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I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Shari Robinson Lillestolen entitled "Daily Routines in Prekindergarten." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Education.

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Daily Routines in Prekindergarten

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Shari Robinson Lillestolen

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Dedication

I dedicate this study to my parents,
Frank and Kathryn Robinson,
who always reminded me not to forget about my school work.

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to gain a better understanding of daily routines in a prekindergarten setting. The study was conducted in a Tennessee prekindergarten in a pod-style classroom. Participants were nine adults (teachers and paraprofessionals) and 47 preschool children. Naturalistic qualitative methods of observation and participant interviews provided the data for interpretative analysis (Hatch, 2002). Knowledge of activities and participant perspectives was gained that was instrumental to understanding the more generic case of daily routines in early childhood settings. Factors found to be influential to routine design and enactment were the setting, teacher power and philosophical stance, and children's developing memory for routine events.

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To my husband, Tom, I say thanks for signing on for this, and for being my partner each step of the way. Thanks to my children and extended family, too, for allowing me the space and time during these years when my attention was divided from you.

To my colleagues and mentors at Pellissippi State Technical Community College. I owe a debt of gratitude for your encouragement and support for the last three years.

And, finally, I thank the many colleagues and hundreds of children that I have known over my career who added to my understanding of daily routines in preschool.

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CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

Background

My study examines daily routines in the preschool classroom. The study was prompted by an examination of my own practices in the classroom. Elements of daily routine are not usually included in published preschool materials/curriculum, and such unexamined elements have been described as parts of a “hidden curriculum” (Anyon, 1983). Nevertheless, I believe that an embedded daily routine serves as an organizing structure for the events and flow of the school day, from its beginning to its end. A structured, well-defined daily routine seemingly “worked” for my former preschool classes, but what meanings had the children and parents held that might be different from my own? What were the messages communicated to students and parents as they entered the preschool environment? Why did I deem that my routines represented “best practice”? I couldn’t remember the antecedents of my beliefs about the creation and enactment of daily routines. Why did I, as teacher, arrange routines the way I did in the classroom, and what were the perceptions of the children as they enacted them? Why did the teachers with whom I worked arrange their routines as they did? There are no simple answers to these questions or easy ways to account for the many influences and perceptions that converge as classroom routines are played out.

This topic might seem mundane to anyone who has not been a teacher, but it was my belief that the daily routine is one of the most sacred parts of planning and implementing the programs of many teachers. Several years ago, however, as I began visiting a variety of prekindergarten programs, I noticed that the daily routine precept that

I believed was so vital was not implemented everywhere. Not only were children unaware of the day's schedule, but also teachers, at year's start, had no set routines other than those imposed by school-wide schedules like lunch and dismissal. I wondered how this could be; why were teachers failing to do what had been so important in my curriculum design?

My teaching experience, spanning 25 years, has been in diverse settings. My practice has developed and changed from its inception in undergraduate early childhood education classes. I have attempted to keep current with educational research. Both graduate school course work and in-service training, most influentially High/Scope curriculum training (Hohmann & Weikart, 1995), have added to my knowledge base. Peers in the field, formal education, and even motherhood have all influenced my practice. I currently supervise practicum students at the community college level. Before passing on folk knowledge (Bruner, 1990) about daily routines to my community college students, I needed to know more. How could I defend my beliefs without researching their roots and the theory that informs the enactment of routines in the prekindergarten setting?

Purpose Statement

As stated, the need for this investigation originated in my practice as a kindergarten and prekindergarten teacher. Prekindergarten is replacing kindergarten as children's initial experience with formal schooling and, as such, seemed the best source to investigate conceptions and enactment of daily routine. I began my study by surveying eminent writers on early childhood education curriculum. High/Scope training (Hohmann & Wiekart, 1995) had added many dimensions to my practice, so I returned to

High/Scope's treatment of daily routine. I found references to High/Scope's own work, but with no other empirical or theoretical bases. Exploring other works (Hatch, 2005; Kantor & Fernie, 2003; Katz & Chard, 2000; Morrison, 2008; Shickedanz, York, Stewart, & White, 1977), I found that each source affirmed my opinions of and offered enthusiastic support for well thought-out routines. Yet, I was surprised to discover that, like High/Scope, their opinions about daily routine were underpinned by few theoretical references. These texts provided little assistance in defining what factors might underlie a prescription for the organized and sequenced routines regularly carried out in prekindergarten classes.

Turning to the broader literature, I found that only a few studies (Fivush 1984; Friedman, 1988; Schweinhart & Weikart, 1997) actually isolated daily routine as a phenomenon or related the practice to cognitive or socio-cultural development, and authors did not relate why it was so suited to best practice with prekindergarten children.

The widely accepted best practice of daily routines had not been validated outside of its demonstration in classroom enactment, nor could I find it related to theory. I therefore feel that my investigation of daily routine in prekindergarten reveals some new theory-based insights into the design, enactment, and participant experiences of the routines.

Choice of Case Study

The daily routine of the Reynolds Elementary Pod One prekindergarten in which I did my study was constructed and enacted by its participants. This investigation exposes the kinds of knowledge inherent in these participants' voices and in this particular local setting, disclosing understandings accessible in this particular site. I chose to conduct a

constructivist instrumental case study in order to access the “multiple realities” (Stake, 1995, p. 12) of participants and their particular story, while investigating the instrumental case of prekindergarten daily routine. This study was designed to provide a better understanding of the phenomenon of daily routines by examining both the meanings about daily routine held by Pod One participants and their enactment of daily routines. Research was conducted in a pod room containing three classrooms and populated by 4 lead teachers, 3 paraprofessionals, and 43 children. My observations as a participant-observer and participants’ interviews provided the data that illuminated the routines as they were enacted and understood by participants. This investigation of the case at Reynolds Pod One prekindergarten furthered my knowledge and understanding of the instrumental case of preschool daily routines.

Research Questions

The following initial questions were posed to anticipate discoveries and to foreshadow themes that might emerge in the study. Questions were generated from my aforementioned personal experiences as well as from a preliminary survey of the literature. These questions were used to focus my attention during observations in the field. I also referenced the research questions as I generated teacher-interview protocols following classroom observations and in my initial reading of the resulting data set. I tied initial typologies to these questions as they are evidenced in the data.

1. What defines daily routine in a prekindergarten setting? What activities make up a daily routine in prekindergarten? What is the sequence of the activities and how regular is that sequence? Are there distinctive features that differentiate Reynolds classrooms’ daily routine?

2. What influences the design of daily routines? What outside influences impact design of daily routines? What teacher characteristics impact design of daily routines? Does curriculum impact design of daily routines?
3. How do participants (adults and children) describe the daily routine? What is revealed in participants' narratives of daily routines? How do participants describe their roles in daily routines? Is there a shared narrative in prekindergarten?
4. How are daily routines enacted by participants? What roles do participants play out in daily routines? What values are imbedded in the daily routines? Are certain activity segments given special significance?
5. How are daily routines learned by participants? Is memory development involved when children learn daily routines? Do children operate from "scripts"? Does school routine become part of either a personal or shared memory? How does the phenomenon of time impact learning about daily routines?

Theoretical Perspectives

Embracing a paradigm, and the methodological theory that it suggests, is a critical decision in creating a qualitative research design. Descriptions of the traditions of qualitative research (Hatch, 2002, Creswell, 1998, Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) detail methodological theories and research designs for new researchers. Without delineation of my research paradigm, and thereby my epistemological and ontological meanings, making assumptions about the kind of study and methodologies I use would have been difficult. Embedded in the researchable questions were the decisions of where and how I uncover the understandings associated with the classroom routine phenomenon.

Ontological perspectives

I embrace a social constructivist ontology through which I come to understand the world of individuals, each constructing a reality that is local, personal, and shaped by individual history with socio-cultural experiences influencing any possible shared meanings (Rogoff, 2003; Bruner, 2004). I believe ontologically that reality is constructed by the participants of my study, as is my reality as participating researcher who was present in the context of the investigation and the description of the case.

Epistemological perspectives

My epistemological understanding is that there are multiple ways of knowing that are constructed by individuals as they experience their lives in context. Epistemologically, I believe that knowledge of prekindergarten routines is accessible in the stories and actions of people in context. The only “truth” is that which individuals construct through their actions and narratives. A research question explores the extent to which an agreed-upon reality of routine impacts student and teacher beliefs. The multiple realities found in prekindergarten routines prompted me to produce a case report that is polyvocal, accessing the multiple understandings of participants (Hatch, 2002, p. 238). Other salient features of the case are highlighted in the findings to add understanding of the “instrumental case” (Stake, 1995, p. 3) of prekindergarten routines.

Researcher Perspective

As a researcher, it is necessary to express my awareness of the impact my beliefs, personal and professional experiences, and cultural background have contributed to interpretations of the data. I sought to give voice to the teachers and children of Pod One in interpretations that emerged from the data. Their enactment of the daily routines

is, indeed, influenced by their unique culture and experiences. As I collected data in the naturalistic setting, I came to realize that previous teaching and observation of students in prekindergarten environments channeled my impressions. By acknowledging my biases, I seek to allow the story of daily routines, which originates in this study's data, to remain contextualized in the words and actions of the Reynolds Pod One prekindergarten teachers and children.

Organization of the Dissertation

Following this introduction, I present a review of the literature (Chapter II) to examine salient research that informed my study. Next, the methodology (Chapter III) is presented to describe the setting, participants, and methods used to investigate the case. The study's findings (Chapter IV) are presented in two sections in order to clearly tell the story of prekindergarten at this particular site and to illuminate data important to the instrumental case of daily routine. The concluding discussion (Chapter V) returns to the research questions with a focus on Reynolds Pod One prekindergarten as it serves to facilitate understanding of the instrumental case of daily routines.

CHAPTER II:

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Although setting up a predictable routine of activities for preschool children is an accepted practice in early childhood education, support for advocating the practice has not been specifically investigated. As I began the study of daily routine in prekindergarten, I found few studies (Fivush, 1984; Friedman, 1990; Schweinhart & Weikart, 1997; Solomone, 1999; Williams, 2001) that specifically isolated the phenomenon. I will first discuss these studies and the ways in which they influenced my research

Schweinhart & Weikart (1997) report the long-term benefit of the High/Scope curriculum model over a traditional nursery school model or a direct instruction model. They attribute the results to “the emphasis on planning, social reasoning, and other social objectives” (p. 117) found in High/Scope curriculum practice. Most directly related to this study is the practice by High/Scope teachers of a “Plan-do-review” (p. 125) sequence in the predictable daily routine. Though noting that the practice was designed to develop “children’s impulse control,” the studies did not explain the phenomenon of daily routines. The emphasis on planning by the preschool children as a part of the routine, however, directed me to investigate the children’s planning and their narratives as they describe the daily routine.

Friedman (1990) began a lifetime of studying children’s knowledge of time by observing their knowledge of routines in familiar daily activity patterns. Though his work

does not seek specifically to examine daily routines, it gave me a starting point to examine children's knowledge of the time-frames in daily routines in prekindergarten.

Fivush (1984), likewise, used daily routine to assist her in studying the development of knowledge in "Kindergartners' school scripts" (p. 1697). Fivush's study reveals the importance of routine for memory development by examining event representations, or scripts for action in a setting. Fivush's study was intended to elucidate memory development, but it serves to inform my study by suggesting the significance of memory development theory for understanding how children come to recall their daily sequence of activity.

Williams's (2001) study of Swedish preschools uses children's actions in daily routines to investigate social interaction and peer teaching. Her study reveals the complex nature of daily routines, or "everyday activities within the preschool context" (p. 319). She finds that the lived-out preschool routines are embedded with "rules, ways of acting, routines, codes and discursive practices" (321) that children learn together and from each other. Williams's study led me to seek other literature that would inform my study of the underlying social nature of daily routines.

Though they do not isolate daily routine, the studies I next reviewed have served as a connection to the underlying processes that teachers and children use in planning and enacting routines. I had supposed that I might better understand daily routine in prekindergarten by looking at the phenomenon of individual children's memory development for routines and group acknowledgement and understanding of routines. I therefore began by reviewing pertinent areas of cognitive development and family systems to discover a framework that children might use in understanding their routines.

The role of adults in teaching the routine also posed an interesting area of this investigation. The narratives of participants, both children and adults, offer insights into how they share knowledge and create both unique and joint views of the daily routines in the prekindergarten classroom of Reynolds Pod One prekindergarten.

I began this literature review prior to doing fieldwork and it guided my construction of the research questions. The literature discussed in this chapter reflects both my initial exploration and additional, post data-collection connections. The following areas of research inform this study: cognitive development and memory (Nelson, 1986, 1993, 2007; Nelson & Fivush, 2004); narratives in early childhood (Bruner, 1990, 2004; Nelson, 2007); cultural narratives (Bruner, 1990, 2004; Rogoff, 2003); and family routines and rituals (Fiese, Tomcho, Douglas, Josephs, Poltrock, & Baker, 2002). Additionally, I review studies of the influence of teacher philosophy on preschool outcomes (Elkind, 2003; Graue, 1993; Marcon, 1999) to assist in understanding philosophical influences in Reynolds prekindergarten, the focus of this case study. Each research strand adds unique understandings of child and adult interactions and the meanings and descriptions given to the routine activities by participants. The following sections describe studies as they pertain to prekindergarten daily routines.

Cognitive Development and Memory

Because of their stage of development, prekindergarten children have understandings of the flow and activities of everyday life that are quite different from those of adults (Nelson, 2007). Researchers of cognitive development (Cole & Cole, 2001; Fivush & Hudson, 1990; Nelson, 2007) have increased our

knowledge of the structure of young children's autobiographical memory, detailing it as being unique from adult memory, yet intricately influenced by recurring interactions between adult and child.

Autobiographical memory

How do children construct their life story in memory? Nelson's (1986, 2007) work on autobiographical memory examines the processes by which language, culture, experience, and cognitive intertwine across time-frames. Nelson's work on memory and language in young children informs my analysis of the knowledge of child participants. Along with Nelson, Bruner's (1986, 2004) investigations of the developing child narratives of everyday life add to my awareness of the storytelling patterns of the prekindergarten children in my study. Studies of family routine and ritual (Fiese et al., 2002) serve to illuminate the routines of prekindergarten and the ritualistic emphasis added to these activities by participants.

Nelson (1986) chooses the term "scripts" to describe the development of children's schematically organized event representations. *Script* is a term taken from the general research model that Schank & Abelson (1977) originally developed to investigate artificial intelligence and representation of thought for computer programming. For Nelson, the script encompasses "roles and props and defines obligatory and optional actions" (1986, p. 13). A script is "an ordered sequence of action appropriate to a particular spatial-temporal context and organized around a goal" (p.13). Scripts entail expected events within a sequence, a generalized structure with slots, and the pieces that fill them. Abstractions such as "how the world works" are contrasted with specific episodic information. "Well scripted" events are so familiar that the participants agree on

sequence, structure, participants and their roles, and the artifacts found in them (for example, school lunch routines).

Script theory

Scripts serve as an interpretative context for experiences as they inform new experiences and interact with, but are different from, episodic memories. Nelson (2007) demonstrates that a child's knowledge is based on everyday experiences that inform their cognitive representation and, in turn, make new action occur. Scripts for everyday action allow planning for future events. The script model is interactive with the environment, particularly in interactions with familiar adults that allow the child's cognitive system to operate in a dynamic give-and-take, reciprocal relationship with social and cultural agents such as parents or teachers.

The concept of *script* is further detailed by Fivush, who defines it as “a spatially/temporally organized set of expectations about the actions, actors, and props likely to be present during a given event” (1984, p. 1698). During early childhood, the young child is experientially bound, before decontextualized language and vicarious knowledge are available. He or she is said to be operating with partial knowledge, using scripts initially supplied by the adult. The prekindergarten classroom provides the time-frame, school-specific materials, and adult-child interactions that can build children's scripts for school.

Scripts for *how things go at school* are built up over time as children, under adult direction, compile predictable episodes of school life. These scripts direct behavior each day and become a framework for a lifelong autobiographical memory. Nelson and Fivush (2004) gathered strands from several traditions in a meta-analysis to generate a “Social

Cultural Developmental Theory” to describe theories about autobiographical memory. First returning to theories of memory development, the authors revisit Nelson’s notions of “scripts” as related to the development of episodic memory. Nelson and Fivush (2004) delineate types of memory as a “generalized memory system for events, later supplemented by an explicit system for specific episodes experienced in the specific past” (p. 487). The inclusion of studies of script theory assisted me in teasing apart the influences that were at work as children began to develop an infantile autobiographical memory and their concepts about being a student.

In investigating the development of prekindergarten children’s school scripts, Fivush and Hudson (1990) discovered through interview studies that children remember an event as a generalized spatial-temporal framework based on their first encounters with the routine. Their study of child and teacher knowledge of well-developed scripts revealed diverse perspectives and conceptions of the meaning of daily routines in a prekindergarten.

Time

What is the meaning of time for adults versus the meaning for prekindergarteners and how is time a factor in their daily routines? Basic to scripts are actions and the time sequences in which they occur. These scripts are developed over time with ever more complex and diverse tracks. The hierarchical importance placed on certain slots of the routine is significant to understanding the daily routines of children and adults in prekindergarten, because children, operating in adult schemas, learn to value and take dictated roles in the scripts that their teachers emphasize.

