What was your experience with that? Were you raising your hand . . . were you trying to contribute, did you shout out, did you wait to be called on . . . whatever comes to your head.

Male 1: When I knew the answer I would raise my hand.

I: Okay . . . if you knew the answer you would raise your hand . . . what about if you didn't know the answer?

Male 1: Then I wouldn't have raised my hand [Unintelligible]

I: Okay. Okay.

Male 2: If we looked like we weren't paying attention she would call on us if we weren't raising our hand

I: Okay . . . help me out here . . . you are?

[Boys say their names so I can identify them on tape]

I: Okay . . . so a couple of times on the tape I may say, "Oh (to male student). . . thank you" so that I know that was your voice contributing but your name will be removed from the transcript . . . so don't worry . . . so is there anyone . . . Male 1 . . . you are happy to contribute if you know the answer?

Male 1: Yes.

I: Any other situation where you want to go back and forth with the teacher about something you are learning?

Male 3: It only happened a couple of times.

I: Can you tell me about that?

Male 3: Well, but she would usually win.

I: She would win?

Male 3: Yeah.

I: So what does that mean . . . she would win?

Male 3: Well sometimes there would be like . . . well in the context of an argument . . . I thought this was happened.

I: Based on something you read or studied?

Male 3: Yeah.

[Coughing in the background]

I: Are you all right?

I: So you would have a conversation with her but she would win?

Male 3: Yeah like it would kind of be in the context of an argument like she would say it happened this way and you read it and maybe misinterpreted it and think it happened another way.

I: Is it possible she could have misinterpreted it?

Male 3: Possible.

I: Was there ever a time when you thought you'd let her win but you thought you know what . . . she doesn't have it?

Male 3: Oh yeah.

I: Laughs . . . Okay . . . well let's look at #2 . . . when you interact with the teacher during classroom instruction and discussion . . . what has been your experience about whether she will call on you, not call on you, ignore you . . . if you give a wrong answer what happens, if you give a right answer what happens?

Male 3: Um . . . it seems like when you don't raise your hand that much and then she sees someone raise the hand that doesn't . . . then she always call on that person.

I: so if you

Male 3: Um . . . is someone raises their hand every time . . . you don't call on them

I: So if you don't raise your hand often but then you do she is going to call on you?

Male 3: Um . . . um hmm . . . like if you know every answer like if you keep talking about it and you raise your hand every time she may call on you only once or twice . . . if you don't raise your hand.

I: How does that make you feel when you know you have your hand up and you have the answer but she won't call on you?

Male 3: Um . . . its kinda like you have the urge to say it out loud but you don't or she will get mad at you.

I: If she gets mad at you . . . what does that look like . . . when she is mad at you?

Male 3: She gives you the look.

I: She gives you the look? What's the look look like . . . can you tell me? . . . [to Male 4] what does it look like

Male 4: [Unintelligible]

I: Does she stare at you?

Male 4: No.

I: Not a friendly look?

Male 4: Yeah.

I: An unfriendly look . . . okay . . . she doesn't have to say anything she just gives you the look.

They agree.

I: Did she tell you in the beginning of the school year . . . when I give you the look . . . watch out or something?

Male 2. Um . . . no.

I: It is funny because the other two focus groups mentioned the look . . . laughs . .. for me I think it is kind of funny that you all say the same thing . . . ummm how would you describe your interactions with her either in class discussion or at other times? Like when you have to go up and get help, or go to the bathroom, or you are checking a grade.

Male 2: She is always nice about it.

I: Okay . . . [Male 4]. . . what about you?

Male 4: Yeah.

I: [Male 4] what about you?

Male 4: Yeah . . . she's pretty nice about it.

I: What does it look like when a teacher is nice about something?

Male 4: She smiles.

Male 4: Yeah . . . she smiles.

I: Nods her head? Or just smiles?

Male 1: Just smiles and nods.

I: Okay . . . have any of you ever had a when she did not smile and nod when you went to talk to her? . . . yes . . . Okay tell me about it.

Male 2: Well . . . I occasionally crack jokes and she doesn't like that . . . so . . . if she

I: Are you cracking by calling out?

Male 2: Like when we are doing something we might go off the subject with something humorous and then she might not like that if she was trying to teach something . . . then I get the look

I: So you get the look . . . even close up face to face you get the look?

Male 2: No, she usually just stands behind the overhead and then she . . . sometimes she walks through the aisles while you are taking a test.

I: Yes . . . right?

Male 2: Usually when [Male 3] has his hand out she will ask if it is serious or if it is a joke.

I: Oooh and what does [Male 3] say?

They all laugh.

Male 3: Usually says . . .

Male 2: I usually just put my hand down.

I: Do you feel comfortable raising your hand in that class?

Three voices say "yeah."

Male 3: Like if you give an answer wrong that is way wrong . . . she won't like make fun of you.

I: Okay, . . . she will be like.

Male 3: No . . . what are you looking for?

Male 4: Or does anybody have a different answer?

Male 3: Sometimes she will be like, there needs to be more answers.

Male 4: And you always do it.

[Laughing]

I: Male 1: . . . tell us what you think.

Male 1: Or she will do popcorn.

I: Oh like you were doing in the room today when I . . . [Unintelligible] . . . came in today?

I: So look at #4 for a minute so what happens if someone calls out? Do you guys know what I mean by call out? Shouting out but your hands not up?

Male 2: She either ignores you or you get the look.

Others: Yeah, yeah.

I: So she ignores you or you get the look. Is this look thing something peculiar to her or do other teachers do the look too?

Male 2: Ummm . . . mostly just her.

I: Is this her way of controlling you?

[Unintelligible] . . . um hmm

I: But it sounds like you have enough respect for her that the look is working for her? . . . because you know . . . not all teachers give the look . . . laughs . . . Okay.

I: So let's go around the table . . . Male 2: . . . do you ever call out in class?

Male 2: Yes.

I: 1/2 the time, more than 1/2 the time?

Male 2: Ummmmm less than 1/2 the time

I: Why do you do that? . . . What is going on in your head?

Male 2: Ummm sometimes I forget to raise my hand . . . sometimes I am so excited I raise my hand.

I: Ahhh . . . okay . . . you guys are making lots of faces?

Everyone talks at once . . . [Unintelligible]

I: Let's go with that Male 2: . . . why would you sit in class and do that?