Friedman and Brudos (1988) initially investigated children's developing cognitive system as it acquires an understanding of a time-route system. To view the future, adults learn to experience themselves as a person extended over time periods. Friedman finds that children can also map out days in sequence and can tell the events in order if the script is familiar.

More recently, Friedman (2002) investigated the ability of children of preschool and early elementary age to distinguish events according to their relative distance in the future. He concludes that time understanding is socio-cultural in nature, stating that it is related to "opportunities their families and teachers provide to talk about the future" (p. 355). Young children master time concepts for both daily and annual events over a long developmental path throughout the preschool and elementary years. According to Friedman, it is through daily talking and thinking about the relative nature of an event's occurrence that children come to understanding. Likewise, Nelson's (1991) hierarchical episodic model reveals young children's ability to perceive the order of familiar routines. In prekindergarten, routine activities are often sequenced and predictable. Nelson's model is useful for describing the developing sequence and hierarchical order in prekindergarteners' accounts of their daily activities.

For Tomasello (1999, 2003), learning the sequences of time is a social interactive process in which the child operates within the schema of the parent until full understanding of past and present are developed. Nelson (2007), commenting on this model, questions the relative effectiveness of parents to model these concepts for children. Parents and teachers serve children as "resources for constructing their own knowledge structures" (Nelson, 2007, p. 193). Through conversation about past

experiences, children come to develop memories over time that are separate from the adults in their social context. Nelson, in fact, defines autobiography as “the culmination of the development of the self in time” (Nelson, 2007, p.205).

Fivush (1998) suggests that very young children are still in the process of understanding the sense of themselves in time. They are not able to reconstruct sequence in personally relevant events in time and thereby evaluate the events as personally meaningful. This echoes Nelson’s (1996) insistence that language development must coordinate with cognitive development, allowing the expression of life stories.

According to Povinelli, Landry, Theall, Clark, and Castille (1999), only when children have reached a mature sense of self that is extended in time can they be said to have achieved an autobiographical memory. The developmental stages of children in prekindergarten classes may locate them on the edge of this achievement. Within preschool routines, autobiography is extended to include understandings of self in school routines, thus revealing a child’s knowledge about school schedules and the predictable states of time occurring in these routines.

Cues

Prospective memory can be defined as remembering to perform a future action (Guajardo & Best, 2000). This mental feat differs distinctly from that of retrospective memory, which describes and retrieves events that happened in the past. Prospective memory, just developing in preschool-age children, functions to prompt future action.

Kliegel & Jager (2007) investigated the prospective memory of preschoolers. They studied cues, defined as “external memory aids” (p. 35), which are used to assist in the performance of intended future actions. In investigating preschoolers’ “prospective

memory,” the researchers sought to understand the strength of children’s ability to “remember to perform intended activities” (p.33). Their data support the conclusion that memory for performing future activities increases over the preschool age span. Further findings indicate that the use of external memory aids is positively related to “event based prospective remembering” (p. 33).

In prekindergarten, teachers routinely use words or timers to prompt children that upcoming events are at hand. Other cues, such as moving to a specific classroom location, are less specified and cue children through their daily repetition, seemingly without teachers’ consciousness of their power. These cues prompt children’s actions and help children develop prospective memory for activities of the school day. Intentional and unintentional cues prompt children’s future actions as they transition between activity segments during daily preschool routines at Reynolds Pod One prekindergarten.

Narratives: Telling the Story

The cultural theory of language is often attributed to the socio-cultural theorizing of Lev Vygotsky (Berk & Winsler, 1995). According to socio-cultural theory, thought and language develop simultaneously, with social interactions scaffolding learning and making speech a mechanism of both thought and social interaction. Unique to Vygotsky’s theories of language is the concept of a socially constructed “tool of the mind” that is neither individually nor biologically determined, but developed through culture’s interaction with the language instinct (Berk & Winsler, 1995, p.20).

Situated nature of narratives

Building on Vygotsky’s theory, Bruner (2004) proposes language as the medium by which we construct reality and our unique self-narrative. Through language, we

construct who we are and, in turn, act out of that construction as we plan future actions.

The role of culture, as it influences a child's gradual understanding of personhood (Bruner, 1990; Fivush, 1998; Rogoff, 2003), is likewise useful to understanding the prekindergarten classroom. Cultural narratives are shown to influence the development of children's understanding of themselves as a school child immersed in the predictable routines of each day (Bruner, 2004, p. 1190). The children of Pod One and their teachers live out their daily routines, developing a shared culture in school routines. For Bruner, telling a life narrative is more than speech; it is a construction of the self through the blending of cognition, language, and culture.

The journal *Social Research* republished Bruner's seminal work, "Life as Narrative" (Bruner, 2004), emphasizing the significance of the study of narrative and, most importantly, autobiographical storying. In this article, Bruner explores the role of narratives as the very constructions that give life meaning. As a student of linguistics, Bruner poses questions that have long puzzled theorists: Does cognition foster language or has language guided development of cognition? Bruner departs from the classic interpretations of cognitive psychology in his search to define narrative. The nature of narrative, according to Bruner, may be portrayed through art, anthropology, autobiography, physiology, or psychology; and it is probably an integration of them all, formed cognitively and told as a "narrative achievement" (p. 693).

Bruner (2004) feels that the stories we tell develop a code for future action. He states that the ways of telling and thinking about life stories "become so habitual that they finally become recipes for not only guiding the life narrative up to the present but directing it into the future" (p. 708). He feels that life is not how it actually happened

but, rather, the interpretations placed on those occurrences. In my study, the daily routines of prekindergarten, too, are routines that become unstated. This study explores the interpretations of life-at-school that teachers and children may share or come to co-construct.

Cultural nature of narratives

Bruner (1990) states that “logos and praxis are culturally inseparable” (p. 81), meaning that children come to know that their actions will be understood not only by the act itself, but by how they tell about it. For Gee (2003), an innate instinct for language is a birthright of all human kind. The instinct for language is intricately connected to a “tool kit” for the specific cultural system in which children develop. Culture, of both home and school, generates the genres we learn to use in its expression. Its development is deeply tied to the tools and resources of the culture in which its development flourishes, giving unique and often dissonant expression across the many languages in American schools.

Adults know a life story they can tell with detail and meaning. It begins as a skeletal schema of small daily activity and soon can be described in words. It has sequence and an embedded temporal structure, even in the preschool years (Nelson, 1986, 2007). Each life story is uniquely embellished by family culture, especially by mothers, as they give words to action and reminisce about meaningful events (Fivush & Hudson, 1990). An individual’s story is, in fact, a family’s story, forever intertwined in the language environment of the cultural milieu experienced as a child (Rogoff, 2003). These culture-rich life events inform decisions throughout life and encourage routines that in turn recreate them (Bruner, 1986). Each family culture, too, has a story, a narrative that informs the beliefs about the past, the trustworthiness of relationships, and the ability

to plan choices for the future. Each school culture, likewise, develops through teacher and child relationships and actions in the daily life of the classroom.

The literature also reveals a juxtaposition of cultural narratives (Fillmore & Snow, 2002; Gee, 2003), often resulting in dissonance between cultural groups, especially in school settings where language, expectations, and routines are often so closely tied to the ways in which words are used (Heath, 1983) in the predominant culture. Teachers and parents, who are often from differing cultures, use the word-ways of their own traditions. Teachers most likely use the form of speech that they learned in school. The dissonance between “home ways” and “school ways” is often a source of tension. Academic language is foreign to many students, but classroom expectations may be based on “teachers’ own cultural patterns” (Fillmore & Snow, 2002, p. 22). Teacher expectations about the knowledge children have about the daily routine may be constructed out of their own cultural notions of what routines in prekindergarten should be.

Prekindergarten entrance brings children into the larger arena of the public school system. Cultural dissonance may be evidenced when young children learn to relate to widening circles of caregivers. For Gee (2003), the “bite” of social language acquisition is the innate way in which learning occurs in social contexts, allowing our discourse to serve as an “identity kit” (p. 35) when approaching any social situation requiring language. Both verbal and non-verbal communication systems are relevant to the discussion of disparate perceptions of *how things go* in a classroom environment (Swick, 2003).

In *The Cultural Nature of Human Development*, Rogoff (2003), likewise, states that while “contact among cultural communities can be a source of creativity, it can also

be a source of conflict” (p.331). For some groups, Euro American school-ways may seem foreign. Students are challenged to “acquire certain social knowledge and communicative abilities in order to participate” (Kantor, 2001, p. 25) in the many facets of the daily routines and learning contexts. Creating meanings for the school routines may come easier if the ideas from home echo those in the classroom and the roles of adults are familiar to those roles taken by school. Children with disparate cultural scripts may operate under a different set of understandings and can have a difficult time acclimating to the predominant culture (Kantor, 2001).

School and home expectations about the meaning of school routines may be similar or different, as the meanings from guided participation change with the context and participants (Rogoff, 2003). Perceptions of routines and embedded meanings may be informed by earlier “scripts” for social behavior. Disparate cultural narratives reveal, for adults and children, differing perceptions of the meaning and roles of participants in prekindergarten routines.

Shared nature of narratives

My research sought to discover the proximal and distal influences on understandings of daily routines in prekindergarten. Family-narrative research clarifies how these meanings are given voice by participants, both individually and collectively. It is in the relating of events that they become shared events and shared knowledge. Building connections is both a personal and a systemic feat in which meaning is gained over time and through interaction with people, artifacts, and language (Fiese, Sameroff, Grotevant, Wamboldt, Dickstein, & Fravel, 1999; Reese, 2002). In *The Stories Families Tell: Narrative Interaction and Relationship Beliefs*, Fiese et al. (1999) state that an

“approach that may incorporate both proximal and distal influences, as well as focus on the family’s interpretation of family events, is the study of family narratives”(p. 2).

“Family narratives move beyond the individual and deal with how the family makes sense of its world, expresses rules of interaction, and creates beliefs about relationships” (p. 2-3).

This same group acknowledgement of valued experience is present in the phenomena of children’s first learning of the rituals and routines of school life. Visiting a prekindergarten classroom reveals the ritualistic use, in many classrooms, of “circle time” or “story time” (Kantor & Fernie, 2003). These events are given meaning by their repetitious nature and the value placed on them by participants. The significance placed on certain parts of routines, and the seeming unimportance placed on other routines, by child and teacher, is evident in daily routines in prekindergarten.

Family Routines and Rituals

The research focused on routines and rituals within family systems informs my study by pointing to the interactions of close-knit groups in telling a coordinated story of their life-as-lived. Like a family, prekindergarten classrooms come to incorporate adults’ narratives into a group narrative that guides participation in the daily routines. Fiese and colleagues’ (2002) investigations have sought to identify family meaning through its expression in narrative construction. The literature on family routines and rituals informs this study through the research on meanings and schedules.

Fiese et al. (2002) reviewed 50 years of research on family routines and rituals in hopes of informing future research toward “the therapeutic value of family rituals” (p. 381). Their research clarifies definitions of the terms *ritual* and *routine*, which have been

used interchangeably in the literature but have different meaning as they occur in family systems. Both ritual and routine involve action and a coming together of family members, either physically or psychically. Both rituals and routines are repetitive, patterned interactions that are practiced in a variety of settings.

Rituals differ from routines in the symbolic meaning attached to the actions. There are two discrete dimensions of family rituals: routines and meaning, according to Fiese and colleagues (2002, p. 382). This subjective element designating routine from ritual is often a personal, albeit family, definition. Fiese et al. (2002) say “any routine has the potential to become a ritual once it moves from an instrumental to a symbolic act” (p. 383), and most definitions agree that rituals have a “practical component in terms of organizing group behavior and a symbolic component that fosters group identity and meaning-making in group situations” (p.383).

The dimensions of rituals and routines are contrasted by Fiese et al. (2002) as continuity, communication, and commitment. The time-frame of routine is simply accomplishing tasks that need doing, whereas ritual is remembered behavior that is repeated for the sake of the intrinsic meaning a family attaches to it. Routine becomes ritual as it is “meta-cognitively acknowledged in joint discourse as a recognized and valued unit of shared experience and to the extent that it is endowed with affective meaning for the family” (Serpel, Sonnenchein, Baker, & Ganapathy, 2002, p.392). Fiese et al. (2002) have shown that rituals can be positive or negative. Prekindergarten routines are peppered with activities that teachers emphasize and extend in time. Both children and their teachers come to ritualize some activities of the enacted routines, valuing them

more highly than others as described in their discourse about their choices and values for the routine and its components.

Just as memory development and the shared narratives that give it expression inform this study, so too does the understanding that teachers bring to designing and implementing routines in the classroom. I will next review literature to assist in understanding the philosophical stance of the teachers in Pod One.

Teacher Philosophical Stance

Teachers come to Pod One with various experiences and training. The lens of their assumptions about *how school goes* influences the design and implementation of curriculum and daily routines. Elkind (2003) poses three epistemological positions, empiricism, nativism, and constructivism, that provide “philosophical rationales” (p. 1) from which day-to-day pedagogy in the classroom is created. As teachers translate their educational philosophies into practice, Elkind finds more similarities than differences in the climate of high-quality classrooms. However, Elkind sees the epistemologies of teachers as being ultimately defined in their practice in the classroom.

For Bruner (1990), ontology is replete with the values one integrates into self-hood. A teacher brings to her practice the philosophical stance that informs decisions about what she will value in curriculum and routine design. The worldviews of teachers in Pod One illuminate philosophical lenses through which the daily routine is designed and enacted.

Curriculum design is directly influenced by the ideas teachers bring with them to the teaching experience. Graue (1993) examined the social milieu of parents and teacher expectations for kindergarten. She finds that each year brings a new social construction

of the meanings of programming in kindergarten. The shift in kindergarten's emphasis due to "curriculum shove down" (Hatch, 2002, p. 457) are discussed by Graue (1993) to illuminate the "flurry of forces" (p. 68) at work as curriculum is designed and lived out in kindergarten. Similarly, there is no one factor that describes curriculum and routine in this study.

To define the worldview of teachers is to place them in camps according to their philosophical stance. In a study of urban preschools, Marcon (1999) identified three distinct curriculum delivery models. These models were labeled as academically-directed, child-initiated, and combination model. Academically-directed classrooms focused on didactic adult-designed instruction with the intent of increasing academic achievement. Child-initiated classrooms, exemplified by High/Scope curriculum (Schweinhart & Weikart, 1997), encouraged children to actively initiate learning experiences in a prepared environment that included adults who acted as guides and facilitators, who scaffolded development through posing questions and guiding skills-development as needed. The child-initiated approach is considered to be developmentally appropriate and best practice by many experts (e.g., Bredekamp & Copple, 1997). A combination model is often an eclectic approach created by teachers using parts of both the academically-directed and child-initiated models. Marcon (1999) reports that children in academically-directed and child-initiated curriculum models showed stronger academic gain than children in the combination model. Findings reported are consistent with the "goals and approaches of preschool models" (p. 372) that each setting and teacher presented. Children in the academically-directed program showed greater advancement in written language, which the author equates to the

emphasis on academic readiness. Child-initiated students, likewise, demonstrated higher receptive and expressive language, which the author speculates is a result of greater orientation toward interpersonal skills in child-initiated classrooms. The combination approach was reported to produce “reduced mastery of basic skills and lower adaptive behavior” (p. 372). This study elucidates the differences in outcomes for preschool children experiencing preschool classes with disparate philosophical models for instruction and curriculum delivery. Macon’s (1999) study is useful in investigating the various interpretations that the teachers at Reynolds prekindergarten place on their daily routine activities.

Summary

Children come to know their daily schedule and define their roles at preschool over time. The research summarized in this chapter suggests that multiple influences on children’s memory and the cultural milieu in which that memory is shaped allow children to begin to understand self-in-time through routines and enacted roles. The philosophical stance of the teacher, as it influences the design and enactment of routines, heavily influences the emphasis and emotional climate that students learn to accept as the norm for school routines. School-knowledge is created in prekindergarten classrooms, and this study seeks to understand participants’ enactment and diverse perceptions of this phenomenon. The following case study reports both the story of Reynolds prekindergarten and a data-based instrumental case of prekindergarten routines.

CHAPTER III:

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

To gain an understanding of the phenomenon of daily routines in prekindergarten and the case at Reynolds Elementary Pod One, I used a qualitative methodology. Using qualitative research methods helped reveal the way in which daily routines were structured and how participants' meanings prompted them to enact the routines. In this chapter, I first present my rationale for choosing instrumental case study methodology. Second, I describe the participants, settings, and selection process. Next, I explain the research design and data collection procedures, and finally, I describe the techniques used for data analysis. The following methods were employed to assist me in describing the enacted routines and the meanings of participants, thus providing understandings of the instrumental case of daily routines.

Rationale

Research questions that I posed about the knowledge participants used to enact and describe routines in this local prekindergarten classroom led me to choose a methodology from within a constructivist paradigm. While I acknowledge my role as interpreter (Stake, 1995), my case report strives to also include "interpretations of the people most knowledgeable about the case" (p. 103). As stated above, I come to this research with some personal bias related to the meanings of routines in prekindergarten program design. The aim of this research, therefore, is not only to understand features of a particular case, but to gain new understandings of the phenomenon of daily routine.