Male 2: It is subconscious.

I: Was it because you wanted to get a laugh?

Male 2: I think it is because I am bored and I kinda of drift off.

Male 3: Didn't you say you didn't even realize you were doing it?

Male 2: No, I didn't .

Male 3: One time you were just like this [Unintelligible]

I: And Ms. Jensen said it was creepy?

Male 3: Yes, one time I was doing this and she got really scared and like I was doing it for five minutes.

[Unintelligible . . . laughing]

I: So you guys like to make faces?

Male 3: Like one time I was bored.

Male 4: Like she doesn't get really mad at you . . . like she likes a little laugh in the class but not too much.

I: Okay . . . so she welcomes humor so long as you don't go too far?

Male 4: Like if you are the class clown but you still do your work . . . then it is all right with her.

I: Let me ask you . . . if you had to pick three students in the class who were most likely to be the class clown . . . who would it be? [Male 1]: . . . let me ask you.

Male 1: Probably

I: Okay and #2? [Male 3]: . . . and number 3?

All . . . yes

I: What no girls?

[Unintelligible] No.

[Unintelligible] [Male 4] No.

I: So you aren't naming any girls for me so the class clown thing is mostly boys?

Male 2: I think it is [Male 4] and [Male 2] and then [he names another male student] . . . but no girls.

I: Why not?

Male 4: Like if they say something funny they just say it to the person around them they won't really shout it out and make the whole class notice them . . . just the people around them.

I: So that is interesting . . . okay . . . so if several students have their hand up . . . I think [Male 4] already covered this but if several students have their hand up . . . which students usually get called on?

I: [Male 4] says the one that never raises their hand?

I: Okay . . . so why do you think that is? . . . what is she doing when she does that?

Trying to keep other people awake then? . . . so that's the why . . . you think she calls on them because she is glad they finally raised their hand? If they are not raising their hand she is afraid they are losing track? They are bored?

Several Yes.

Male 3: Well she says we have like 50 participation points and if we don't participate enough then or get called on enough then it affects out participation grade which really affects our report card.

I: So if you are a really smart kid but you sit in the room and say nothing.

Male 4: You could have like a B because you don't say nothing.

I: [Male 3] . . . since you brought this up . . . how does she keep track of your participation points . . . does she write them on a grade sheet or write them on the board or what?

Male 3: I guess she just kind of looks to see who is raising their hand who is in it and who is not spacing out and who is on task.

I: Do you think . . . for the five of you . . . that participation points make you want to participate more or less or it doesn't matter?

Male 2: It doesn't affect me.

I: Not too much?

Male 2: No.

I: So what about you [Male 4] . . . does it make a difference?

Male 4: It makes you want to say more stuff.

I: So without it you probably wouldn't say much?

Male 4: Probably not.

I: Why not?

Male 4: Because I really don't like speaking in front of the class.

I: You don't . . . how come you don't like speaking in front of the class [Male 4]

Male 4: I don't know . . . I just don't.

I: Okay . . . is that true in all of your classes?

Male 4: Yes.

I: Pretty much . . . was it true in sixth grade?

Male 4: Yep.

I: Fifth grade?

Male 4: Yep.

I: And probably will be true in eighth grade?

Male 4: Yep.

I: How about you [Male 3]?

Male 3: I think it doesn't usually because I usually raise my hand like whenever I have the right answer but ummm when she says . . . c'mon there are not a lot of hands up . . . c'mon you will get participation points . . . I don't usually raise my hand.

I: But that's a reminder.

Male 3: Yes.

I: She reminds you…when you get a report card do you get a printout showing you participation points?

Male 3: I don't know . . . I don't think so.

I: So you know you got them?

Male 3: It is on Schoolloop?

I: Oh so it is on schoolloop? [Male 1]. . . have you seen it on schoolloop?

Male 1: Nods.

I: All right . . . so think about the five of you . . . I want you to think about your own . . . on #6 there . . . I want you to think about how much you participate in class discussion . . . would you like to participate more than you are doing or less? . . . with Ms Jensen in her class . . . do you ever say I wish I could participate more? Or gee I wish I didn't participate so much . . . let's go around.

Male 4: I would say I participate just the perfect amount.

I: Okay what about you [asks Male 1].

Male 1: Just a little bit more . . . I am a little quiet.

I: So you would like to participate more . . . ? Okay so when I was in the class observing she used to say your name a lot . . . cause at first I didn't know who that was but then I knew . . . do you know why she would say your name a lot? Are you aware that she does?

Male 1: [Unintelligible]

I: So you are not aware of that . . . Okay, I just wondered if you were. So [Male 3] . . . what about you? Would you like to participate more or less?

Male 3: I think that uh I would pretty much like to stay the same as what I am doing the only thing is that I don't think I need to participate more or less.

I: So it feels all right where you are? . . .[Male 4]?

Male 4: Same.

I: Same . . . maybe a little bit more?

Male 4: Yes.

I: In your heart you feel like, gee I could just do this a little bit more?

Male 2: Well, for me I think I could have done it a little less because I got sometimes carried away . . . it got me in trouble.

I: It did.

Male 2: Got the teacher mad at me.

I: Was the teacher really mad at you?

Male 2: Not really . . . just a little fed up.

I: Yeah?

Male 2: Yeah.

I: Can you understand why that would be?

Male 2: Yes, I can understand.

I: Okay . . . so let's look at the other side . . . these kinds of questions have more to do with your confidence about yourself . . . in terms of your ability to learn in that class . . . we talked a lot about calling on, who calls out who talks and who raises their hands . . . who I want to know about your confidence level . . . is there anybody among you who does not know what confidence is and would like me to explain it? Like if I say . . . are you confident you can shoot hoops . . . do you know what I am talking about? . . . Ok so here is the question . . . How confident are you about raising your hands . . . in other words [Male 4] has already indicated that he is not crazy about doing that

Male 4: I am not.

I: Okay, so . . . so what holds you back?

Male 4: I don't know sometimes I just don't have the answers . . . something like that.

I: Like you are afraid you might say the wrong thing?

Male 4: Uh-huh.

I: Okay . . . that's fine . . . okay . . . so sounds like [Male 2] . . . you are very confident . . . not maybe about raising your hand but to just jump in there!

Male 2: Yep.

I: Is that right?

Male 2: Yep.

I: Okay . . . how about you, (to Male 3)

Male 3: Well, like I raise my hand whenever I have an answer I think is right.

I: Uh-huh.

Male 3: Or whenever I want to point out something or make a comment or question/

I: Uh-huh . . . okay . . . and you feel secure enough that you can do that in that classroom.

Male 3: Yes.

I: You don't feel that . . . boy I would like to ask a question but I am afraid to?

Male 3: No.

I: No . . . Okay . . . how about you (to Male 1).

Male 1: I am the same as [Male 3] . . . I don't ask too many questions.

I: Why not?

Male 1: Well, I don't usually have many questions.

I: You just don't have them?

Male 1: Yes.

I: Okay . . .

Male 3: I would feel confident to shout out the answer even if it is completely wrong.

I: So if you knew the answer you were going to give was probably wrong . . . would you still feel confident to shout it out?

Male 3: Probably.

I: How about you [to Male 4] if you knew the answer you were going to give was probably wrong would you give it?

Male 4: Probably.

I: Test the waters a little bit?

Male 3: I would probably say it because even if it was wrong . . . you would at least find out what the right answer is . . . if you need it for an answer on a quiz.

I: So you are saying it is worth it to take a risk?

Male 3: Yep.

I: How about you? [to Male 1].

Male 1: Well, sometimes like if you say the wrong answer you know which one is wrong so if you have a test.

I: Okay . . . if you thought the original answer was wrong you aren't going to say anything . . . why not? . . . what might happen to you?

Male 1: I just won't say it.

I: Okay . . . I just wondered because you are hesitating . . . like there is too much pressure in the class about not raising your hand when you are not sure . . . fear or being made fun of or . . .

Male 1: Not here.

I: Not here . . . not in her class.

Male 1: No.

I: In other classes?

Male 1: She wouldn't let it happen.

I: Okay . . . so all right . . . this is a history class you are in and so #2 . . . are you learning anything in this classroom?

I: [To Male 4] . . . are you learning anything?

Male 4: Yes.

I: You are . . . how about you, [to Male 3]?

Male 3: Yep . . . whatever is in the textbook or in her lesson? . . . usually I grasp it and I understand it

I: You understand it pretty well . . . how about you [to Male 4]?

Male 4: I ah . . .

I: Are you learning anything?

Male 4: Usually what is in the textbook . . . I don't really know it . . . I don't remember it really good.

I: Are you able to learn it okay . . . so do you think since school started you are learning anything in there? How about you? [to Male 5]. You are shrugging you shoulders.

Male 5: I forget.

I: So you are admitting maybe you don't remember anything much at all?

Male 5: I don't like the stupid class.

I: Okay . . . [Male 1?]

Male 2: Same as [Male 1]?

I: Like the bathtub effect . . . all the knowledge is in there and then you pull the plug and all the knowledge goes down the drain? . . . Yes . . . okay . . . all right ummmm . . . well it is hard to learn in this classroom?

Male 1: Not really.

I: Anybody else? Anybody else think it is hard? What keeps it easy?

Male 4: She helps you with to make sure you know the answer.

I: Okay . . . well describe . . . well you all have told me that there is nothing in the classroom that makes it hard to learn . . . so if you don't understand something in the classroom . . . say she is doing a lesson on . . . I am doing this out of my head . . . the class system in Hinduism, for example . . . you are sitting there and you are thinking . . . I don't get it——what do you do?

Male 3: I blurt out loud and say I don't know.

I: So you are shouting out because you are frustrated or?

Male 3: No I want to get it.

I: But instead of raising your hand . . . is there some reason you shout out instead of raising your hand?

Male 3: Because when most of the time I shout out and anyone [Unintelligible] instead of raising my hand.

I: Okay . . . so if you raised your hand and didn't get it then . . .

Male 3: She might not call on me.

I: She might not call on you . . . okay . . . so shouting out is going to make sure you get your question answered?

Male 3: Yes.

I: I see . . . so what about you? If you don't get something . . . what do you do?

Male 4: I just wait until the end to see if my question is answered.

I: If it doesn't?

Male 4: Then I ask her.

I: Privately?

Male 4: No.

I: You ask publicly?

Male 4: Yeah.

Male 2: And I will ask a question about it and if someone doesn't get out I will shout out "me too" sometimes if she is going through a lesson she might say . . . hold on to your question and it might get answered.

I: Okay, so if you aren't getting something you're not afraid to . . . not afraid to speak up?

Male 2: No.

I: How about you?

Male 1: I would ask someone else.

I: Or the teacher?

Male 1: Or the teacher.

I: But you are not afraid to ask . . . you would never sit there and say . . . I really don't get this but I don't want to say anything . . . okay.

Male 4: Well, I will have to agree with [Male 1] and [Male 2] because like sometimes I will agree and say I don't get it either.

I: Uh-huh . . . but you're not afraid to say something in class because someone would put you down for not knowing?

Male 4: Naaah.

I: Okay . . . #4 . . . how do you feel about yourself as a student? Are you a good student in this class?

Male 4: Well I get A's.

I: So you are getting A's . . . you would say that you are doing well? . . . Okay How about you [Male 3]?

Male 3: I would say the same as [Male 4] I get good grades and all . . . I get an A . . . and [Unintelligible]

I: So how do you feel about it Male 1)? . . . in the class? Do you do well in there? Feel like you are learning?

Male 1: Yep? . . . I always get like A minuses.

I: Okay.

Male 1: Sometimes its hard but always ask a lot of questions.

I: Okay . . . you ask a lot of questions . . . so how about you?

Male 2: Same as [Male 1]. . . I always ask a lot of questions to make sure I get it.

I: Okay . . . so let me ask you . . . what does a really smart kid in your class look like? And I don't mean for you to tell me oh he has blonde hair and blue eyes . . . I mean.

They all laugh.

I: I mean what does a really smart kid look like in terms of their behavior and the things they do . . . how do you know?

Male 4: They are triplets and they eat in class.

I: And they are really quiet? [Laughing.]

[Unintelligible]

I: Okay so what does a smart seventh grader look like in a classroom?

Male 1: [Unintelligible]

I: Okay . . . glasses?

Male 1: Weird clothes and then a big binder full of stuff . . . and they have really good posture.

I: Okay.

Male 2: They don't blurt out or anything and they always apologize and they always know the answer.

I: They know the answer?

Males 2 and 3: Yeah.