I chose case study as the most useful tradition (Creswell, 1998) for developing an understanding of how a daily routine can be described and understood. Stake (1995) describes instrumental case study as a method that allows the researcher to use a particular “case” as an instrument for facilitating an understanding of an external interest. Creswell (1998) states that case study provides the researcher a means to “instrumentally illustrate the issue” (p. 62). I chose to conduct an instrumental case study of Pod One’s daily routine to gain insight into the phenomenon of prekindergarten daily routine and facilitate an understanding of how it comes to be enacted and valued. This is not to underplay my interest in an in-depth consideration of the designated case from which unique understandings were developed. The case of Reynolds prekindergarten provided rich data that led me to a “refinement of understanding” (Stake, 1995, p. 7) of the phenomenon of daily routines.

My research questions address the need for a “general understanding” (p.3) of daily routines, and study of the particular case of daily routines at Reynolds Pod One prekindergarten was instrumental in gaining this knowledge. Following traditional case study design (Creswell, 1998; Hatch, 2002; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003), multiple methods of data collection were employed. Case study involves multiple sources of data to “build an in-depth picture of the case” (Creswell, 1998, p.123). Following Yin’s (2003) suggestions for multiple forms of data collection, I used observation and interviews—structured, informal, semi-structured, and open-ended. In addition, I collected documents and physical artifacts that provided data to assist me in revealing the enacted daily routines.

In the next chapter, I present a detailed chronological description (Stake, 1995, p. 127) of how participants in this setting live out their daily routine. Case study design

allowed me to capture “life as lived” in the routines of prekindergarten by gaining access to the descriptions and the understandings of children and teachers, the actors and narrators (Bruner, 2004). I also describe the contexts of the study and the participants who provided the information that helped me explore this case of daily routines.

Setting and Participants

This study was conducted at an elementary school in a small city in eastern Tennessee. In 2007, the school’s population was over 650 students in prekindergarten through fourth grade. Reynolds is the only elementary school in a small, three-school city system. Its building is unusual because of its design. The elementary school was built in the 1970s, when educational philosophies of “open classrooms” led architectural designers to create open spaces. The school’s rooms are grouped into eight large pods in a circular design, with the library forming the central core. Grade levels are grouped together, and prekindergarten, in Pod One, is no exception.

Reynolds is a targeted assisted school using federal funding under Title I for special “pull-out” programs that offer assistance to low-income or low-achieving students. One of the prekindergarten classes is funded through these funds. Children included in Title I prekindergarten classes are given a screening test to evaluate their skills and qualify them for this program. State lottery earnings fund the other prekindergarten classes, and the students in these classes are qualified for admission by their family income level. The number of Reynolds students whose family income level qualifies them for free or reduced lunch in 2007 was 58 percent of the total school. The developmental preschool classroom housed as part of Pod One is for children ages three

through five who have documented developmental delays or other identified deficits requiring special education services.

In January 2007, there were 43 children and 7 adults in Pod One on most school days. These adults, four degreed staff and three assistant teachers, are regularly joined by speech, occupational, and physical therapists; practicum students from a community college; and students from child development classes at the local high school. It was not unusual to find as many as twelve extra adults scattered throughout the classroom during certain parts of the day.

At the outset of this study, the racial mix in Pod One was 23 White, 16 Black, and 4 Hispanic children. These numbers fluctuated somewhat during the semester as children moved or as three-year-olds entered the developmental classroom when they became age-eligible under state guidelines. Legal ratios for prekindergarten are 20 four-year-olds for 2 adults, but Reynolds had decided to lower this ratio to 16 to 2. Thus, at Reynolds, one certified teacher and assistant were assigned to each prekindergarten class group. The developmental class required more staff because it served three-year-olds, requiring higher ratios, and because the special needs of students often require more supervision. This year, 2 certified teachers and an assistant serve 11 students who follow an individual education plan (IEP) as a guide for individual instruction of these students.

Participant selection process

Graue and Walsh (1995) state that a research context is both the “physical and social place” (p.141) in which research is conducted. I chose to conduct my study at Reynolds prekindergarten for both reasons. As a community college instructor, I had previous experience with this school system through placing and observing practicum

students in the prekindergarten classes during the previous year. An initial comfort level had been established with the staff; however, continuing to develop trust with administration and staff and eliminating any “gatekeeper” (Creswell, 1998, p.117) predicament was a goal for the recruitment process. Since I have been an observer at this site, it did not seem strange or unusual for staff to see me in the school, thus easing recruitment of participants. I have a long-standing positive relationship with the principal, who is very supportive of prekindergarten education in the elementary setting. I selected the prekindergarten teachers for the study for several reasons: they were willing to participate, the administrators granted permission, and I found the pod classroom interesting. The selected teachers and the daily milieu of life in their classrooms afforded me access to data that revealed both the daily routine as enacted and their multiple perceptions of it. Reynolds proved to be a fertile research site because of the variety of experience, training and philosophies of the teachers. Pod One provided rich data because of the varied programs housed within this one space.

I gained permission to conduct my study from the school system’s director of schools, the elementary school’s administration, and the teachers at Reynolds. Prior to collecting data, I scheduled a meeting with the teachers and assistant teachers to explain the proposed study, answer any questions, and ask for their participation. Teachers, assistant teachers, and a speech therapist gave permission for observation and interviews at this meeting. During the study, I obtained permission from community college students to use their written reflections as part of the unobtrusive data set.

Reynolds Elementary School currently has three prekindergarten classes designated by their funding sources as either Title I or State Grant. Two prekindergarten

teachers combined their classes for this year into one large pod classroom in which I conducted my study. A third group, the developmental preschool, also inhabited the space and was led by a team of two teachers for the special education preschool students. Although I had not initially planned to include the developmental preschool class in the study, the immersion of these students in the activities of the pod made it crucial to include them, and so I also obtained the permission of their parents.

With the help of classroom teachers, I obtained permission to participate from the parents of nearly all the children in the three classes (see Appendix A). Permission forms and explanation letters were distributed as parents arrived at the school to drop off children. Some parents read and signed the permission immediately, while other parents took it home and returned it shortly after. Children whose parents were not accessible during the school day and did not return the permission form were not interviewed, nor was their information included in the study data. Using specially designed smiley-face permission forms (see Appendix A), I obtained permission from the children I interviewed immediately before I talked with them, during the preschool day.

Data Collection

I used three primary methods of data collection in order to describe the daily routine at Reynolds. First, I observed the natural setting of the classroom, which permitted me to collect data to reveal the social and physical environment in which the daily routine occurred (Stake, 1995. p. 62). I also conducted open-ended interviews to give voice to the participants' narrative descriptions of the routine (Stake, 1995. p. 64). Finally, artifacts, unobtrusive data that reveal aspects of the daily routine, substantiated themes that other data sources suggested (Yin, 2003, p. 96). The collection of multiple

sources of data in this case study served to confirm my impressions and assist in “triangulation” (Yin, 2003, p. 97) of themes and meanings.

Observation was the initial method of data collection for this intrinsic case study of daily routines. Graue and Walsh (1995) state the importance of studying “the interpretative record of children’s contextualized lives” (p. 140). Observations in the natural setting of the prekindergarten pod allowed me to observe the routine as it was enacted in the classroom. For the purpose of this study, observations were made during enactments of the daily routine from the day’s beginning at 7:45 A.M. until dismissal at 1:30 P.M. Nine visits were made during the first session of the second semester, which began on January 4, 2007, and concluded on March 9, 2007, in this year-round-school setting. I visited the classroom, staying for the entire preschool daily routine, during one day each week for the nine-week observation period.

I realized from the study’s beginning that my presence would affect the children and teachers. Graue and Walsh (1995) warn that researchers must “invest long periods of time with children on the children’s terms” (p146) in order to clearly understand the role that the researcher will play in the context. I sought to eliminate negative effect by participating in the classroom as a teacher assistant during the study, but I ultimately provided minimal assistance and functioned primarily in the role of a participant observer (Creswell, 1998, p. 58). I marginally interacted with the children as I observed, attempting not to interfere with their regular activities and remaining outside of the group during group times. This access allowed me to be “immersed” (Creswell, 1998, p. 58) in classroom routines and, thus, gain emic perspectives.

Observers, practicum students, and interns are frequently present in this setting, so I felt that my presence was not intrusive. Only one of the three teachers seemed to be overly aware of my presence, and I adjusted my observations and placement in the room to discourage conversation with her during class time. By purposefully trying to remain reflexive, I feel I was able to become part of the classroom culture and gather data that led to understanding the participants' knowledge of daily routines.

I took detailed field notes during the nine daily routine observations, focusing on contexts, such as transitions between activity periods, when actions of individual teachers and children in the three groups revealed their knowledge of the routine. Because the level of my "participant observation" (Wolcott, 2001, p.89) was less than I originally planned, I felt free to watch unobtrusively as participants enacted daily routines. The size of the space and the large number of adults normally found in the pod made my presence seem less obtrusive than it might be in other sites. During observations, I was able to maintain a low level of interaction with teachers and children while recording field notes that produced data that I was later able to enrich with my bracketed impressions and subsequent research-journal entries (Hatch, 2002).

Although three classrooms simultaneously occupied the space, I primarily focused my observations on a specific group during each visit because of the large pod-design of the classroom. I alternated observing teachers and groups to better focus and to capture the context and "multiple realities" (Stake, 1995, p. 12) of the participants. In this fashion, I was able to focus on "certain contexts" (Stake, 1995, p. 64), such as transitions and morning group time, that were important to understanding the enacted routines.

The second data source for this study was participant interviews. Stake (1995) states that “interview is the main road to multiple realities” (p. 64). In this study, interviewing allowed me to gather data that reveal unique narratives of routines, as the participants described both the enactment and design of their routines. I found many opportunities to speak with teachers and assistants informally during observations and record these brief conversations in field notes.

I made the decision to conduct individual interviews with only the certified teachers. These interviews were conducted after spring break, approximately three weeks after my final classroom observation. This time-frame allowed me to read through the data from field notes and my research journal to hone interview questions (Appendix B). Individual interviews were conducted at the school after the school day in an office adjacent to Pod One’s classroom.

Teachers’ interviews began with semi-structured questions, leading to more open-ended queries designed to lead participants to voice their “own conceptions of their experiences” (Kerlin, 1999, p. 3). Unlike more structured interviews, this method of inquiry made it possible for me, as the outsider, to gain insight into teachers’ ideas and perceptions. I found that this approach required me to adjust the interview duration to allow ample time for discussion (Stake, 1995). Teachers were easily accessible for interviews, and I had to reschedule only one interview appointment. All interviews were audio recorded using a portable digital recorder. Teacher interviews lasted between thirty and forty-five minutes. One interview was rerecorded because some of the initial recording was damaged when I mistakenly recorded over the initial tape.

Interviewing children provided a different set of challenges from those I experienced when interviewing adults. Graue and Walsh (1995) emphasize the importance of studying children in context, and in my study, I came to understand that this was a key feature in gaining privilege to their perspectives. I had anticipated conducting in-depth interviews with children from the pod's prekindergarten classrooms, gaining student perspective on the daily routine. I anticipated asking the teachers to assist in selecting children to interview. The time schedule of the pod left little time to interview individual children away from the classroom, and following Graue and Walsh (1995), I was able to "change the context to one more ... amenable to a real conversation" (p. 147). Incidental interviews provided a fruitful source of data from the preschoolers, who proved tricky to interview when taken out of the classroom context.

The style of incidental interview that I developed during the research process used child interviews conducted in the natural environment of the classroom. I was able to approach children during "center time," when the children were primarily free to select a play activity within the pod. I gained permission from the children to casually talk and ask questions about their daily activities. Graue and Walsh (1995) call this type of focus a "shot of the situated child" (p.141). This type of incidental interview allowed me access to children's thoughts during the ongoing daily routines, and I believe that interviewing them in this setting was more effective than removing them from the classroom.

The process of interviewing children was completed, with a few exceptions, during center time. I approached children while they were engaged in play activities and asked if they would like to talk with me for a few minutes. If they assented, I had them circle "yes" on a prepared smiley-face form and write their name (see Appendix A). I

dated this form and signed my name as the researcher. I then was able to audio-record their words without removing the children from the naturalistic setting of the classroom. I conducted 11 interviews during center time in the pod classroom, which necessitated using children who were accessible during center time and cooperative, and who granted permission. Other incidental conversations with children that occurred in the pod classroom, outside, or in the gym were recorded in field notes. In Pod One there was one child who consistently chose not to participate and was not used in the study. Other children provided terse comments, because of their involvement in play, therefore providing little data. Both adult and child interviews were transcribed for data analysis.

In field notes that I made during and after the interviewing process, I recorded social cues and inferences that the audio recordings do not disclose. Recordings allowed me to preserve the participants' words while I concentrated on the expressions, body language, and nuances of the interviewee. These field notes combined with interview protocols to generate a thick description of the participants' perceptions. Informal, incidental interviews of additional adults, classroom assistant teachers, and therapists were likewise recorded during the daily routines in field note entries.

Initially I anticipated that high school students might provide a source of data, but their class schedules brought them into the pod during rotating one-hour periods, making it difficult to find time to speak with them. Students from a regional community college participated during spring semester in two of the three classes as observers and student-teachers. I obtained permission from two of these students to use their perspectives to add additional perspectives to the data. I conducted informal interviews with the students. I was also able to obtain their written reflections on their experiences in Pod

One, which they produced as part of their student assignments for their practicum experience, as a source of unobtrusive data.

Finally, various other types of documents and “physical artifacts” (Yin, 2003, p. 96) were collected to assist in triangulating the data. Most importantly, the routine was depicted and described in the posted classroom schedule (see Appendices E and G) and in documents for parents and others. Additionally, the teachers from the developmental class, additionally, developed a document for their new assistant teacher (see Appendix C) that detailed the times, activities, and roles for their day’s routine. Collection of these relevant artifacts was ultimately very significant in revealing aspects of the daily routine.

I took photographs of posted routines, mini routines, and circle time areas in each prekindergarten group’s home area. Photos of the empty classroom, likewise, provided a sense of the physical environment of the classroom, as did a diagram of the entire elementary school showing Pod One’s remodeled shape. I also obtained a preschool handbook that is shared with parents, which provided further information about school routines. These “physical artifacts” (Yin, 2003, p. 96) and documents informed my knowledge of the sequence, roles, and settings used in Pod One, thus providing an informative element of data that adds to the “richness” (Hatch, 2002, p. 125) of my case description.

To summarize, data used for analysis consisted of observations made in the naturalistic setting of the classroom, child and adult interviews, and artifacts, documents and photographs, which served to corroborate the other data sources. Next, I will discuss the interpretive analysis model, as described by Hatch (2002), that I used to “transform data” (p. 180).

Data Analysis

Wolcott (2001) makes a “distinction between analysis and interpretation” (p. 32). He cautions the novice investigator not to rely on personal interpretative powers, rather, to translate the data through an “analytic dimension” (p. 34) to better present the case. Therefore, as a novice researcher, I closely followed the steps of Hatch’s (2002) “interpretative analysis model” (p. 180) as I processed the data for interpretation. Although Hatch terms his model “interpretative,” the model forces the researcher to ground impressions in the data, providing “tools for linking interpretations to data” (p. 180). Hatch’s model gave me a path to follow as I completed rigorous and systematic analysis.

Graue and Walsh (1995) suggest that interpretive research methodology can provide “richly detailed cultural descriptions that realign our present understanding” (p. 135). My choice of qualitative methodology and interpretive analysis was made because of the nature of the research and my desire to understand the phenomenon of daily routine in prekindergarten. My findings reveal a multi-layered description of the perceived school routines that allow an understanding of the participants’ perspectives and voices. I referred to the research questions throughout the data collection and analysis phases to direct my study’s discovery of the teachers’ and children’s perceptions of daily school routine. Analysis was ongoing and interpretation (Stake, 1995, p. 71) enabled me to reveal common themes across settings and participant perspectives by comparing and contrasting data.

I kept a research journal, recording data during and after each visit to the site. Interpretation was an ongoing process, beginning even before the formal observation

period with my impressions of the setting and teachers at the meeting held to gain their permission. This meeting initiated a “collection of instances” (Stake, 1995, p. 75) that ultimately informed the set of memos used in the “interpretive analysis model” (Hatch, 2002, p.180) detailed below. Using a research journal and bracketed impressions (Creswell, 1998, p. 52) in field notes, I became an “interpreter in the field to observe the workings of the case” (Stake, 1995, p. 8), and used the recorded happenings to progressively interpret and refine my impressions.

Hatch (2002) suggests that the inductive process of data analysis produces interpretations that are “better grounded in the data” (p. 181) if researchers have engaged the data in analysis prior to step one of the interpretive model. I had the opportunity to review protocols prior to beginning the steps of more formal “interpretive analysis” (Hatch, 2002). The field notes and my research journal were hand written and then transcribed before analysis. I personally transcribed field notes after each site visit, which allowed me to add initial impressions. Data from field notes were reviewed prior to teacher interviews following the data collection phase of the study. Since the teacher interviews were conducted after Reynolds’ spring break, the time-frame and rereading allowed me to refine teacher questions prior to the interviews.

Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed before I began formal steps in the interpretative analysis. I employed a transcriptionist to transcribe interviews, and I reviewed the transcribed interviews for mistakes. Although short in duration, children’s interviews required careful review to interpret their exact wording. This step in analysis allowed me initial familiarity with this part of the data.

Documents, photographs, and other “physical artifacts” (Yin, 2003, p. 96) were placed in a notebook and labeled with their source and the date they were acquired. These artifacts were then available as a source for triangulating the data (Stake, 1995, p. 107). Artifacts, data from field notes, and adult and child interview transcriptions were combined to provide the data set for analysis.