Male 3: They will say the answer and then they will go on for like 5 minutes . . . they will say enough to make a whole section in a chapter [lots of laughing and agreement now among all of them].

I: Is there anybody in that class that fits that description?

All: Yeah.

I: You can name them.

All: [They name three female students]

Male 3: [Female 1] goes on and on.

I: You are naming girls now? Do you think the girls are the smart ones in the class?

All. Yeah.

I: You do? Now why is that?

Male 2 and Male 4: I don't know.

Male 3: Cause they don't mess around in class.

I: Can't you mess around and still be smart?

Male 3: No.

Male 4: I guess so but only when its time to talk which is not a lot of the class.

I: So well let's move on because I know you have a basketball game to go to. Is there any tine in the class where you feel that "I can do the assignment no matter what she gives me. . . . Is there ever a time like that?" Anything Ms. Jensen can do to make you feel like that? Her behavior . . . her look?

Male 4: Well at the end of teaching us she will go is there anyone who doesn't get it or anything?

I: Okay, so she creates the atmosphere where you are comfortable?

Male 2: Yeah.

I: How about you [Male 1]?

Male 1: Yeah . . . same as [Male 2].

I: Is that for real . . . so you feel like you can really learn if you want to?

Male 4: Yeah, well she will hand out the assignment and then come to your desk and have a one-on-one conversation with you if you need it and that helps.

I: Okay.

Male 4: And that helps . . . it helps a lot more than if she just talks to the class.

I: Okay . . . so is there anybody in the class whom she tends to go more to their desk than anyone else? Nobody? [Male 4] . . . anything you want to add?

Male 4: [Unintelligible]

Interviewer shuts door because of outside noise.

I: We are almost done here but I just want to ask a few more questions . . . so I am going to ask the last question and then let you guys take off. Ummm . . . is there anything that ever happens in this class that makes you feel like you just can't do it?

Male 4: When she gives us huge essays that . . .

Male 2: Yes . . . when she gives us huge essays with 700 words and you have to write a huge amount and it's due tomorrow.

Male 4: It's actually only 350 words.

I: So some of the assignments sometimes makes you feel like you can't?

Male 4: Whenever she feels that we can't do it she will lower the standard.

Male 3: And usually when we start it seems lot easier but if you are interested in the topic or if like or you just remember to use a lot of adjectives then it is a lot easier.

I: Is there anything she ever said or did when she interacted with you that made you feel like you couldn't do the work?

All: No.

I: So you all feel pretty good about Ms. Jensen?

Male 3: When she is there she has good control of the class.

I: What does Ms. Jensen do to control the class?

Male 3: Well, you know how like when you have a teacher throughout the whole year you like to make a good impression.

I: Relationship.

Male 3: Like they put in your grades and stuff but with a substitute you really don't care because you don't want to make a good impression on her.

I: Doesn't the sub do your grades sometimes?

Male 3: Yes . . . she does but . . .

Male 4: She doesn't do anything much.

I: Just holding the fort?

Male 4: Yeah.

Male 4: Especially in first period . . . we just run around the whole class . . . sometimes she will just sit in her chair and not tell us what to do or anything.

I: So the teacher that communicates with you better and has a relationship with you better . . . I am trying to figure this out.

All: Yeah , yeah.

Male 4: Ms. Jensen was strict at first . . . at the beginning of the year she was really strict and then she got really cool.

Male 3: So if a teacher is too strict you might not like them or have respect for them.

I: So as long as they are strict but respectful to you?

All: Yeah.

I: Anything else . . . you guys have been great . . . lots of good insights vocabulary and you have given me a lot of good information . . . anything you want to add about your confidence in the class?

I: So you are done and ready to check out?

All: Yep.

I: All right, so thank you so much for today . . . do you know where you are going now and you need any help: a pass or anything . . . you think you will be okay . . . have your teacher call me when you get back to class.

APPENDIX H

FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT NUMBER 4

Focus Group #4 - 5 females

I: Interviewer

Interviewer introduced herself, explained her interest in Grade 7, her experience teaching Grade 7, and her interest in how seventh graders interact with their teachers. She tells them "You saw me observing. Now I want to hear what you guys have to say . . . Look at first question. I will explain it. When you are sitting in class and Ms. Jensen calls on you, what does that feel like for you? *Interviewer tells them she is going to ask questions about Ms. Jensen. If they don't understand . . . let her know and she will try to get it another way.* Student asked interviewer to explain first question she says they do not understand.

I: So the first question is about your experience in the class when Ms. Jensen was there. When she was calling on students and you might raise your hand and she would call on you or are you raising your hand or whatever. So when you are sitting there and she is in front of the class and she says something like, "Last night you read chapter 5 and lets talk about what is in it . . . how did that work for you guys?" How does it feel when you are in class discussions with the teacher . . . anybody want to start or should we just go around?

Female 1: Sometimes I just wanted her to call me. Sometimes if I am not paying attention I am like . . . don't call on me . . . don't call on me.

I: So sometimes you want her to call on you and sometimes you don't want her to call on you?

Female 1 It depends on if you are paying attention and are interested.

I: Okay . . . what makes you interested?

Female 1: If it is about a topic I can relate to . . . kinda . . . if its about like the landscape of someplace . . . doesn't always have anything I . . . like the fashion during the Heian period was interesting because they blackened their teeth and stuff . . . and now like we whiten our teeth so it is kinda funny.

I: By comparison . . . so you . . . I they were discussing that you would want to get involved in that discussion. [Student nods.}

I: So how about you [Female 2]?

Female 2: Well, sometimes I know the answers and sometimes I don't . . . so if I know something about it that no one else knows . . . then you want them to know it so you say it . . . but if what you know they are already saying . . . there is no point in me saying anything.

I: Okay . . . all right, so [Female 3] . . . how about you?

I: How did you feel during class discussions when she was calling on students?

Female 3: Well usually if it was a topic I know a lot about or am interested I will raise my hand more, but lots of times I am not paying attention and it's not a good way for me to learn because . . . I don't know . . . because its just . . . that some kids just don't always have the right answers . . . so it's like boring so I don't pay attention.

I: So let me see if I am saying this right . . . you think that class discussion is a waste of time because a lot of kids don't know the stuff so it is just time wasted?

Female 3: [Agrees]

I: What does Ms. Jensen do [I will get to you in a minute . . . off to another student[. . . .in a situation like that when a lot of the kids don't seem to know it?