The “interpretative analysis model” (Hatch, 2002, p. 180) provided a framework for making sense of the data. After data were transcribed and organized, I followed the steps of interpretative analysis (Hatch, 2002) to attempt to strike a balance, giving “attention to both the methodical result of analysis and the conjectural task of interpretation” (Wolcott, 2001, p. 34).

I began by reading the entire data set, including field notes, interview transcriptions, student journals, and artifacts, to gain a sense of the whole of the accumulated data. I then read my field notes and research journal to note the initial interpretations I had made during data gathering. Next, I read the interview data to uncover impressions made at the time of the interviews. This set of impressions was then added to the field note impressions, combining all impressions made during data collection. These were recorded in a separate file as initial impressions. Impressions salient to the research focus were grouped. From these impressions, I generated short summaries called “memos” to clarify my understandings of the data thus far (Graue & Walsh, 1998, p. 166).

My subsequent readings of the data produced four sets of impressions from field notes, interviews, documents, and artifacts in separate files. I read and grouped these in memos that related to the context of the investigation. Memos previously recorded from

the initial impressions and the research questions influenced my impressions at this stage of analysis.

I returned to memos from all the data and grouped those memos salient to the research questions and those that suggested other themes discovered during the writing of impressions. I organized these memos into five themes: definition of the routine, design of the routine, enacting the routine, learning the routine, and locating routines within routines. These general topics served to organize my thinking, and I generated an outline with sub-topics that addressed salient ideas. I assigned colors to the themes and numbers to the subordinate themes and returned to the data to code each data set according to the themes.

Using the grouped memos, I wrote summaries of each area and linked the coded data to each area of the outline. I coordinated excerpts and quotes that supported my interpretations. Several unanticipated themes were generated that illuminate daily routine as lived out in this setting. I used these themes, along with the four themes from my impressions, to generate a narrative description of my findings that describe Reynolds Pod One prekindergarten routines and understandings pertinent to the instrumental case.

Summary

This case study examines the phenomenon of a daily routine in Reynolds Pod One prekindergarten as it is enacted, described, and given meaning by participants. I was able to access insiders' views of the class routines through their descriptions and compare these views to the observed routine. The results of my interpretative analysis of the data allowed me to develop and present findings that reveal the daily routine in this unique setting, while adding to understandings of the instrumental case of daily routines in

prekindergarten. Graue and Walsh (1995) state that interpretive research can provide a “locally grounded perspective on the experiences of particular individuals that can then be linked to other descriptions” (p. 151). Interpretations of the data from Reynolds prekindergarten will add new insights to assist in understanding the phenomenon of daily routine. In Chapter IV, I will first present the findings by providing a chronological account of a day at Reynolds prekindergarten in order to provide “vicarious experience” (Stake, 1995, p. 87) of the case. Salient issues discovered in the analysis and interpretation of data are presented in the second part of Chapter IV in order to illuminate understandings of the instrumental case.

CHAPTER IV:

FINDINGS

Introduction

Although the sequence and procedures that give structure and flow to the daily activities of school are often unstated, they are as much a part of the learning as any stated curriculum goal (Anyon, 1983). In this study, I explore the enacted sequence of daily routines and meanings held by participants, allowing me to describe this case as lived out in one specific classroom culture. Stake (1995) describes an instrumental case study as a format that seeks to understand something more than the particular setting. My study describes daily routines at Reynolds prekindergarten, employing this particular setting and these participants to illuminate the instrumental case of daily routine.

The result of my data analysis is a narrative case study report. The following in-depth look at Reynolds Pod One includes the voices of participants in quotes or in vignettes and a thick description of the activities of the classroom. I start by presenting the daily routine chronologically in story form. I then explain specific findings salient to discovery of the instrumental case. I chose this approach to articulate the particular unique aspects of Reynolds, while using it to help me understand the instrumental case of daily routines in prekindergarten.

Findings are reported in two sections. The first section provides the sequential story of the daily routine at Reynolds prekindergarten. The intent of this description is to allow the reader “the vicarious experience” (Stake, 1995, p. 86) of the classroom and the participants as they enacted their routine. This chronicle of daily routine at Reynolds is a

story of the particular case and its participants; yet, it is also a story that illuminates the features of the instrumental case.

In the second section of this chapter, I present findings salient to the instrumental case. Findings in this section are reported in addition to the case-story to present a richer and more detailed case report and, thereby, enrich understandings of both Pod One at Reynolds and the instrumental case of daily routine in prekindergarten.

The Story of Daily Routines at Reynolds Prekindergarten

At Reynolds Elementary, the school day starts at 7:45 A.M. At 7:15, the prekindergarten pod is still, empty, and quiet except for the murmur of noise that drifts in from nearby halls. Elementary-age students eat breakfast in the cafeteria and so arrive earlier than the preschoolers, who come in accompanied by parents, when, in the words of a teacher, “the flood gates come down” and the double doors of Pod One open each day at the prescribed time.

This year, Pod One houses two classes of prekindergarten and one class of preschool special education. The latter is designated as the developmental preschool. A school map (see Appendix D) shows the design of Reynolds school, but the classroom that holds Pod One has a shape that is not easily described. Its once circular design has been altered over the years by various construction projects, and now it most nearly resembles a cartoon conversation balloon with the pointy end being a hallway from the main school. This entry contains children’s cubbies. Just inside double doors, teachers’ desk stations line the wall before opening out into the irregular oval that contains homeroom areas for the three classes.

During the previous year, a single prekindergarten class and the developmental preschool class were housed here. This year, a second prekindergarten class is included in order to facilitate the need for room in the rest of the building. This classroom carved a homeroom space at the end of the oval, bringing with it toys and materials and doubling the array of activity centers in the room. In fact, twenty-two centers now fill the space between the three carpet areas that designate the three classes' homeroom spaces. Pathways have been carved out using room dividers and furniture, so it is possible to go to each area, to the shared bathrooms at the side of the pod, or to an adjacent classroom of preschoolers without going through the center activity spaces. Even to an eye accustomed to preschool activity centers, this looks like a sea of shelves, toys, and dramatic play paraphernalia broken only by the paths and the brightly carpeted areas positioned as far as possible from each other that constitute teachers' specific territory, or "our little home," as one teacher refers to her carpeted area.

Child-sized tables and chairs are found in each of the three areas, and in the early morning they stand empty and ready to be used for breakfast and then for various activities throughout the day. Each teacher has an easel and white-board spaces for recording daily calendar and attendance charts. Storage rooms, away from the immediate area, contain unit materials not presently in use, and cabinets in the classroom keep materials out of touch that are not for the children. The classroom is designed for the habitation of the preschool children and the ways they use it each day provide a window to their understanding of each area.

The staff of Pod One

By 7:30 each day, the teachers and assistants begin to arrive, quietly taking their places to begin another day in this prekindergarten setting. Frequently, Jeri is the first to arrive. Jeri has been at Reynolds for 23 years, although only recently in prekindergarten. After arriving and checking plans for the day, she can be heard saying, “I am a real planner.” Often Jeri may be found visiting with other teachers in the school or in the teachers’ lounge before settling in to the prekindergarten day.

Jeri is the senior member of the prekindergarten team as denoted by her years on the job at Reynolds, her age, and her teaching experience. When Reynolds prekindergarten initially opened with one class, Jeri was hired to develop and institute the program. She did not have the required early childhood certification at that time. According to Principal Schraft, she obtained her certification when a “special case” compliance was granted to allow her to teach prekindergarten after only a summer’s state workshop. Jeri’s husband, director of schools in the small district, supported Mrs. Schraft’s development of prekindergarten classes. Jeri has two grown sons.

Jeri’s previous teaching experiences have been in this or, briefly, an adjacent district. She has taught in elementary school for 27 years. Most of her experience has been in first grade and reading, with limited time in special education. All of Reynolds classes are in pods, employing various plans for team-teaching, so, as Jeri stated that the arrangement of multiple classrooms in one pod setting did not seem unusual. However, she was the staff member who, in casual conversations, most often voiced the desire to have her own space.

Carolyn is Jeri's assistant teacher. Jeri feels that Carolyn serves as a model for the other classroom assistant teachers. Although Carolyn holds no formal degree, Jeri looks at Carolyn as an equal and says she "feels guilty" about the discrepancy in their salaries since she "does every bit as much as I do." They talk together frequently during the day and seem to be in agreement about the needs of the children in their class. Carolyn seems to value her role of preparing materials for projects to be completed in craft or group activities. Carolyn usually remains on the periphery during whole-group activity time, often monitoring behavior while Jeri leads the group. Like Jeri, Carolyn is middle-aged, has grown children, and has been at Reynolds for many years as an assistant. Most mornings, Carolyn brings two of her grandchildren to the elementary classes at Reynolds. She briefly stops in the prekindergarten pod, leaving her belongings, and then goes to settle these children at their respective classes before coming back to begin the prekindergarten day. Jeri and Carolyn make sure their homeroom space is neat and that the planned activities for the day are prepared and ready on the day before.

The special education developmental preschool was the first early childhood program at Reynolds. This year, the developmental preschool class is team-taught by special educators Mia and Melissa. Their homeroom space is carved out of the front of Pod One, just beyond the bank of teacher desks. Their teaching assistant is Tina. Melissa has been at Reynolds for three years. She was initially hired for a pullout special education position but took the preschool position when another teacher left midyear. Last year, she and Jeri shared the Pod One space but had fewer inclusion activities. This is Melissa's first teaching job after graduating from the local university with a degree that awarded dual licenses in elementary and early childhood special education. Melissa is a

young newlywed who loves her job and is always in place before the children arrive in the morning.

Last year, Mia also began her teaching career at Reynolds. Mia is in her twenties, single, with no family in the area. She is rarely ill and arrives each day well before the children and families are assembled outside the double doors. She was hired to team-teach with Melissa when the population of special education children in the developmental class increased. Mia also holds a master's degree in special education, but her emphasis was in behavior disorders and autism. Mia looks younger than her years and often wears blue jeans and t-shirt, making her hard to spot as she works with children on the floor or at child-sized tables.

Tina came to the developmental preschool class this year after working with special education students for a few years at the local high school. She recognizes some of the students who come from the high school to observe each day and converses easily with them. Although Tina has a teen-age daughter of her own and has worked with special education classes, the developmental preschoolers are a new challenge this year. She enjoys and is affectionate with the children and has learned to switch in and out of the roles that Melissa and Mia have designed for the adults in this class. They expect her to prepare materials for the classroom, but, more importantly, they expect her to facilitate the students' adaptation to the classroom routines. Melissa and Mia prepared a guideline document of "teacher roles and para roles" at this year's onset to delineate their stance regarding the jobs of adults during each portion of the day (see Appendix C). Tina complies with these requests even though sometimes she admits, "it is hard to have two bosses." She calls herself an "enabler" and really tries to anticipate the needs of both

teachers and children. Tina has breakfast out and ready when the children come in at 7:45 each day.

Caitlyn is the teacher of the second prekindergarten class in Pod One. Her undergraduate and master's degrees came from a local university and were based on classes in child and family studies. Caitlyn student-taught in university lab school classes and then taught in the lab school in infant and prekindergarten classes before branching out to public schools. She spent five years teaching third grade, took a leave to have a son, and, two years ago, began the position in prekindergarten at Reynolds. Last year, Caitlyn was in a very small self-contained classroom teaching a newly added prekindergarten class. She collaborated with Jeri and Melissa last year, but only by sending two children each day into the pod for mainstreaming during "center time," when the children are free to select a play activity within the pod.

Caitlyn is very outgoing and anxious to cooperate with her teammates. The move into the pod room has been "interesting" for her and has called on her to develop creative ways to "pull from the teacher strengths" to make this open environment work. Early morning is Caitlyn's least favorite time of the day. Living across town and dropping a preschool son at daycare means she often arrives just as the children are flooding into the room. With activities on tables and breakfast at her kidney-shaped table in the middle, she feels stressed trying to greet parents, serve breakfast, and monitor children at activities.

One reason for Caitlyn's stress is that her assistant, Pat, is also a bus driver, which delays Pat's daily arrival until 8:00 A.M. This fifteen-minute lag means that the brunt of early morning transitioning is for Caitlyn to accomplish alone. Pat, like Carolyn, has

been at Reynolds for many years. Pat, too, has grown children and grandchildren. Her age is difficult to guess, as she maintains her ex-military fitness by playing ball and other sports. She dresses in plain jeans and t-shirts, and her stature and build confused at least one preschooler, who thought she was a male. Pat enjoys leading the children in stories, movement, and games in the gym. She frequently takes over for Caitlyn as group leader and seems to enjoy the role. Pat has the task of returning the breakfast juices and milks to the cafeteria and removing the breakfast trash that might have been left throughout the pod. This assignment, along with the bus schedule, means that she often does not join Caitlyn and her class until after they have finished eating and have completed the first table activities for the day.

The daily routine of Pod One

Fitting the routines of prekindergarten into the schedule of Reynolds Elementary School was the first consideration for teachers. Lunch, playground-accessibility, and dismissal times set the parameters for the day's activities. Jeri and Melissa shared the pod's physical space last year, but both the addition of Caitlyn's classroom and a call for more inclusion of the developmental class in the activities of prekindergarten made some changes necessary. The schedule that Jeri had earlier designed was revamped to the satisfaction of some of the teachers and to the dissatisfaction of others.

Since she did not come to the prekindergarten with coursework in early childhood education, Jeri says she "read a lot of different creative curriculums" before designing last year's schedule. She tried pulling groups for instruction during center time, but because of "classroom management issues," settled on the method of whole-group instruction that she now uses. The other classes have followed her lead in this decision.

For Jeri, learning and readiness for the next year are critical elements to be considered. She feels that “state standards really drive” her inclusion of direct instruction time, and that thematic instruction time, likewise, should be scheduled “when they [the children] would do best.” She feels strongly that “phonemic awareness that [she has] developed over the years with children” is very important. When the decision was made to include the developmental preschool children in more activities with the prekindergarten, Jeri saw it as an opportunity to “get all of the children in a phonemic awareness program.” This offer to contribute her expertise to the group, Jeri says, is “how we came up with really just the afternoon rotation.”

Caitlyn taught prekindergarten in a separate classroom last year, with routines that she developed independently around the Reynolds schedule barriers. She sent only a few students each day with assistant teachers to play during center time (also called “centers”) with Jeri and Melissa’s class. This year, she entered the same pod-space as the other teachers and, thus, the same schedule.

Little was changed in the morning schedule, but Caitlyn reveals the struggle to coordinate three classrooms, saying “With three of us in there, we had to make sure we were doing group times all at once” in order to accommodate inclusion of developmental students into all class groups. The noise level of the three classes also required coordination of the schedule to allow for children to hear teachers during group times. Caitlyn feels she was instrumental in designing the afternoon changes implemented this year. It was “my idea and it was not liked the first few weeks,” she states. But now she thinks “everybody really does enjoy the afternoons the way they are.”

The day begins

Parents and children have learned not to enter Pod One until a bell sounds and the double doors open at 7:45. The stated policy is for prekindergarten parents to walk children into the pod and deliver them to their designated homeroom area and teacher. Parents are usually quick with the task of saying goodbye and leaving the children. Each teacher has a customary way of greeting parents each morning and receiving children for another day. At the midyear point, this has become routine.

Caitlyn is seated at the kidney-shaped table in her home area. Children pause to place a Velcro photo-tag on the chart just outside the home area on the portion of the sign that says "I am at School," clocking in for the day. They proceed to Caitlyn at the table, where she greets them. She has retrieved milk, juice, and cereal choices from a cafeteria cart that is parked in the middle of the pod. The other two tables in her area have work sheets to be colored and cut by children after the breakfast choices, or immediately by those children who choose not to eat. Caitlyn makes an effort to chat with arriving parents, but she is clearly multi-tasking, since Pat has not yet arrived to assist her or the children. In this first fifteen minutes, Caitlyn takes attendance and lunch count, serves breakfast, and directs children in their table work. She glances at the tables to see who is completing the task, noting some who are getting the task completed in the allotted time-frame. It is clear that a time structure confines these activities, as Caitlyn admonishes children to "Finish up breakfast...time to get to tables!" Even the children seem in tune with the schedule as they brag "We fast," as they complete the assigned coloring and cutting, which is frequently centered on the alphabet letter the class is learning that week.

The elementary school schedule supercedes the routines of Pod One. At 7:55 each day, the first imposition is the interruption of breakfast and table work with a call to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. At this point in the year, children are accustomed to this ritual and stand with hands on heart, occasionally still clutching a cereal spoon, to recite the words and stand emulating adults for a moment of silence. The rest of the announcements and daily cafeteria menu are mostly disregarded by the preschoolers in Pod One as they return to the table activities or to eating. A cafeteria worker circulates through the pod at 8:20, asking each teacher for a count of children eating lunch later in the day. She occasionally pauses to talk with Pat, sharing tidbits of school news. This worker's child is in Caitlyn's classroom this year.

At around 8:00, Pat arrives, first chatting with Caitlyn on topics of adult interest about her family and traffic. Soon she approaches the tables and starts to assist children, but she does not sit with them. Instead she circulates, prompting children to finish or put away any trash left from their paper-carton and plastic-bowl breakfasts. Once Pat is on duty, Caitlyn retreats to take attendance lists to the office and retrieve coffee for herself. This respite is short, and at her return, Pat begins her daily clean-up of breakfast trash and leftover foods from breakfast in each of the three home areas. Caitlyn resumes her role at the tables and passes a clipboard for children to "sign in" for the day. This routine provides her with a daily record of students' progress toward writing their names.

Caitlyn is very satisfied that the children have remembered the routine and her expectations for behavior after the winter break vacation. "They didn't miss a beat," she comments, as she watches each child come in and go to work. Caitlyn's children seem to go through these habitual morning activities without question at this point in the year. As

children come in, breakfast is one of two options: “We eat breakfast and if you don’t want to eat breakfast you play with toys out.” Those children who are not eating may sit and do table work for up to thirty minutes, waiting for others to arrive or finish work before a transition is made by the whole group.

Across the sea of centers and dramatic play kitchen and dress-up area is Jeri’s home area. Jeri occupied this same area last year, when Caitlyn was in another room, and it has remained an anchor site for Jeri. As children come into the room, Jeri places herself beside a freestanding bulletin board that blocks the entrance to her area. At this spot she greets parents and asks children to indicate with their photo-signs that they are “at school.” Jeri’s greeting station seems to serve as a gate, indicating that home has been left behind and school life, with its rules and procedures, is now beginning. Jeri expects that children will learn to distinguish “home behaviors versus what’s appropriate here” where she is “boss.... [and children] have to do what she says.”

On Jeri’s kidney-shaped table are small, colored sheets of paper for children to use as sign-in cards. Jeri planned this to be the ticket to recording good behaviors throughout the day. Carolyn uses these papers to record stars for appropriate behavior throughout the day. Children in her homeroom have this part of the routine ingrained and mention writing on the “little piece of paper” consistently as they recount the beginning of the day. This task completed, they choose whether to select from the breakfast of juices, milk, and cereal or to go to one of the other tables, where activity sheets have been placed in neat totes along with needed crayons, glue, scissors, and pencils. The tables here have the same cut-and-paste activity found on Caitlyn’s side, but Carolyn and Jeri carefully plan and assemble the materials to make the work-jobs self explanatory.

Carolyn is often absent from the pod at this time, putting her lunch away. When she is present, she does not sit with children but prompts from across the home area and suggests they begin their tasks while she converses with Jeri or parents who might linger a moment. At midyear, children in Jeri's home area frequently complete the early morning routines of breakfast and table work with few adult interventions.

A parent, who is an assistant from an upper-grade classroom, sits briefly with her child during breakfast. This parent is frequently in the classroom, unlike most other parents, and seems to have an insider's place in the group. The expectation is for children to go through the routines without bothering adults. Jeri's group keeps to the overarching time-frame that dictates the day across Pod One with little socializing so they "hurry and eat." If one worksheet is completed, the children may get another worksheet as a consequence of working quickly. Other mornings there are games or puzzles for children to use during wait time.

In Mia and Melissa's home area, they greet the parents warmly and sometimes converse about home or parenting concerns. Tables hold the same breakfast items as in the other two classes, but Tina sits at the breakfast table with children, pouring, opening, and assisting in conversation. Mia and Melissa seem to take turns between greeting parents and helping children transition to the tables. For children who are not eating breakfast, unusual in this group, there are two required work tables. Often these tables include puzzles or other manipulative toys and a writing task. Like Caitlyn's area, this homeroom uses a sign-in sheet on a clipboard, which the three adults circulate among the children. Early morning is full of conversation in this area, and warm hugs are common.

Unless they are talking with a parent, the teachers sit or crouch beside the children, who are involved in their work but still encouraged to express themselves.

This homeroom also pauses for the pledge, and Tina, especially, seems to model a serious regard for the moment of silence by standing completely still with eyes closed. One child listens intently each day for the lunch menu and can be counted on for this information when asked later. There is rarely adult talk between the teachers in this classroom. They are intent on the children and, though they exchange short prompts, they primarily talk with the children. Therapists come in and out of the group, pulling children to their respective offices for speech or other intervention services. This, too, is a part of the routine and children signal with a Velcro picture-card to indicate that they have left the pod area.

Team teaching is well coordinated between Mia and Melissa. They have negotiated a system of sharing the lead role through the day. The upcoming group time will be led alternately by one of the two, who leaves first to prepare the materials she will use for the activity to come after the transition from breakfast. Today Mia goes to the group area, leaving Melissa and Tina with the busy puzzle workers. As Melissa looks at her watch, the whole pod is poised for the first major transition of the day.

Transitioning to “carpet”

Transitions from one activity and place to another are carefully planned in Pod One. Moving and relocating 43 children and 7 adults required the creation of a daily schedule into which every activity is coordinated. By January, children are rarely surprised by the order of each day, and many children can describe the order from start to finish in sequence, especially those early morning routines that seem more consistent

than later activities. Teachers feel that their instruction early in the year has allowed children to anticipate transitions. Now “it is really not a big deal,” like at the beginning, when more explanations were included. Jeri expresses confidence, saying that her group “knows what to expect,” but she is still likely to give verbal cues at each transition. In fact, teachers’ verbal warnings are the only directive that cues the transition after breakfast and table work for Jeri and Caitlyn.

Mia and Melissa, however, begin the day’s first transition using picture cards and a dinging timer to cue their children to the first transition from tables to circle. “We always use the timer and go around beforehand and tell them they have two more minutes, you know, and show them even the picture at that point,” Melissa says, describing the day’s first transition in the developmental class. Teacher-provided cues before the transition are designed to help children anticipate the transition and “know in their minds they need to start cleaning up.” Picture-card cues are designed for all children with autism but serve as a key device in easing transitions for the developmental classroom children throughout the day.

The time schedule that the pod follows through each day was negotiated among all teachers to assure that quieter times were simultaneous. Since there is no wall separating the areas, only the ample space across the large room allows teachers to separate their groups. Teachers are as far as possible from each other during morning group time. Children are seated on the carpets facing toward the teachers and the decorated walls to reduce distraction. Still, the songs and voices of teachers can be heard across the spaces, and teachers have learned to disregard the other groups. Jeri states that the classes “probably, I think, they all do calendar,” indicating that the beginning

morning circle time, while at the same 8:30 to 9:00 daily time slot, is not enacted identically throughout the pod.

Circle time

Once children across the pod transition to a new time period, they settle into their home “group area.” Many children say “carpet,” to describe the time-frame, the activities engaged in, and the place where they occur. Bright primary colors with shapes, letters, and numbers decorate the large carpets in each group area. Caitlyn has labeled her carpet’s blocks with student names to locate students in spots that she feels will help them “pay attention” during group times. Caitlyn sits on a low chair at the front of the rug area, with children in an audience-like group in front of her. Pat often stands at the edge of the group, ready to correct behaviors that are considered inappropriate. Children face the outside wall, where Caitlyn has displayed a primary calendar, a chart with a graph for children to cast votes on the “question of the day,” and a pocket chart for choosing “helpers.” A large easel nearby holds books or charts related to the weekly theme around which learning activities are planned.

Caitlyn reminds children more than once each morning to abide by what she calls “carpet procedures.” Circle time is one of several times during the day when Caitlyn consults a clipboard to post stars for children who exhibited behavior that she deems appropriate during the previous time period. During this time, Caitlyn posts stars for breakfast and initial table work time as well as for the transition to the “carpet.” “Don’t lose your stars,” she warns, as the children watch to see what she will show them first.

“Go to carpet” is the designation given to the time-frame, place, and various activities in circle time. Caitlyn’s group does “all our daily things,” including songs,

calendar, choosing helpers, and, perhaps, a story. The order is not highly ritualized and the children in this group cannot describe any consistent order, just like their teacher. Caitlyn lets a special helper manipulate the calendar number, and children place their name on the “question of the day” chart. Most children watch quietly so as not to lose stars for good behavior, though they may be restless and wiggling, waiting for the next transition. However, children enjoy and participate enthusiastically in singing songs and doing movement activities.

Pat is often late in joining the group at circle time because she is circulating through the pod putting away leftover breakfast foods. She then either watches from the back of the carpet or prepares for the next craft activities. However, she joins in, participating eagerly, with songs and movement activities, her preferred choice when Caitlyn is absent and she assumes the lead.

Jeri never varies her mini-routine. At 8:30 on the dot each morning, she is found in her rocking chair at the front of the carpet in her group area. As breakfast and table work are completed, Jeri reminds children, “It’s almost time to go up front” when she takes her place. Carolyn is usually found perched on the edge of a nearby table. She holds the children’s sign-in name cards and watches for appropriate behavior that she rewards with a star.

Like Caitlyn, Jeri’s morning activities include calendar, helpers, and “question of the day,” but Jeri never diverges from set patterns as she executes these activities. She says she needs this instruction time and tries to pack it with skills. Now, in January, the student helpers mimic her behaviors, asking the other children to “use your counting finger” when placing the calendar numerals. Jeri is intent on the children during circle

time, probing for answers, making eye contact, and asking questions. The children are attentive and involved, and Jeri seems to be performing a carefully choreographed ritual in which she and the children participate.

Melissa and Mia have children with autism in their home group. Some of their morning mini-routines have developed as interventions to assist these children throughout the routines of the day. The picture schedule (see Appendix E) on a side bulletin board has drawings of each of the day's time periods. From this schedule, Mia takes a card and circulates past tables, showing a small drawing of "circle time" to the children. This picture and a sounding timer are cues for transition to circle time. Teachers and children hurriedly stack up puzzles or papers and run to the carpeted area and sit on individual cube chairs that have been previously arranged by Melissa in a semi-circle facing an easel and bulletin board.

Tina and Mia sit on the floor directly behind the students' seats and help prompt and redirect students as the entire group participates in the activities. The developmental preschool group also has expected behaviors during group times. "When you come here you have to be quiet," Mia warns. Each child has a turn to participate, and attention to the group focus is maintained with enthusiastic prompts from all the adults.

Today Melissa leads the group, sitting on a low chair at the front of the circle. She shows another small board to the children with pictures of the mini-routine they will now follow (see Appendix F). Each card is removed as the activity is completed. When questioned, the children in the developmental classroom were unable to remember the steps of the mini-routine outside of the context of the circle. However, they did

enthusiastically remember what each picture stood for when Melissa showed them the cards during circle time, calling out “Calendar,” or “Star.”

Time “on the carpet” lasts for a half hour in Jeri and Caitlyn’s prekindergarten classes, but Mia and Melissa have added another transition during this mini-routine segment. “Sensory” is the name the developmental group uses to describe children manipulating “rice, or play dough or foam soap, or sand, or trampoline or balls” in the circle or table part of their group area. Mia and Melissa had added this playtime to the schedule from 8:45 until 9:00 to accommodate the special needs of students and the attention spans of the three-year-olds in their group. The shortened circle time and “sensory” are only implemented in the developmental class schedule, one of several departures that Mia and Melissa employ to accommodate their special children while staying within the framework of the schedule of the whole pod.

Center time

The “Pre-K Daily Schedule” lists “Learning Centers” during the time period scheduled from 9:00 until 9:45. During “centers,” the children venture out from their home areas into the larger world of the pod, thus mixing with students from all groups. The 22-plus centers have “apple” shaped signs posted near each, with Velcro dots indicating how many slots are available for children to “play” at each station. Children take their photo name-card and indicate their center choice by sticking it onto the appropriate “apple.” Caitlyn feels the children “do a really good job of spacing themselves out” across the room. She says that centers provide a “huge choice” of activities throughout the pod.

Early in the year, teachers sent children to centers in groups of five so the children could learn the procedure. Now, in the spring semester, children in Caitlyn and Jeri's classes tell teachers where they will play before leaving the home carpet area, and then begin "mingling socially with lots of different children," as Caitlyn describes it. Caitlyn and Jeri ask where children are going to play, but do not monitor this or ask for a recounting of the play after center time.

The pod hums with activity during centers. Children may be found in every nook and cranny. In the large middle area of dramatic play materials, they may be dressing in costumes, serving plastic food cooked in toy ovens, and placing dolls in doll-house scenarios. Caitlyn's carpet area doubles as a block area, where three-foot-square waffle blocks are being made into a race car by children from Mia and Melissa's class. Busy groups are at a sand table and a water table, and two easels are on the far edge of Jeri's area. Next to the wall leading into the pod, across from Mia and Melissa's home area, is a bank of computers, and preschoolers from across the pod are using each computer to play games. A self-serve snack area is labeled "the Cozy Café," and here regulars are found each day serving cups of cereal or small snack crackers and pouring themselves cups of water. A favorite activity of these snackers seems to be using the nearby mini-sweeper to tidy up after their spills. There is talking, laughing, and movement all over the pod, but especially in the middle sections and in Caitlyn's small and large block areas.

Many of the centers, like the area with the large waffle blocks, are used consistently throughout the year. Other areas change during the various themes that are planned by teachers over the course of the year. In February, the computer games and

science center have fish games and manipulatives, since the class and parents will soon be going to a local aquarium on a field trip. Books and thematic projects also reflect the fishy theme. Jeri is the team member who “drags out” the theme materials at the beginning of each new unit and directs the Friday afternoon planning sessions for teachers.

The motivation of the children at center time seems mixed. Some children await a favorite playmate before choosing activities. Other children go with regularity to a choice center, playing with the same materials for continuous days. Still other children seem to have things to do as they execute self-imposed plans of writing a letter at the “writing center” or painting a self-portrait at the art easels. Certain children seem to need adult companionship and position themselves in order to gain the attention of teachers.

“Monitoring” centers is the way adults most often describe their role at center time. During the center time-slot, adults are most often observed socializing in pairs or preparing for the upcoming “thematic time.” Unless children’s behavior is considered very inappropriate, adults seldom interfere.

Of the adults in Pod One, only Mia is regularly found engaged in play as a partner with the children. She follows students from her classroom to chosen centers, offering options, playing with them, or assisting them with materials. Melissa plays occasionally, but frequently she is stationed at the computer bank assisting the children with programs. The plan that Mia and Melissa created for their classroom adults calls for Tina to spend center time working “with one child covering a goal” from the individual education plans. However, Tina usually cleans up her home area and then often chats with Carolyn as she enjoys a mid-morning snack and watches the children at play.

Caitlyn sends students to centers by having a designated helper ask each child where he or she will go for center time. The helper holds up the designated child's name card to signal children to come up and answer. Caitlyn is often the first of the pod teachers to send children out into the centers. Although Caitlyn says that center time is ideally spent in play with the children, in the "huge" area of Pod One, center time is often spent "just monitoring where everybody is." Like Jeri, she occasionally uses center time to test a child's developing skills, but often, while the children are occupied in play, Caitlyn enjoys an opportunity to talk with other adults or field a phone call. Pat is always busy during center time, but she is rarely playing. She uses this time to help the teachers with tasks such as removing or displaying children's "work" on bulletin boards around the pod. She monitors the messiness of the "Cozy Café" and vacuums or removes trash.

Jeri is frequently the last teacher to allow her children to go to centers. She uses the transition from group to centers as another chance to insert a quiz for children, as she asks their address or birthday as a ticket to play. During center time, Carolyn and Jeri infrequently leave their home area, instead hanging about their home carpet. Jeri says that she stays "closer to what [my] actual room is." Jeri and Carolyn talk together about family and school-wide chitchat or pull students to their tables to "test" their readiness skills. Carolyn sometimes goes to the back edge of their area to assist with children's paintings, but her focus remains on adult conversations. Speech directed to children is usually concerned with the mundane tasks of removing smocks or using drying racks.

During center time, students from the local high school and a community college join the official prekindergarten staff. These students filter into the centers and play with

the children. The teachers, too, engage these students in conversation and so, many times, adult talk goes on while children are playing at center activities.

Although the teachers don't have assigned areas to maintain or "monitor," they seem to take charge of those centers adjacent to their home areas. From her carpet area, Jeri calls out across the room to the dramatic area, reminding children to be careful not to "drag everything out." Carolyn and Jeri never "play" house, but threaten to close it if rules of appropriate behavior are not met. Jeri, like Caitlyn, thinks the sheer number of children causes center time to be "probably not as fun for me as it could be because a lot of it is just management for me."

Thematic time

On the official posted schedule (see Appendix G), the next time-frame is termed "thematic time." For the teachers, this means that they will plan stories and projects that introduce the children to a particular theme. These themes—sea life, nursery rhymes, or others throughout the year—are agreed upon at the year's outset by the lead teachers. During thematic time, children from the classes are mixed. At the outset of each unit, two new children from each of the prekindergarten rooms join Mia and Melissa for their "story time," which occurs at the same time. Jeri and Caitlyn include the same two children from Mia and Melissa's group for thematic time activities during the entire year.

By 9:50, Jeri has given five- and then four-minute warnings to children playing in centers. She and Carolyn cluck tongues as they straighten the dramatic play area each day. Their warnings to "close the center" are seemingly disregarded or misunderstood by the children engaged in play. Melissa often checks her watch as she or Mia brings a picture card to cue a child with autism that "story time" will soon begin. Caitlyn has

sounded a timer as a signal that clean-up should start, and across the pod children and teachers put materials away, transitioning back to their carpets.

Pat has the “Cozy Café” in perfect order and has threatened children in the block areas to clean up or lose “stars.” If a child does not accumulate enough stars throughout the week, he or she might be forbidden admission to the “treasure box” at the end of Friday’s session. Children listen for the timer, look to see what others are doing, and watch their teachers for cues to transition to the carpet areas. By 10:05, children and teachers are in their places at the three circle areas.