Female 3: Well she sometimes says, "I need more hands," and then people who would think I am just going to say what somebody else would say I bet that person would have the right answer and so there is no point in me saying it but maybe they raise their hands because they also know it.

I: Okay . . . okay . . .[Female 4], during class discussions where there is a situation where she is calling on students and you are raising hands, how does it feel?

Female 4: Well, usually I want her to call on me because I am into history . . . like all of my life because I know all of this stuff.

I: I wish you were in my class because it would be fun to teach someone who actually likes history.

Female 4: But most of the time I think Ms. Jensen gets annoyed with me because I can sit there for 15 minutes just like this and she is like, Please let me call on someone else.

I: And she won't call on you then?

Female 4: Yeah, like because she wants . . . [hesitates]

I: Someone new?

Female 1: Yeah, she wants someone who isn't normally paying attention to pay attention and if so they could learn something too.

I: So who is that most likely?

Female 1: Who won't pay attention?

I: Yeah . . . you don't need to give me names but is there someone like . . . always the same students who are not paying attention that she tends to call on?

Female 1: It tends to be people in the back because a lot of time they think the teacher won't really notice if they talk or don't remember.

I: Okay.

Female 1: Cause if you are like in the front row and you talk to someone then she will know exactly what you are talking about and say "stop pay attention," but if you are in the back you can say Oh [Unintelligible] and so and so.

I: So if [Female 4] has her hands up and she is being ignored for say 15 minutes maybe . . . your arm is getting tired?

Female 1: Yeah.

I: And you are sitting there and you are wanting her to call on you, but instead she is calling on everyone else?

Female 1: Yeah.

I: Have you noticed who it is she calls on?

Female 4: Well it is usually people like [names one] and people who are off task and not paying attention because she wants them to be able to learn and get with the flow.

I: Right . . . okay, and so when you think about the classroom, is it any particular couple of students? . . . or could it just be anybody?

Female [unidentified]: Well like normally with their hands up or normally on task . . . and like people in the back that are on task rarely . . . so if she . . .

I: Interrupts . . . is that why they are in the back?

Female [unidentified]: [Unintelligible]

I: Okay . . . [Interruption by PA announcement]

I: Okay, so let's go to #2 on your list. Let's focus on Ms. Jensen . . . not as a person but as a teacher. What experience have you personally had with her when you are interacting with her during class discussion? Let's go around . . [Female], I will start with you.

Female 1: Why don't we start with [Female 4]?

I: Okay . . . let's start with [Female 4]?

Female 4: So you mainly mean like just . . .

I: [Interrupts.] Well when you raise your hand and it is Ms. Jensen and you . . . even though everyone else is in the classroom . . . what experience did you have?

Female 4: Like talking and contributing [seems confused by questions].

I: Yeah . . . I mean how did it work . . . how did your interactions work with her?

Female 4: I think she usually liked it . . . when it was one of those days when no one understood it and then when I finally got it.

I: [Laughs.] She's relieved?

Female 4: [Laughs too.] Yeah.

I: How did you know that she liked it ? Anything you can tell me? Anything she said or did?

Female 4: Well she would sometimes be like, "Yes . . . finally!"

I: [Laughs.] You mean she might smile or nod her head?

Female 4: Yeah.

I: Good . . . okay. . . so how about you? [To Female 5]

Female 5: Ummmm . . . I guess good . . . because I never had a bad experience with it.

I: Nothing bad . . . like you always felt like she was okay to deal with? [trying to draw her out] okay . . . [Female 2].

Female 2: Well, I always felt like if we tried to say things we weren't sure about she kind of like hummed a song or something [Unintelligible]

I: so you thought she supported you; anything you want to add?

Female 2: [Unintelligible] Sometimes I would have a problem and like call out.

I: um hmmmm . . . . you would?

Female 2: Yeah like if I just wanted to add something and she didn't answer me for a long time I would just get [Unintelligible] and then she would get mad.

I: [Gentle tone.] How would you know when she was mad?

Female 2: She'd give you . . . the look.

I: [Laughs.] Everybody tells me that.

Female 2: The look is evil . . . like I want to murderize (*sic*) you.

I: Oh . . . okay.

Female 2: Just like you are not paying attention and you just continue doing that.

I: During the school year does she say to you if you guys are acting out I am going to give you "the look"?

Female 2: No . . . but it is just kind of an unspoken thing that everyone knows . . . that a lot of teachers that if you keep doing something you get . . . the look . . . and everyone is like mmmmmmmm!

I: Well, okay . . . that's funny . . . everyone has brought the look up so I gotta call Ms. Jensen and ask her about the look.

I: So, um, if I ask you to give me an adjective . . . under #3 . . . ask you to describe your interactions with Ms. Jensen not during class discussion but anytime you have to go in and ask about a grade or an assignment what kind of adjective would you say?

Female 2: Well, I guess positive.

I: Positive? Okay.

Female 2: She was always like helpful like if you were wondering something she would tell you where to look or help you figure it out.

Female 4: I would have to say that she was more cordial . . . like if I really didn't understand she was patient with me and she helped me figure it out and didn't get mad at all.

I: [Unintelligible] Okay . . . patient.

Female 2: Because that is one of the characteristics you need to be a teacher . . . patient.

I: Yes . . . it helps a lot [Female 1]?

Female 1: I've had Ms. Jensen every year since fifth grade.

I: Oh, you have?

Female 1: [Unintelligible] I feel pretty comfortable around her and going up to ask her something because it has been 3 years here at Central.

I: What if you had not had her for 3 years?

Female 1: Well, I think that I am used to having her because she has certain teaching methods that I have gotten to know over the years and her teaching methods and what she means when she says that.

I: Can you give me an example of that at all?

Female 1: Ummm

I: Teaching methods.

Female 1: Like if we have a class discussion she calls us on all the time [Unintelligible] you kind of get used to that . . . like some teachers will give you 5 minutes but she is different [loud noise in background now . . . makes the rest of this unclear; Interviewer closes door.]

I: So what happens if someone calls out in this class. You can talk about your own experience or what you have observed with other kids . . . what happens? Let's start with you [Female 4].

Female 4: So would definitely for sure give you the look.

I: Laughs

Female 4: If she got really annoyed with it . . . like sometimes she wouldn't mind like if it was open discussion and you didn't have to raise your hand.