For Mia and Melissa, this transition needs to move quickly because their developmental preschoolers find waiting difficult. A small felt board, like they used for the initial circle time, cues the names of songs. Alternating the lead role, Mia or Melissa calls on children to choose a song by selecting the corresponding pictures. Mia and Melissa call this time segment “story time,” and they frequently read the same thematic story that they read earlier in the day, repeating the content for students in their group. After completing the songs and story, they move to tables for a thematic art project, and their “friends” from the other classes stay with their group to complete this project before lunch time.

Caitlyn says that “thematic time” is her favorite time of the day’s scheduled activities. Perhaps she is settled into the routine by now and, unlike during the hectic starting circle, Pat is now ready to assist. Caitlyn may read a thematic story at this time-frame, or she may choose to have children participate in other “hands-on” activities that extend the theme’s concepts. Either Pat or Caitlyn often hangs back from the carpet, preparing the thematic art project that will follow the carpet time. This “art” time is often

hectic, as children cut and paste at various rates and require various amounts of adult assistance. Pat hovers above and Caitlyn sits at the middle table, but frequently each adult goes to individual children to help or settle disputes.

Carolyn usually gets Jeri's thematic art projects ready and portioned out on individual trays during center time. When Jeri sits in the adult rocker, she reads a theme story and then carefully details the steps that will be taken by children as they complete the thematic art project. Jeri says "our little thematic time" projects also help with skills, and she routinely includes a booklet for children to color that helps with "number recognition and one-to-one correspondence."

The time period from 10:00 to 10:50 includes bathroom and hand washing in preparation for lunch. The transition after thematic time seems hectic in Pod One, since children from the integrated groups return to their home group, bringing completed art projects and often hearing directions from many different teachers. They return to their carpets to regroup and sometimes take a side trip to the bathrooms, unbeknownst to their home-group teacher. Bathroom time is supposed to be built into this transition, but instead, as children line up, adults often dispense hand-sanitizing solution. From across the pod, adult pleas of "hurry" attest to the subservient nature of Pod One's schedule to the overarching schedule of Reynolds.

Lunch time

Before 11:00 A.M., Mia and Melissa begin Pod One's exodus to the Reynolds Elementary School cafeteria for lunch. The other classes follow in turn until Pod One is empty and quiet. When questioned about where they are going, children seem sure that lunch is next on the schedule. They follow the line with their hands folded behind them in

“duck tails” and their cheeks puffed out in “bubbles” as teachers attempt to keep them quiet and orderly in the elementary school’s main areas.

Lunch time is not a favorite activity of any of the adults in Pod One. As children negotiate the distance from the school kitchen to the long cafeteria tables, adults from each group meet them and help them find seats. Disruptive children are often seated alone at an adjacent table; they are frequently the same children each day. The cafeteria has high ceilings and is in the middle of the school proper. Many other adults and students pass through the space, making it seem even more hectic. Teachers and assistants do not sit with the children, but “monitor” the tables, admonishing the children to eat and sit still. Only Mia and Melissa make an effort to converse with their class. As students finish eating, the adults take the students’ lunch trays to trash receptacles while the children sit and wait to leave.

Mia and Melissa leave earlier than the other groups, going either to an empty theater or to a garden area. They say they devised this plan when they felt the time-frame was too long for their class to wait. Children run and play in the circular theater, crawling through hula-hoops or empty cardboard containers. They play while the other groups finish eating, have their trays emptied, and then go back to Pod One to again regroup on the carpet before going outdoors for play.

Gross motor time

On fair-weather days, the classes rotate outdoors to one of two activity areas. Two days each week, they play on a fenced playground area with a large activity climber and slide. The other two days, they play on a concrete area at Reynolds entrance with tricycles, sidewalk chalk, and plastic balance beams. On rainy or cold days, the classes

go into the school gym for play with hula-hoops, balls, and jump ropes. On Fridays, prekindergarteners go home before outdoor play.

A third prekindergarten, not from Pod One, joins the rotation with Mia and Melissa's developmental preschool group. The groups are active and loud, running and playing. The teachers often use this time to take a break from the children, either by staying inside or chatting together outside. Jeri and Carolyn routinely spell each other and are rarely both outdoors together. Caitlyn says she knows that it is appropriate to engage in the children's play, but she admits to needing a break. Only Pat seems to enjoy the physical activity and often leads the children in ball games, either in the gym or outdoors.

Children listen for the call for playtime to be over, responding to their own particular teacher's cue that it is time to leave. They know that they may play " 'til they call our names," and then it is time to return to Pod One.

"Rotations"

After the time outdoors, Pod One's children are, in Jeri's terms, "all mixed in there together" as they enter into what teachers call "rotations." The time period from 12:15 until 1:00 P.M. is an innovation to the pod this year. At the urging of a special education administrator to provide more inclusion activities, the group designed a rotation consisting of three fifteen-minute time slots. The three groups— two Pod One prekindergartens and the developmental preschool—rotate around the pod until they have completed a circuit of snacks, phonemic awareness activity, and science or math activity.

For Jeri, this rotation allowed her time to do "my thing" of phonemic awareness. She and Carolyn stay closely at their tables, playing games or completing activities that focus on pre-reading and learning the alphabet. First-grade experience led Jeri to develop

these activities, and although she finds the rotation time “hectic,” she is glad to “go to [her] strengths.” There is rarely any unfocused behavior in Jeri’s area, as Carolyn and Jeri seem totally involved and centered on each group’s activity during the three fifteen-minute periods.

Caitlyn and Pat rotate teaching responsibilities with teachers Mia and Melissa, as each pair team-teaches a science lesson during one unit and then supervises snacks during the next. Popsicles are served in Mia and Melissa’s area on tables while science or math activities are accomplished in Caitlyn’s circle rug or tables. At each fifteen-minute transition, teachers rush the children to the next activity and the next area of the room.

The end of the day and “going home”

The teachers loosen their demands on children’s behavior as the last of the three “rotations” is completed. Children go to their home areas and then to the “cubbies,” where assistant teachers have packed today’s bundle of papers and projects into their backpacks. Once on their carpet, each class sings a goodbye song and teachers dole out “dollars” commensurate to the “stars” earned that day. These dollars can translate into a trip to a “treasure box” on Fridays to purchase treats or small toys. This discipline plan originated with Jeri as a first-grade teacher. The plan was modified for the Pod One children to, in Jeri’s words, “stress positive behaviors” by rewarding children for appropriate behaviors throughout the day. This “behavior plan” is listed on the Pod One master schedule and is rarely forgotten when children give their rendition of the daily routine.

Mia and Melissa’s children go straight to their carpet area and chairs after rotations, where they consistently sing the good-bye song. Tina brings the backpacks to

this circle area to relieve the children of one last transition. Mia and Melissa offer the children a treat every day from a “treasure box,” but they do not participate in the system of stars and dollars like the other teachers.

The published time for the end of prekindergarten is 1:30, but by 1:15 each day, the preparation for “going home” is well under way. As Jeri fits in a last attempt for “skills” by playing letter or guessing games, Carolyn joins Pat as they dismiss children to the cars that wait outside Pod One. Caitlyn sometimes switches roles with Pat, leaving her to monitor waiting children, while Caitlyn goes out to cars. Mia routinely waits with children on the rug area of the classroom, reading books with restless students while Melissa dismisses children with Tina’s help.

By 1:30, teachers and assistants are beginning to find their own lunches and informally chat at the tables in Mia and Melissa’s group area. On Fridays, they may plan activities for the themes of upcoming units when Jeri takes the lead to open “tubs” of materials from previous years. Usually they share recollections of the days’ activities that are, for Jeri, important because “being able to vent” is one of the bonuses of sharing daily life in Pod One.

This concludes the story of day in Pod One prekindergarten and a typical routine. I will next turn to salient findings that help to further understand the instrumental case of prekindergarten routine.

The Instrumental Case of Daily Routines in Prekindergarten

Introduction

The following sections are included to report further findings from analysis of interviews, observations, and physical artifacts (Yin, 2003, p.96). These data will

illuminate the instrumental case of daily routine in prekindergarten. According to Stake (1995), an instrumental case study is best described as a format that seeks to understand something more than the particular setting. My research addresses the need for a “general understanding” (Stake, 1995, p. 3) of daily routines, and the case at Reynolds was instrumental in developing this broader understanding. Reporting the findings in the following section allows the “teasing out” (Stake, 1995, p. 17) of issues salient to understanding the instrumental case of daily routine. I present connections to the broader literature in Chapter V. In the following sections, I will discuss these issues, which I believe are salient to understanding the instrumental case: 1) defining daily routines, 2) designing routines, 3) enacting daily routines, 4) learning daily routines, and 5) locating routines within routines. The first section, defining daily routines, reports findings and impressions that illustrate the schedule and activities of the master routine of Pod One as they are instrumental in understanding the case of daily routine in prekindergarten.

Defining daily routines

The master routine

A master routine is the schedule that dictates the overall pattern of daily life for participants in prekindergarten. Reynolds teacher Melissa defined the daily routine succinctly as “our schedule, what we do each day.” The master routine of Pod One was negotiated by teachers and was habitually followed each day from 7:45 until dismissal at 1:30.

Pod One of Reynolds Elementary School published its daily schedule in a parents’ handbook and posted the same schedule (see Appendix G) on the front bulletin board near the classroom’s entrance. This schedule operated like a time-clock, as teachers made

sure that activities were confined to each prescribed slot. When interviewed, teachers' descriptions of the master routine of Pod One were virtually identical to the posted routine and to each other's descriptions.

Teachers at Reynolds Pod One said that children's growing knowledge of routine was a positive force and helpful for managing daily school life. "I love that when they know the routine," said Caitlyn when she watched the children go about breakfast and morning table time with few prompts from her. When observed during spring semester, the children, in fact, had been "ingrained in the schedule" and, according to Jeri, knew "what to expect" from each day. Mia also noted the children's increased understanding, saying, "they've gotten accustomed to the schedule," thus indicating their growing knowledge of the master routine.

Strict adherence to the master schedule was obvious as the entire pod went about its daily activities. Whether cleaning up after center play or arriving at the cafeteria, teachers were observed to adhere to the regular time-frames of the master schedule throughout the day in Pod One. The children and teachers in Pod One abided by a schedule that dictated their daily activity and kept them in sync. Recognition of the regular and closely followed schedule of Pod One provided a critical backdrop that was instrumental to understanding the case of daily routines in prekindergarten.

The activities

What activities were included in the daily routines in Pod One? Activities that teachers included in the schedule of Pod One's master routine (see Appendix G) were also listed on the posted master schedule. As previously detailed in the story of daily routines at Reynolds, each day followed the same course of activity from breakfast to

going home time and dismissal. Jeri and Caitlyn stayed in sync throughout the day's activities, but Mia and Melissa inserted sensory and theater as alternative activities. The daily routine activity slots were consistent and habitually enacted each day.

Starting each day, "circle time" was consistently enacted by teachers in Pod One as the first group time of the day. Mia said that "A good morning circle time" was her favorite time of the day's activities.

Center time (or "centers") came next in the daily routine. This time-frame, a favorite of the children, was one of the activity periods in which children initiated their own choices for activity.

I observed that "thematic time," the third listing of activities for the day, consisted of sitting on the carpet to listen to a story or other teacher-delivered information before going to tables for a project. This time-frame was adult-directed and poorly understood by children.

Lunch and "gross motor time" were dictated by the overarching schedule of the elementary school. "Gross motor" had two meanings in the routine. Depending on the weather, it could mean outdoor play or play in the gym.

The master schedule listed "Phonemic Awareness/Science/Social Studies/Snack" as the activities included from 12:15 until 1:00 P.M. Teachers referred to this time-frame as "rotations," and children physically rotated to three areas of the classroom for activities or snack.

The end of the day came after the last "rotation" and was listed on the master routine as "Treasure box/Reflection of the Day," followed by "Closing /Dismissal." These activities made up the plan for the prekindergarten day and came to hold special

meanings for the participants. The inclusion of activities in the daily routine gave the schedule its meaning and ultimately gave meaning to prekindergarten. The schedule and activities were enacted in the pod room in reoccurring spaces each day.

Spaces and places

I found that the events on the master routine's schedule occurred in the same places each day as participants in Pod One enacted them. In fact, when participants recalled the activities of the day, they often used the place name interchangeably with its activity. Teachers told children to "go to centers," indicating both the activity period and the places where they expected children to carry out activities. Children, too, seemed to equate place with activity and said "carpet" to describe both a location and its implicit activity. Instead of using the term "circle," Jeri told her group to "Go up front." Children's actions indicated that they interpreted this phrase to mean that it was time to sit on their group's carpet for morning circle time.

These findings demonstrate that having a consistent place for activities to occur during the daily routine may be important to participants' understandings of the time-frame in which the activities occur.

In following sections, I will present findings that reveal the factors instrumental to the design of daily routine in Pod One.

Designing daily routines

I initially examined the design of daily routines to tease apart various influences on how prekindergarten routines were conceived. Findings presented in this section illuminate the ways in which the daily routine was conceptualized and developed in Pod

One. These findings are instrumental to understanding the issues of routine design that were pertinent to the case.

I found that the antecedents of a daily routine are multifaceted, and that the daily master routine in prekindergarten is based on influences from both outside and inside the classroom. First, I will discuss influence from the pod setting and from the larger arena of the elementary school on the conception of routines in Pod One. Most prominent, however, were data revealing the influence of the individual teachers' philosophical visions and their abilities to exercise power to control the design of a routine.

Influences from the setting

Influences from the elementary school. The master schedule of Pod One was not entirely open to teachers' interpretation because the prekindergarten is situated in the elementary school. Some routines and time constraints were in place before teachers began to design their routines. Certain "must do" activities, such as lunch time and the "pledge and moment of silence," constrained teachers' decisions about routine and were necessarily incorporated into the master routine. Each team member expressed frustration with the elementary school's mandated schedule. Teachers felt that it often interfered with their ability to create an ideal schedule. For Caitlyn, an ideal schedule would include a more causal arrival time, instead of the perceived "floodgates" at 7:45. Jeri, likewise, expressed frustration with Reynolds lunch schedule, which crowded prekindergarten students into the cafeteria with students from other grades. The overcrowded elementary school precluded a request by Mia and Melissa for an indoor area for gross motor activities. The addition to their schedule of "theater," for extra gross motor activity,

resulted from this denial. I found that the design of daily routines, therefore, began with accommodations necessitated by outside schedules that superseded individual routines.

Influences from the pod design. I found that the distinctive pod design of the classroom, like its elementary school location, was influential in daily routine enactment and design. Teaching in an open space, in fact, required the teachers to collaborate in designing the routines. Jeri, a twenty-three year veteran at Reynolds, purported to know well the pros and cons of working in a pod design. “It can be draining,” she admitted when asked about teaching in the open classroom setting. Jeri noted that if everyone was not “flexible,” some team members had to give “more than others and that’s tough.”

Although saying pod design had “lots of pluses and lots of minuses,” Caitlyn confessed that it was “hard” “to be in such an open space and [have] 65 [children] in here.” She felt that having “such a huge space to oversee” caused her interaction style with children to be different from what she acknowledged to have enjoyed in “a self-contained room that’s smaller.” Caitlyn blamed the pod design on her inability to “play” and to have “one-on-one time” during the busy master routine schedule. As she described the way the routine was designed, she noted that the teachers had “changed things around a little to accommodate all of us in one room this year.” This statement alluded to the fact that the pod arrangement necessitated changes to both the routine and the activities.

Teachers designed the master routine to ensure order and control noise. Although the “huge open space” allowed more center choices for the children, adults admitted to feeling “mandated” to stay on schedule during this time. Jeri seemed to imply that ongoing negotiation was needed to make the routines work, saying that she frequently needed to “tweak [the schedule] a little bit” in order to fit activities into the master

schedule. The pod configuration of Pod One influenced the master schedule and the length and content of daily activities. I found that the physical layout of a classroom is instrumental to the design of daily routines.

Influences from special education. The elementary school and prekindergarten were part of the larger school system that incorporated special education services. The prekindergarten and developmental classes were influenced by the special education administration when designing routines for their children. In fact, Mia attributed the newly planned “rotation” to a directive from the special education supervisor requiring “our and the other kids” spend time together. Mia and Melissa saw “rotations” as an improvement to the schedule because it accomplished the goal of “inclusion.” When speaking of their supervisor’s desire for inclusion, Mia said, “She wanted more inclusion and we made it happen.”

The special needs of their students were ever-present for Mia and Melissa as they planned their routines and activities. The team-teaching relationships in Pod One made these concessions influential in the design of routines for all the teachers, however, since they shared the master routine of the pod. I found that teachers in Pod One were influenced by the setting as well as special education requirements as they designed their daily routine. Analysis of these findings suggests that the case of daily routines in prekindergarten may be influenced by varied environmental and programming constraints from outside of a particular class.

Influences from teachers

Influence from teachers’ philosophical stances. The teachers in Pod One hold diverse philosophical views of teaching in prekindergarten. I found that the teachers’

view of their roles and the purpose of prekindergarten had an impact on the design of the daily routine. Jeri designed the original schedule of Pod One's prekindergarten prior to being joined by other teachers in the pod classroom. During the morning hours, the activities of this original master routine remained unchanged and reflected Jeri's preference for adult-directed activities, including two time-frames that were teacher-directed, with centers sandwiched between. Centers, included during the morning, were also often shortened by Jeri as she focused on skills she felt were necessary to ensure children's "readiness" for the next grade. For Jeri, it was necessary for children to respect her authority and follow directions for this skill-based learning to occur.

The other teachers accepted Jeri's schedule for the morning, but made adjustments to the activities according to their philosophical view of schooling and adult-child relationships. For Melissa and Mia, the needs of the individual children were a primary concern. They shortened their group time to accommodate the younger children in their class. Caitlyn expressed her desire that school be "home-like" and "fun." She followed Jeri's lead in the schedule design but was inconsistent in inserting readiness activities. Caitlyn's influence was found in adding home-like decorations to the pod and the "Cozy Café" to centers, both aimed at making the space "comfortable" for children.

Although they functioned in an identical time-frame, the teachers had developed quite different mini-routines based on their philosophical perspectives. Findings suggest that teacher design of the daily routine is influenced by their philosophical bent. Chapter V will link the views of teachers at Reynolds to a discussion of the broader literature on teacher philosophical stance and further illuminate its importance to the case.

Influences from specific teachers. The power exerted by individual team members was also influential to the design and implementation of the daily routines in prekindergarten. I found that power in Pod One was unevenly distributed, leading the design of the routine to be more heavily influenced by Jeri than by the other teachers. Commenting on her design for the morning time-frame, Jeri said, “I think everybody pretty much knew that that’s the way to go.” Although she is part of a team in Pod One, Jeri continued using the procedures that she had “developed over the years.” Caitlyn affirmed that the schedule was “what Jeri was already doing,” suggesting that she and the others had fit their class schedules into Jeri’s preexisting routine.

Mia and Melissa, however, were able to exert power to make changes through their status as special educators. Without challenging the master routine, Mia and Melissa added inclusion, sensory, and additional gross motor time by adjusting their schedule to meet their desired goals. The added changes incorporated both the goals of special education programming as well as their classroom goals for children. “We kinda ... put it together,” said Melissa, describing the approach they used to develop activities that fit their vision of what was appropriate for their group.

Caitlyn was the officially designated team leader this year, yet she seemed to wield little power in Pod One. Her group’s physical location at the farthest corner of the pod seemed to affirm my impression that Caitlyn had less influence over routine design. Caitlyn seemed to look for opportunities to have influence in the schedule, however, and expressed pride about creating “rotations.” Seeming to enjoy a peacemaker role, she declared, “It was my idea,” although it required a “little bit of working some schedules” to get everyone on the “same path.”

Power in Pod One was unevenly distributed, and, therefore, some teachers influenced the design of the routine more than others. The power exerted by individual team members seems significant to understanding how the daily routine in a prekindergarten comes to be created.

Influences from teachers' education and experience. Teacher education and experience, perhaps antecedents of their philosophical stance, were also influential in how the daily routines came to be designed. Jeri's educational training was in elementary education and special education, and perhaps is influential in her preference for adult-directed activities. Her experience had been primarily in first grade. Jeri's prekindergarten licensure was granted as a waiver, allowing her to teach outside of her areas of expertise. Jeri's elementary school background influenced her to design a routine with more hours spent in adult-directed activities than in child-initiated activities.

Caitlyn's educational background included experiences in a University "lab" school, where she taught both infants and prekindergarten children. Most of her experience after college was gained at a small school in a self-contained third-grade classroom. Last year, her first year back in preschool, was in a self-contained classroom at Reynolds. The environment of the elementary schools differed from the more child-focused environment of the university lab-school. These educational and classroom experiences have placed Caitlyn in settings that embraced quite different theoretical stances.

Neither Mia nor Melissa had taught in a self-contained classroom. They were educated, and spent their internships, in early childhood special education settings where having many adults in the classroom was the norm. The individualized education plans

(IEP's) dictated that each child receive specialized instruction from a staff member with ratios that provided more one-on-one attention. Perhaps this influenced Mia and Melissa to plan more time in child-initiated activities for their group than did the other two prekindergarten teachers.

The teachers in Pod One hold different philosophical views of prekindergarten and the design of the routine, including an emphasis on adult-directed activity, which was influenced by Jeri's original design. Mia and Melissa's compromises to this schedule were made without disturbing the master routine. The philosophical stance of teachers, as revealed by this analysis, strongly influences the choice of activities and the schedule of a daily routine in prekindergarten.

Enacting daily routines

This section of the findings details the lived-out routine sequences of Pod One's master routine. Observations of the enacted daily routines provided the data needed to discover findings that illuminate features of enacted routines for the case. I first present findings to reveal the physical locations and the roles that teachers regularly assumed in daily routines. Findings show that teachers' philosophical stances, influential in design of the routines, also influenced their behavior in the daily routine. I will conclude the section by presenting findings that reveal children's unique views of the daily routines in prekindergarten.

Teachers

Teachers enacted daily routines by consistently assuming the same roles and positions in the classroom each day. As the prekindergarten teachers participated in the daily routines that they had designed for Pod One, their actions and statements seem to

reveal their beliefs about the nature of school and the purpose of prekindergarten for the children. The philosophical stance of each teacher was exposed in both statements and activities during the enactment of routines. Teachers located themselves around the pod as they enacted routines during each daily segment. As I observed them assume various daily roles, individual perspectives on what a prekindergarten teacher should be doing during a typical day were revealed.

Teachers' physical location in enacted routines. Observing during the spring semester, I found that the physical location of each adult in Pod One was consistent and predictable during each time-frame of the day. Mia and Melissa participated with children, involving themselves in play during center time and in the circle activity during group times. Tina, their assistant, had learned to behave much as the teachers on her team, both from their example and from the document they crafted (see Appendix C) to direct her daily interactions with children.

Jeri and Carolyn were less likely to interact with the children in playful ways and often assumed a managerial role rather than the role of co-player. During group activities, Jeri habitually positioned herself at the front of the group with children seated on the floor in front of her. Carolyn never took a place in circle, but, instead, regularly sat on the table edge watching behaviors from outside the group. Carolyn and Jeri rarely participated in Pod One's centers other than those in their own space. Jeri said that during center time they stayed "more over in the math, art, that area...closer to what my actual room is." Jeri and Carolyn were the only team that alternated playground duty, with each taking a turn inside for a break or to prepare for upcoming activities. When observed, Jeri was so predictable that her location alone could reveal the time of the day.

Caitlyn's day often seemed rushed and her location in the classroom during each time segment was less predictable than the location of the other teachers. During the early morning activities, Caitlyn was confined to her center table, facilitating breakfast or activities at two adjacent tables before Pat arrived from bus duty. Both Caitlyn and Pat were frequently found preparing for the next activity during center time, while children were occupied with play. Pat frequently stood outside the circle area during group times and often was across the classroom working to clean up after breakfast or put up art displays.

There were frequently centers in Pod One without immediate adult supervision. During center time in Pod One, only Mia was consistently observed to be in all areas of the room. In the large classroom space, the teachers chose locations during routines that were consistent but not always attentive to children's actions. Observation of the adults in this busy space found them more attentive to children during adult-directed times of the routine than during child-directed activities or play. Perhaps philosophical views of prekindergarten, as discussed below, influenced their chosen positions in the classroom and the roles they enacted.

Teachers' philosophical stances in enacted routines. The ways teachers enacted routines provided information about their beliefs and philosophical stances regarding teaching in prekindergarten. Jeri's adult-directed activities revealed her preference for an academically-directed philosophical view of prekindergarten. For Jeri, preparation for the next grade was the stated goal. She was continuously working on skills throughout the daily routines, both in her own group and during "phonemic awareness," during which she covered skills with each of the rotating groups of the pod.

Jeri said an ideal preschool schedule for her would include “more structured language.” The enacted routine in Jeri’s area reflected this desire, as Jeri and Carolyn seemed to change demeanor during “phonemic awareness” activity, giving the children their undivided attention while sitting at tables at child level. Jeri said center time was “a big part of prekindergarten,” but during center time she rarely interacted in play activities with children. Rather, she prepared the classroom activities, talked with adults, or administered skill assessments to children. Jeri monitored inappropriate behavior during center time and said the activity segment was frequently “just a lot of management.”

Unlike Jeri, Caitlyn’s ideas about child-initiated versus adult-directed activities were often conflicted in her enacted routines. Rotations, Caitlyn felt, provided a time when “kids get more teaching from me,” perhaps meaning direct instruction. In direct contrast, Caitlyn spoke of wanting school to be “comfortable” for her group of students. Her ideal routine, she said, “wouldn’t be as strict table activity in the morning.”

Mia and Melissa, and assistant Tina, consistently engaged in play with children during center time and participated in group times, facilitating the children’s participation with extra prompts and touches. Both teachers said that their favorite activity was group time, choosing it because they believed it provided a beneficial and consistent routine for their special students. As Melissa stated, “the set and the consistentness” of the group routines encouraged “closeness” and built a cohesive group. Observation of their group corroborated her description.

Findings revealed the philosophical stance of the teachers in Pod One during daily routines as they provided either adult-directed or child-centered activity. The roles they chose also revealed their views about teaching and prekindergarten.

Teachers' roles in enacted routines. I had anticipated that teachers might assume different roles as they participated in the daily routine activities. I found that the roles that each teacher took on each day were consistent and often defined by their team-teaching positions in their specific group.

Jeri said her role did “not really” change during the day’s time segments. She rarely took the role of play-partner during center time and seemed most animated during times when she was seated in the rocking chair. Jeri said she regarded Carolyn as being on “total, total, equal terms,” but the two maintained very specific and consistent roles, with Jeri as team leader. I observed Carolyn assuming the group leadership position only once during my observations.

Caitlyn said that she and Pat “kinda tag team” as they exchanged roles as group leader. Unlike the planned leadership sharing of Mia and Melissa, however, this exchange was rarely decided in advance and often happened when Caitlyn was otherwise occupied with a phone call or other interruption.

Again, the roles of adults in Mia and Melissa’s group were clearly defined in their document for Tina. These three adults seemed to slide easily in and out of roles as needed, perhaps because of the written directive. Tina never took the leadership role in group activities. She was assigned more “clean up” chores than lead teachers: “our paras do a lot of straightening up,” Mia stated.

Melissa saw her role in relation to children as both “Playing with them, where other times I do want to be their teacher.” She sat on the floor near children and accompanied children as they used playground equipment outdoors. Although Mia felt

her role did “not really” change throughout the day, in practice she often allowed children to assume the lead in play activity during center and sensory time.

The roles teachers enacted each day in daily routines were consistent, and I found that I could predict both where teachers would be in the classroom and what they would be doing at each day’s observation. These findings suggest the importance of teacher location and roles to understanding the case.

Children

In spite of the teachers’ intent to “ingrain” students into the daily routines of Pod One, data from incidental interviews and observations of the children revealed their unique perceptions of life at school. Children had favorite activities that differed from those of their teachers. As children recounted the events of a day at school, they recalled a schedule similar to that of their teachers, a recitation reminiscent of the routine as it is posted, yet they often missed parts. Just as teachers in each of the three groups designed mini-routines that allowed them to express their unique ideas, children used center time as an opportunity to create personally meaningful activities in the enacted routines of each day.

Children’s routine sequences. When interviewed during the daily routines, many children in Pod One were able to list, in order, the sequences of their day. Although they missed some segments, their order aligned with that of their teachers and with the master routine of Pod One. Five children interviewed were able to give sequenced accounts of their day, with one naming ten segments in sequential order. A child from Caitlyn’s group listed nine daily routine segments, but forgot any mention of “rotation,”

instead mistakenly saying that “treasure box” came after gross motor activity at day’s end.

I observed that children could anticipate an upcoming routine segment. Finishing breakfast, children from Caitlyn’s group moved to the carpet area to wait for circle time to begin. After cleaning up blocks that were used during center time, a child from Mia and Melissa’s group was observed to anticipate “story time” by returning to their circle area with no prompting from his teacher.

Children’s private worlds. The children in Pod One often took part in activities in which the adults did not participate, or notice. As previously discussed, for the most part, adults were busy with preparations and adult conversation during center time, leaving children to play without adult intervention, unless they were disruptive. One child interviewed had completed writing a letter in the classroom’s writing center. He said he planned to complete the task at home and took the “letters” to his backpack. None of the Pod One teachers noticed the activity or commented on his actions. In another example, two students from Mia and Melissa’s class completed a complicated plan for building a boat in the block area. They spent thirty minutes designing the boat and trying out its dimensions. Neither their project nor their joy at completing the boat was noticed by classroom adults. These two instances were illustrative of others that happened to the children in Pod One during both center time and outdoor play. These time-frames, identified as favorites by the children, contained child activities in which adults neither participated nor seemed to discern.

Children’s favorite parts. Children recounted favorite times of the daily routine that differed from the favorite times identified by their teachers. In interviews, four

children said “centers” was their favorite daily routine segment. Three others named “play,” which can translate as either center time or gross motor time. The only other time-frame mentioned as a favorite was “go home.” One child from Mia and Melissa’s group was observed taking the photo of “story time” from the class “daily schedule” board. Melissa commented, “He wants it to be story time,” showing that even children with low language skills demonstrate preferences for certain daily activities.

Children’s knowledge of daily routines and school-ways was revealed as they participated in school activities and schedules. The special perceptions of children revealed in data from interviews and observations provided insights to describe the more generic case of daily routine in prekindergarten. Next I describe findings that reveal the phenomenon of play of the teachers and children at Reynolds.

Play in the enacted routines

The importance of play in the enacted routines of prekindergarten differs for each of the three groups. Teachers’ support of “play and child-chosen activities” (Bredecamp & Coppel 1997, p. 128) is a key tenant of appropriate practices as defined by the National Association of Educators of Young Children. The data reveal that participants from Pod One demonstrated dissimilar values when it came to including and fostering children’s play as a part of the daily routine

The daily routine of Pod One included 5-¾ hours of programming each day, and by charting each class’s observed routines, I was able to detail the amount of time that each group spent in play versus adult-directed activity during a typical day (see Appendix H). Jeri and Caitlyn’s groups were engaged daily in child-directed play for two hours, during center time and gross motor time. However, observation revealed that because

Jeri's group was the last to go to centers, their center time was regularly reduced by 15 minutes. After lunch, Caitlyn often included music, and both she and Jeri read a story before outside time, thus reducing the children's free play by another 15 minutes. As observed, the children in these two prekindergarten classes actually spent only 1-½ hours in child-initiated play on an average day. These findings revealed that Jeri and Caitlyn had chosen to include other, often adult-directed, activities over child-initiated activities.

Although following the same master routine, Mia and Melissa's class differed in the amount of play they participated in each day. The way in which this team altered its mini-routines increased the amount of play children engaged in daily. These changes increased the child-initiated playtime for their class to 2-½ hours daily.

Teachers' values related to play in the daily routine were also revealed by the roles they assumed during the day. Although Jeri noted the importance of developmentally appropriate practices, perhaps referencing ideas discussed by Bredecamp and Coppel (1997), neither she nor Carolyn frequently participated in the play of children.

Caitlyn expressed a desire for the type of play that occurred in her classroom last year, but felt that the large classroom of the pod forced her to be less involved in play. Likewise, she said that she felt it was desirable to participate in children's outdoor play. However, she often sat and talked with adults instead of interacting with the children, except to reprimand inappropriate behaviors, because of needing "a break." Pat was an avid participant in gym and outdoor activities, often facilitating children's ball or climbing activities.

Melissa and Mia expressed a desire to include play during their group's daily routines. Melissa said, "With kids this age ... a big part of their day is the play and the choosing the centers." Their routines attested to her belief. Mia, Melissa, and Tina were often observed to facilitate play as play partners during center time.

Play was a segment of the daily routine that children seemed to understand. Children mentioned play frequently as they described their favorite part of the daily routine. A child from the developmental class summed up the opinions of many, saying "I love to play." Child-initiated play activities included in the daily routines of a prekindergarten revealed the values of teachers and the preferences of children. These findings are useful for developing an understanding of how play is embedded in daily routines of the broader case.

Transitions in the enacted routine

Transitions between activities throughout the daily routine were initially an area of interest of my study. However, the cues that triggered these transitions were an unforeseen finding. Throughout the daily enactment of the routine, certain cues, intentional and unintentional, were given by the adults to signal the transition to a new segment of the daily routine. By spring semester, most children seemed to have been socialized to utilize both the subtle and more deliberate cues to trigger them to change both their places and activities.

Intentional cues

Teachers intentionally gave children warnings that cued children to the next activity. Jeri said her experience had provided a "bag of tricks" that helped her calm the children and transition them into new activities. In practice, she often used a variety of

intentional cues to alert children to transitions. Using words like “5 more minutes” and “give a buzz,” Jeri routinely circulated at the end of center time to alert children of the end of the activity.

Mia and Melissa’s developmental classroom included several children with autism. Using picture cues during transitions throughout the day accommodated their special needs. This system, called a photographic cueing package (Schmit, Alper, Raschke, & Ryndak, 1999), is a common sight in special education preschool programs, especially those serving children with autism. Both developmental classroom staff and therapists used this pictorial cuing system to help children with transitions. Mia and Melissa also used a timer’s beep to signal the end of morning table activities and the beginning of their circle time.

A timer was also used to cue the ending of center time for the entire pod. When “they hear that beep” Caitlyn said, they know to clean up center activity areas. This cue was so ingrained that a child was observed refusing Pat’s request to clean up because, as he said, “I don’t hear the timer.”