I: And you knew that?

Female 4: Yes and she would give signals like through her eyes and body language. It's okay if you just talk out and then sometimes when she is asking you to raise your hands she like gets mad at you if you don't . . . do that.

I: When she gets mad what does that look like?

Female 4: Well . . .

I: Does she raise her voice, scream, and yell?

Female 4: Yeah . . . she kind of raises her voice a little and then she gives you the look.

I: The look . . . but the look does it . . . right?

Female 4: Yeah.

I: What about you [Female 1]?

Female 1: Well, ummm, the look while you are talking or if you call out while she is talking she might move your seat to somewhere else or have a talk with you.

I: Do you call out very often?

Female 1: [Shakes her head.]

I: No you don't seem like you would . . . [Female 4]?

Female 1: Sometimes I get upset because she just won't call on me. I just [Unintelligible] up and then sometimes if its not an open discussion and she gets made and gives me the look . . . like she moves you . . . like she only moves you if you are talking to your neighbor except she doesn't move you if you are talking in the discussion she just calls on someone else.

I: Think about this, think about the classroom for a minute . . . are there certain kids in the class that tend to call out more than others?

Female 1: Me.

I: You . . . are there others? [Female 2 is nodding her head.]

Female 2: Like sometimes people in the back.

I: What kind of people are sitting in the back?

Female 2: I am not sure.

I: What's that?

Female 2: I am not sure.

I: You are not sure?

Female 2: Usually it's mostly like the louder people.

I: Uh-huh . . . not necessarily smarter people just louder?

Female 2: Not necessarily calling out the answers but calling out to their friends of something like disturbing the class or something.

I: Like showing off?

Female 2: [Unintelligible]

I: Anyone come to mind . . . any particular student?

Female 2: Yeah.

They all nod and say uh-huh

I: Can you tell me if it is a particular student? Can you tell me if it is a male or female?

Unidentified: It's a male.

They all say: Yes, it's a male."

I: You are nodding your heads. Is it one person you are thinking of or several?

U: It is a group of people.

Everyone agrees.

I: And they are all male . . . with the exception of . . .

[Laughing around table]

Female 1: Maybe me.

I: So would it be fair to say that the kids that call out are the boys in the class?

Female 1: Except for me because I am also with this discussion about the discussion so I am more in the front.

I: Have you noticed too that the boys call out more than the girls?

Female 1: Yeah, I think.

I: Do they know the answer?

All say "no."

I: But they are calling out?

I: I am glad you raised that [Female 1] because when we do that how do you feel about it?

Unidentified voice . . . most of the time they are [Unintelligible] and trying to get attention and they are trying to draw more attention to themselves.

Female 2: And make other people laugh.

I: Like be the class clown?

Female 4: One time Ms. Jensen was asking a question about the King of Korea because it was like one of those days when we were talking about random stuff the whole period long.

I: Uh-huh.

Female 4: And then one guy in our class was like, "Ooh ooh, I know the answer pick me," and she's [the teacher] was like "yes?" and it was like "Charlemagne!" [she laughs].

I: So it was just a name he wanted to get out there? So does it upset you when they are calling out . . . do you feel like you don't care, do you feel annoyed?

Female 4: Sometimes it is just pretty funny . . . the answers they give.

I: So you just sit back and watch?

Female 2: Like toward the end of the year it was funny but now it is getting old.

I: Yeah, okay, so it gets old after a while.

Female 3: It kind of gets predictable, the stuff they pick.

I: If several students have their hands up . . . say there are five students with their hands up, which students usually get called on . . . you have already told me the kids in the back . . . is that always true?

Female 1: Well it's normally a few people, like if there is a couple of people who always raise their hands and some who rarely raise their hands, [Unintelligible] at the side . . .

I: Not front and center?

Female 1: No not front and center but the outside rows but especially toward the back because if you are in the front and center you are in the teacher's view more.

I: Do you agree with that?

Female 3: Sometimes the quiet people get it but they don't really participate.

I: But if they have their hands up . . . like a quiet person and a noisy person both have their hands up . . . who is she most likely to call on?

Female 1: Quiet person.

I: Let me ask Female 2.

Female 2: A quiet person because they rarely talk.

I: Ummmm if boy has his hand up and a girl has her hand up . . . who is she more likely to call on?

Female 1: I don't think it makes any difference.

Female 4 I don't think so either.

Female 2: Usually she makes it like each person has to say something and if you have already said something and someone else has their hand up . . . she will call on that person.

I: Okay.

Female 2: Teacher says you have already said something . . . let someone else say something.

I: Ok . . . I got it . . . good . . . all right. Ummm, I think I already know what you are going to say, but I am going to through this question out anyway . . . would you like to participate more or less during class discussions?

Female 1: I would like her to call on me more when I have the answers because like sometimes we are doing a topic that I know nothing about and so I would like her to call on me less.

I: Okay . . . now about you [Female 2], would you like her to call on you more or less?

Female 2: Probably more . . . a little more because I don't really . . . talk that much.

I: So you would be okay with her saying, "[Female 2], do you know the answer?"

Female 2: I think more depends on the topic they are talking about . . . if it is something I know a lot about I would rather her call me if it is something I am too like not sure about than [Unintelligible]

I: Okay, [Female 4] [mispronounces her name and apologizes].

Female 4: That's okay, everybody does that . . . Well, I have to agree with everybody but it would be nice to be called on a lot when you know everything but it is kind of a drawback when you don't know the topic as well.

I: Right.

Female 4: I understand why I don't get called on as much because I always have my hand up.

I: Okay and she wants to spread the wealth a little bit because she may feel like you are saving everyone else by providing the answers and as a teacher I will tell you in my experience I always have a couple of kids that know it and they want to get that hand up and you want to include them, but the other kids just start to sit back and let them do the work, so that's a real tough call because you feel really bad shutting down the kid that had their hand up; on the other hand ya gotta get the other kids involved . . . it's a very tough thing so . . . Okay, ummm, lets flip over to the back because now we are gonna talk a bit more about a slightly different aspect of interaction in the classroom . . . we are going to talk more your confidence level when you are learning . . . do you

four understand what confidence is? If I say confident . . . are you completely clear or do you want me to go over it?

Female 1: Like if you are confident it means that you know what you are doing, you are calm. You're fine.

I: You can do it well.

Female 1: Um-hmmm.

I: Don't need help.

Female 1: Um-hmm.

I: So here is my question . . . I have asked you this before and I think you already answered it, but I will ask it anyway . . . How confident are you about raising your hand? [Female 2] . . . I would like to start with you.

Female 2: Okay . . . if I know the answer then I am pretty sure.

I: Is there anything else that ever happens in that class that makes you not want to raise your hand? Besides not knowing the answer?

Female 2: Hmmm, nope.

I: Okay . . . how about you [Female 1].

Female 1: Usually like even if you get the answer wrong nobody is going to laugh at you so you have nothing to worry about by raising your hand.

I: Okay, okay. . . you are not worried about being teased at lunch or recess or something [Unintelligible]

Female 4: I am usually like really confident at it because I usually know what I am, except for when it is those really bizarre questions that I don't know so

sometimes I restrain myself in case the teacher wants to spread the wealth like you said and want to see if other kids know it, too.

I: Right . . . you don't want half the class sleeping while Female 4 does all the work for them.

Female 1: Anything you want to add? . . . you look pretty confident to me but maybe I am wrong?

Female 1: Yeah, I am normally pretty confident, but the only time I am not confident is when I am sure that she won't call on me so I have to keep my hand up there for a long time so then I just don't raise my hand.

I: Okay, okay, good ummmm . . . have you learned anything in the class so far this year? Has it been easy to learn or hard to learn? Let's start with [Female 5].

Female 5: Yes, I have definitely learned things but the topic seems lot harder for me like the dates.

I: So the dates are hard?

Female 5: More like the characteristics of the certain places I do a lot better.

I: Female 2 . . . how about you . . . are you learning anything this year . . . how is it going?

Female 2: Yes, I am learning stuff I didn't really know that before . . . I knew what it was.

I: So it wasn't hard for you. How about you [Female 1]?

Female 1: Umm, I am pretty bad at dates . . . the daters are familiar to me but I am just clueless about what happened . . . you have to remember when, what day when

Joe Bob died and when he had this battle and there is only one date and you need to match it with one of the two . . . that would be bad.

I: So it is not anything that Ms. Jensen did . . . sometimes the material can be easy and sometimes it can be hard . . . how about you [Female 4]?

Female 4: Well, I think I learned a lot this year . . . I have had a faint idea what the middle ages are like, but we are learning a whole bunch more . . . I didn't know there were civil service exams in China or I read ahead in the textbook.

I: Yeah . . . we have civil service in this country too . . . so you made that connection . . . is there anything in that classroom that made it hard for you to learn? Besides being asked to learn dates?

Female 1: Distractions by other people.

I: Okay . . . can you explain those distractions? You are nodding your head [Female 4] . . . can you explain and then tell me if you feel that way, too? Well when I am trying to study or figure a question out . . . and someone [Unintelligible] or says something completely random . . . even if its funny you will laugh so you didn't think it through or get the right answer so you can't remember it.

I: It is more likely to be another girl in the class or more likely to be a boy.

Female 1: A boy.

I: [Female 2] thinks it s a boy . . . [Female 1] thinks it could be either way . . . is that right?

Female 1: They tend to be more loud . . . more outward loud sometimes . . . girls just tend to talk among themselves . . . not loud.

I: Not trying to get attention.

Female 1: Yeah.

I: So if you don't understand something . . . that Ms. Jensen or a lesson that she gave you and you didn't get it . . . maybe you understood the materials but you didn't know what she wanted . . . what could you do? What could you do in that classroom if you didn't understand something?

Female 1: Well, usually if you ask Ms. Jensen a question and she won't review it she will expect you to ask one of your friends

I: Okay so she won't repeat it . . . she will try to have you get it from someone else? But what if you ask three people and you still don't know?

Female 1: Huh?

I: What if you ask the three people she tells you to and you still don't' know . . . do you go back to her and she will help you?

Female 1: Yeah usually.

Female 1: She will announce it to everyone because she would know that either she wasn't clear enough because too many people don't know it.

I: How about you, [Female 2]? If you didn't understand something what would you do?

Female 2: If I couldn't hear, I would ask [Female 4].

I: And you would get help . . . usually.

Female 4: Well what I usually do is I would ask her? Like if nobody else knew it or she didn't go over it again I would look it up on the textbook or the Internet and then I'd probably be able to figure it out.

I: Okay . . . did you ever have a situation where she is wanting you to do something but you have no idea and you can't get help?

Female 1: Yes it has happened.

I: It has happened? A couple of times? [Female 2] . . . has this happened to you at all? . . .

Female 2: Well kind of . . . like I would ask another student what to do if I wasn't sure about it.

I: Okay so you weren't sure . . . you weren't confident.

Female 2: It happens a lot of times where you aren't sure how to answer the question that you think would sound right or I would do whatever [Unintelligible] sounds better.

I: How about you, [Female 1]?

Female 1: Well, usually if I didn't hear her say what the homework is having schoolloop really helps 'cause you can just go on there and find out your homework or if there is a test or something.

I: Good . . . so schoolloop is helpful, too.

Female 1: Yes.

Female 4: This is a little unrelated but Ms. Jensen . . . I also like schoolloop a lot too because it is very helpful and I was on it doing a project for my group in language arts or something, and I checked all my other homework to see what else I had to do . . . then Ms. Jensen said something about participation . . . and I was like What's that? And I clicked on it to see what it was and it said participation worth 50 points and I thought what the heck is that?

I: Ooh.

Female 4: So I e-mailed her twice, and said what is this?

I: And did she help you?

Female 4: Yeah.

I: good . . . so sometimes she helps you on email on schoolloop?

Female 4: Yeah.

I: So that's a form of interaction with you? So on #4 . . . how do you feel about yourself as a history student in this class . . . [Female 2]?

Female 2: [Unintelligible]

I: Did you feel . . . hey, I am really good at history . . . or not so good or I am not too sure.

Female 2: Well, I am okay at it in some things, but not others.

I: Okay, okay . . . so it depends . . . what about you, [Female 1]?

Female 1: I am [Unintelligible] as a student because you want the grades and Ms. Jensen makes it really easy for you to do well . . . like you don't have this assignment and it would really help your grade [Unintelligible].

I: Okay . . . so she puts things on the board?

Female 1: And always reminds you.

I: And you are probably always listening.

I: [Female 4], how about you?

Female 4: I feel like I am a really good student in this class because I am able to remember stuff most of the time and when I didn't figure it out before so I was

able to get it done and I also made sure to participate . . . and also I have a lot of fun in that class.

I: Good! . . . [Female 1] . . . how about you . . . how did you feel about yourself as a student in that class?

Female 1: [Unintelligible] if there was something I didn't want to do with the question . . . I think that would help with the participation points . . . overall I think I was pretty good.

I: Is there anything that happens in that class that makes you feel like you can always do the work . . . no matter what? Some of you have already covered it . . . schoolloop . . . that kinda thing . . . anything else that goes on between you and Ms. Jensen that makes you feel like you can do it in this class?

Female 1: Like if there is a really easy homework assignment I will think, "Wow, this is easy . . . I could do 10 of these in one night."

I: You think the level of what is expected is easy to handle.

Female 1: Um-hmmmm.

I: Interesting . . . how about you, [Female 2]? Is there anything that happens in the class that makes you feel like you can do the work?

Female 2: She explains it clearly.

I: So she explains it well?

I: [Female 1] . . . what do you think?

Female 1: Well, she always keeps remind you what is due . . . [Unintelligible]

I: Does she remind you personally? Or the whole class as a group?

Female 1: There are some people she reminds personally and [Unintelligible]

I: Are there some kids she reminds more than others?

Female 1: There are certain people in the class that she calls on more . . . even doing the same work.

I: Are they male or female or does that matter?

Female 1: It doesn't matter.

I: How about you, [Female 4]?

Female 4: Well Ms. Jensen is very good at making me feel capable to do the work because she always gave me support and she would help me and . . .

I: Anybody else have that experience in this class or just Female 4?

Female 2: Well she would explain a lot of it and it is easy to understand.

I: Did you ever go up one-on-one and ask for help? [general agreement] And you felt you could?

Female 1: Well maybe if there was a test question which looked like there could be two answers . . . then she would always say . . . Oh . . . let me reword the question.

I: Oh, Okay!

Female 1: For everyone because maybe everyone wouldn't get it.

I: So you are saying that if a couple of kids stumble on it she would figure maybe everyone needed clarification.

All: Yeah.

Female 1: At least two.

I: Okay good!

I: And then the last question for you, Is there anything that ever happens in this class that makes you feel like "I can't do this"? "I just can't do it?"

Female 1: Whenever I was like stuck on a question and I was like this is so hard I can't believe it.

Female 2: Like when there was more like a distraction . . . like the tests we have and I am concentrating and people are moving their desks and bumping into me and I can't work when they keep moving into me.

I: Ok . . . so distractions in the classroom . . . where you feel like you are trying to work and they are bumping and talking . . . any particular group of kids that do that more than others? Or just everybody?

Female 1: Everyone does it at sometime . . . sometimes there is an empty desk and someone like kicks that desk.

I: So now you are talking a little more about how the classroom is set up . . . not interaction with Ms. Jensen. [Female 4], how about you . . . anything ever happen in the class room where you thought, "I can't do this . . . I am not getting it . . . I can't do it?"

Female 4: Like [Female 1] said, there are distractions and then the really brainracking questions . . . I only felt a little incapable but then I kept pushing myself and telling myself to do it.

I: Why do you do that? Why do you keep pushing yourself? . . . Have you learned to do that over time?

Female 4: Yeah . . . through soccer because if you don't push yourself—I play defense—then the forward is going to get around you and then they are going to score a goal.

I: So you learned over time that if you just keep at it you are going to be okay?

Female 4: Uh-huh.

I: Okay . . . so you are persistent, would you say?

Female 4: Yep.

I: Are you persistent, [Female 1]?

Female 1: Usually.

I: [Female 2]?

Female 2: I wish I were a little more persistent. Like sometimes you are working on a question you missed then I ask my mom and even she gets upset . . . sometimes I really . . . this is like one of the things that I really absolutely just hate. I will work on a question for a very long time and then come up. . . . Okay they are really slow on telling you how to do this . . . so first start here . . . and so okay you do it like this . . . now how do you do this right?

I: Who would be doing this with you?

Female 2: My mom . . . sometimes Ms. Jensen.

I: she would slow it down further than you needed it slowed down because

Female 2: You only need help in one place up to a certain point.

I: You don't want to go back and here all the other points . . . Well I am going to have to let you guys go and write passes because school is almost out, but I had one last question . . . not on the sheet.

I: If I were to ask you describe what a good student looks like in that class, what would you say to me?

Female 1: I am confused.

I: What kind of behaviors would you see?

Female 1: [Unintelligible]

I: Someone who has the work out?

I: Oh, slouch.

Female 1: Someone who doesn't put their head on the paper?

I: That's a good student?

Female 1: No that's not a good student.

I: So a good student sits up straight and has the work out?

Female 1: Eyes open rather than . . .

I: Look alert?

Female 1: Yeah.

I: [Female 2] how would you describe a good student?

Female 2: Well they participate . . . like some people in our class . . . she sometimes has a lot of people and she would sometimes try to get people to talk.

I: What about you . . . what does a student look like to you?

Female 2: Like [Female 4]

I: I don't mean with freckles and a white shirt.

Female 2: No, but like Ms. Bennet (pseudonym) said, your head should be supported by your neck not your hands.

I: Like I am doing right now. [Laughs.]

Female 2: Always focusing on the teacher . . . not distractions. People who could do better are sometimes distracted easily. A good student is always on task, is always focused on the work unless she has bee disrupted by other students.

I: How about you, [Female 4]? What does a good student look like if you had to write a paragraph about it?

Female 4: I would probably say like [Female 1] and [Female 2] and the other [Female 1] said. I couldn't rephrase that better, but mostly they are alert, they are focused, on task, and they have their work out; they look like they are alive and can do the work.

I: Okay . . . okay . . . before I let you go . . . because I am going to give you guys a pass –are there any kids in the class that never look like that?

Female 4: Yes.

I: Are there any kids I the class that always look like that?

Female 2: Not always but sometimes.

I: So you guys have been really great . . . you are very articulate; you speak well; you have good vocabulary; you are knowledgeable. I really enjoyed this and you have given me a lot of really interesting information. I certainly appreciate your time . . . but I now I am concerned about where to send you [and she writes them passes, etc.]