Pat consistently used verbal signals to cue children to clean up. She shouted, “Hey guys, clean-up time,” from across the areas of Pod One in expectation of the time-frame to follow. Pat was often observed physically touching to assist children to come to the carpet area as Caitlyn began “circle time” or “thematic” group time.

Unintentional cues

A surprising finding was that the children attended to unintentional cues during transitions in the schedule. I found that children noticed and responded to unintentional cues as they prepared to transition to a new area or activity throughout the day. These

subtle cues seemed to trigger action from the children as they anticipated transition to a new place, activity, or both.

Reynolds is a big school, and when children left Pod One, they were expected to walk in a line. I found that the direction of this line often cued children as to their next location and activity. When asked where the group was going, a child commented, “if we headin’ this way we go to lunch.” Similarly, a child asked Melissa, “Playground?” while standing in line in “theater,” anticipating joining the other children outdoors. These unintentional cues appeared to be taken from the location and direction of lining up and seemed to prompt children to anticipate the next time segment.

The location of adults during transitions also cued children to the next activity. Jeri was usually found sitting in a rocking chair at the start of group time activities, which signaled to children to come to circle. Mia and Melissa took turns leading morning and thematic group activities. The group leader was usually the first person to come to the circle area after the transition from the previous activities, cuing children to focus their attention on her and the group activity.

Teachers’ unintentional awareness of the ticking clock of the master schedule also may have cued children. When Melissa checked her wristwatch, the action cued a child to ask, “Is it time to clean up?” Likewise, when Carolyn put on her coat at day’s end, children watched in anticipation of being called for “going home.” Melissa said, “Our kids have an internal alarm clock” when they ask about the next time segment in the daily master routine. Perhaps both the intentional and unintentional actions of teachers allow children to anticipate the transition to the next activity and place.

Adults regularly began the process of cleaning up at the end of center time in Pod One before the timer rang or an official announcement was made. Pat always seemed ready for the end of centers and frequently began to thoroughly vacuum the “Cozy Café.” Jeri went into the “dramatic play” area, folding dress-up clothes and tidying toys. Children sometimes took their places on respective carpets to wait for the next activity, alerted to its impending time-frame by adults’ early cleanup of the centers.

I found intentional and unintentional cues in Pod One’s daily enacted routines. Children were alerted to the locations and activities of the day by the actions of their teachers and peers, helping to move them through the day’s schedule. These findings are instrumental in understanding the importance of cues in the case of daily routine. I next describe findings that revealed the ways children learned daily routines at Pod One.

Learning daily routines

An intriguing area of this investigation of daily routines in prekindergarten was learning how children learn to operate in the routines that adults have constructed. I will save ties to the literature until Chapter V, and here present findings that will later inform that discussion. The section that follows presents data that are salient to the discovery of how children’s memories of the school day are shaped, how children come to operate within the schemas of their teachers, and how they view the time sequences of the day’s events. Also presented are data detailing Pod One participants’ responses to differences in and disruptions to the routine and children with atypical understandings of the routine.

Developing memories

How did the children of Pod One gain the concepts about their day in prekindergarten that they demonstrated midyear? As previously described, it was not

unusual for some of the children I interviewed to list in near-perfect sequence the events of the day. Teachers in Pod One felt that their efforts early in the school year solidified the children's knowledge.

Each of the teachers in Pod One remembered intentional instruction about the routines at the start of the prekindergarten year. Jeri recalled that "at the beginning of the year for probably the first nine weeks we really had to say, 'This is what we're *gonna* do today. We're *gonna* do this first, then we're *gonna* go to centers.'"

Similarly, Caitlyn remembered teaching the routines to the children saying she "talked through each step every day for about the first nine weeks," often asking, "what comes next and... [I] would have them tell me."

Mia and Melissa added another layer to their beginning-of-the-year instructions about the routine by using the picture cues (Schmit, Alper, Raschke, & Ryndak, 1999). These picture cards were displayed in their area and were often shown to children during transitions. Mia said the plan was "just to help the kids transition better, kids don't want to stop...so we make the transition easy." Melissa recalled their use of picture cues, saying "Within the group times, the individual little schedule within that schedule, and we've consistently used that every day the whole year."

Children's understanding of the routines revealed their developing abilities to use interchangeably names of activities that fill the same time slots. The after-lunch time-frame included either gym or playground, and children revealed their understanding, saying "We can go play outside or go play in the gym." The alternate time schedule for Friday dismissal will be discussed later, but children were also able to remember, "If it's a short day we go (home) right after lunch and not go outside to play."

Repeated enactments of the routine and teachers' verbal and picture prompts seemed to assist children's memory development, so that in the second semester they were, in Jeri's words, "in tune with it." The phenomenon of children operating within the routines of adults will next be discussed.

Children in adult routines

Previous sections detailed findings that illuminated the various factors that combined to influence adult planning for Pod One's routines. The repeated routines and teachers' words indoctrinate children into life at school. Teachers began the year hoping that children would be "in tune" by midyear. The following data describe adult-child interactions as evidence for how children learn to operate within the framework of school, as do their teachers.

Each of the three classrooms seemed to be transmitting a special meaning of school to its students. For Jeri, learning about school equated to learning appropriate behaviors. Jeri felt that developing appropriate school behavior required "a lot of teaching and training at the beginning of the year [in order to learn] how do we earn things...what kind of behavior would earn a star." She felt that for some children, home was a permissive environment where they were allowed to say "I don't want to do this." Conversely, she said that at school, "now [he] has to do things...and [know] I have to do what she [the teacher] says." Jeri had trained her group to "stop doing whatever it is they want to do" in order to follow her plans. Assistant Carolyn reinforced Jeri's vision for school as she assigned stars to reward those who "get it."

Caitlyn, too, had a set of rules that defined school, although her design for preschool may have been, as previously described, somewhat less well defined because

of conflicting philosophies. Caitlyn was often heard reminding her group that they knew “what a good choice is” and threatening loss of a “star” for an inappropriate alternative. Caitlyn’s call for “carpet procedures” and “carpet listeners” was frequently heard during circle and other “carpet” times. Caitlyn felt she had accomplished the desired acquiescence from a child, as she recalled, because he was “not ready to clean up, but he’ll still do it.”

Children in Pod One come to know that they must cooperate with teachers’ procedures for the routine activities. One child from Jeri’s class summed it up by saying “the teacher tells us what to do.” Likewise, one student from Caitlyn’s group revealed the same compliance as he outlined the rules saying, “listen to our teacher, be good or if you don’t be good you’ll loose a dollar and she takes all our dollars that you have and you start all over again.”

From the morning “Pledge” to the end-of-day activities, children in Pod One were expected to do as their teachers say. Each time-frame came with a specific set of behavioral expectations that fostered children’s allegiance to school life as defined by their teachers. These findings suggest that the ways children come to think of themselves as school children and build memories of themselves over time are framed within the worldview of their teachers.

Conventional time is important to understanding repeated routines and to explaining them in the broader case. Next I will discuss findings that reveal children’s understanding of time and how it was incorporated into the routines in Pod One.

Time

Teachers in Pod One listed activities sequentially throughout the day with times noted on the master routine. Teachers were observed checking their watches and glancing at clocks as they stayed on schedule. For the children, mastery of the concepts of conventional time was still a few years away, but learning the schedule of routines was already in process.

Melissa said, “Our kids have an internal alarm clock” when asked about the next time segment in the daily master routine. Findings, however, demonstrate that children were just beginning to use the vocabulary of conventional time. They asked “Is it time for centers?” and “Is it time for going inside?” Yet, their immature understanding was evidenced as a child remarked that center time lasted for “about 5 minutes.” When asked about a favorite time, a child misunderstood and replied “8:30,” which is a conventional time, but it carried no meaning in that context. A child likewise described party time on Valentine’s Day, saying “during 17.”

I found that time was sometimes understood by children as the place in which activities are enacted. When asked what comes next in the schedule, children replied “carpet” and “outside.” When asked “How much longer is work time?” a child replied, “When we eat lunch,” recalling the activity that would come next and thus end center time. A child from Caitlyn’s group said she knew it was center time, “’cause [it’s] when we do stuff,” equating the activity with the time-frame.

Teachers also seemed to equate places in the room with the times when they occurred. Melissa said, “We’re at sensory” to a child returning from therapy, alerting him to the place, activity, and slot in the routine. Time and place were linked as children

were instructed to sign in and sign out, moving their picture name-cards to signal “at home” or “at school.” Especially confusing was the time-frame of “rotations,” when children received a popsicle for a snack. When a child asked Tina for a “popsicle,” she replied, “It’s not that time of day yet [snack time],” and instead satisfied his snack request at the “Cozy Café” area. For the child and Tina, “popsicle” designated a time of day, an activity, and the place where the activity occurred.

Children learned the routine schedule in prekindergarten through repetition and consistency. However, sometimes the schedule was not so regular. In the next section, I discuss some exceptions to the routines in Pod One and their implications for how children learn routines.

Special days

Even though the daily routine of Pod One was consistent, there were changes in the schedule for special events and early dismissal on Fridays. Data presented in this section reveal how children responded to these occasional changes.

Party days were disruptive to the regular flow of the routine in Pod One. During the spring semester, a Valentine’s Day party brought changes to the schedule that caused the teachers to struggle to prepare children for disrupted routines. Caitlyn verbally described the way the “day would go” during the first circle time on the day of the party. She told her group they would have the “party after playtime this afternoon.” Before this, however, children were discussing the party and guessed it would occur “in a minute” or “right now.” One of Caitlyn’s children guessed that the party would occur “after lunch,” correctly identifying the time-frame. The same child was able to detail the daily routine segments in sequence.

Fridays were shortened days in Pod One, and children were dismissed at 11:30, directly after lunch. Friday was also the day on which Caitlyn and Jeri's groups cashed-in "dollars" earned for good behavior for toys or candy from a "treasure box." In interviews, children frequently spoke about the Friday routine change, perhaps because of its weekly recurrence. When asked about afternoon activities, a child asked, "Is it a short day?" indicating his understanding that Fridays were different. Another child offered that trips to "treasure box" come "on a short day [that] is a Friday."

Children in Pod One had learned the expected routine, and many were starting to understand the meaning of exceptions to the routine. These findings add to general knowledge pertinent to understanding the case of daily routine in prekindergarten. I will next discuss unpredicted findings that describe children for whom learning the routines of school was different from that of their peers.

Atypical children

The accuracy of children in describing the sequences and activities of the daily routine varied widely in Pod One. Certain children were able to describe the daily sequence and also the atypical routines of special days. Other children could not tell the sequence as they talked about their school experience. One child from Caitlyn's group who was often observed to be confused during transitions from one activity to another, seemingly lost in the large classroom, exemplifies this confusion. He required frequent redirection by the teachers. The same child was unable to answer my question, "What do you do at school every day?" and instead told a disconnected story of activities at his "grandma's house." This child was often labeled as "misbehaving," and his inability to tell about daily routines was in contrast to the other children in Caitlyn's class. One child

from Mia and Melissa's group, similarly, could not sequence the routine and instead told a story of home activities. When I asked about school routines, she said, "I eat and play and play."

Conversely, other children seemed to understand the routine sequences very well. Caitlyn said that one child from her group "without ... routine would be miserable" and this child did, indeed, describe the details of the "rotation," a time segment most children did not describe. Jeri, likewise, says that a child in her group understood the routine better than most. She said he had "got it" so that "he knows what's going, knows [when] things are different." In fact, he was the only child interviewed who could accurately relate the daily plans that would be carried out on a party day, Valentine's Day.

While most children were able to recall a sequence of daily activities, most left out some of the activities. The children that knew none or knew atypical day schedules provided an interesting contrast. My understandings of the instrumental case for daily routine in prekindergarten were augmented by inclusion of the findings from these atypical children.

Locating routines within routines

I found that although they share the same space each day and even share students for parts of the day, the three groups in Pod One were distinctly separate from one another. Findings revealed that the groups had disparate identities, environs, and routines that distinguished them. This dissimilarity was not immediately evident by observing the busy pod. Within the master schedule that was described in approximately identical sequence by all four lead teachers, mini-routines were observed that attested to the

uniqueness of the three groups. These *routines within routines* were played out in distinct areas of the room that each teacher staked out as a home space.

Separate spaces and places. The classroom design of Pod One was somewhat altered from the original school design, since remodeling for main office storage had been subtracted from one side of the classroom space (see Appendix D). Each group had designed a home space on the edges of the central activity areas. Brightly colored carpet spaces served as a home base for each of the three groups.

Adding Caitlyn's classroom this year increased the number of centers and decreased the amount of free space in the pod. Jeri's original home space did not change and still occupied the largest section of group space in the pod. In contrast, Caitlyn seemed crowded into her far corner of the pod, which is located between windows, an outside exit, and the doorway to an adjacent classroom.

Mia and Melissa seemed to have found clever ways to fashion their "spaces" in the pod, accommodating the general schedule of the pod, yet addressing their students' special needs. Their area had become a virtual hallway after remodeling of the pod; however, by using portable, waist-high room dividers and tall storage cabinets, they created a small and secluded circle-time area in their end of the pod.

"We" versus "they." It has been suggested that children learn about school through "subtle dimensions" (Kantor, 2001, p.26) of social interactions with teachers as they negotiate what it means to be in preschool. In Pod One, the three groups were defined by subtle references that identified each group's separate identity. Their use of identifying pronouns seemed to reveal descriptions of belonging to the separate groups.

Teachers used the pronouns “we” and “they,” “our” and “mine,” to designate inclusion in their own group and separateness from another teacher’s group. When working with the mixed groups from other classes, the teachers never seemed to forget the actual group to which each child belonged. Mia said, “We have lots of friends” and “we’ll work with our friends,” indicating that a “we versus them” division existed. At the “rotation” portion of the day and during thematic art, children were “all mixed up,” as Jeri termed it, but they never seemed a part of a larger “we” that included the totality of Pod One.

In their group spaces, Carolyn and Jeri, indeed, had group-specific expectations. Jeri’s description of mainstreaming plans for Mia and Melissa’s students implied that the separateness of her group would be maintained. She said, “They [Mia and Melissa] asked if they could switch some kids from their group to mine.” The children from Mia and Melissa’s group spent time with Jeri’s group, but they were considered no more than temporary members. Caitlyn defined this separateness well, saying that after “our kids are all mixed up,” they return to their teachers’ “own space.”

Mia and Melissa frequently referred to their group of students as “our kids” contrasting them, perhaps because of their special needs, to the “other kids.” Mia asserted that she and Melissa “tweaked [the main schedule] to our kids’ needs,” again defining the unique status of their group

Like their teachers, the children in Pod One recognized their membership in their distinct groups, including their unique meanings, rules, and routines. When asked what she does after center time, one child in Jeri’s class replied, “Ya’ gotta go back to your class,” indicating her return to the home group. Similarly one child from Mia and

Melissa's group commented on another child's exit from play saying, "He's going to his class," showing he understood the physical division and the inclusion of the friend in a separate group.

Comments from one child in Mia and Melissa's class illustrated knowledge of the separate rules for each class at clean-up time in the gym. When asked if she should mind Caitlyn's call to clean up in the gym, she said, "no, not we's" and that "Ms. Melissa or Ms. Mia" would be the one to tell her when it was time to go. Even in the immature pronoun choice, she knew that only Mia or Melissa should cue her particular group, and that Caitlyn's cues for the other children did not apply to her. This subtle difference was apparent to this young four-year-old and seemed to illustrate her knowledge of the subtle, imbedded quality of group membership in Pod One.

Pronoun choice also revealed teachers' values for particular segments of the routine. As they described center time, both Jeri and Caitlyn used the word "they" rather than "we" to designate children's daily expedition out to the centers, saying, "They go to centers." Observation of the enacted routines corroborates that most of these teachers' center time was clearly spent in adult activities or "monitoring" rather than engaging in the activities with children. Centers in Pod One were for children and rarely for teachers.

Language used by teachers and children seemed to reveal the separate nature with which each group regarded itself and was regarded by the others. The pronouns used in interviews and daily conversation in Pod One seemed to imply that group membership in one of the three classes required participation in the exclusive mini-routines and rules that apply to that unique group. I report findings in the next section that reveal the disparate

names that participants used to describe the activity segments within the master routine of Pod One.

Names for the daily routine activities

I found that the names for time segments throughout the day were diverse and were not used consistently by participants. Examination of the posted daily master routine (Appendix G) showed the agreed-upon names for the various time segments and their embedded activities. Neither the teachers nor the children, however, consistently used these official names for the routine segments. Throughout the day, teachers and children referred to the various activities and time segments with names other than the posted name, and their names were often unique to their group.

Teachers' names. Each class included a group time during the morning, but participants called it by different names. "Morning circle time" was the term on the posted routine in Pod One. It referred to the first group time of the day held on respective carpeted areas. "Calendar really sets the stage" for the day for Jeri, and she sometimes said "calendar time" in place of "circle time."

"Thematic time" as it was posted on the master schedule was a term rarely used in the actual enactment of the routines in Pod One. Teachers referred to this time segment as "thematic art" or "art." Caitlyn called thematic time "group time" in talking with children, but "theme time" in an interview. Instead of "thematic time," Mia and Melissa called this time segment "our story time," using the term "art" for the second segment.

The posted routine called an after-lunch time-frame "Phonemic Awareness/Science/Social Studies/Snack." "Rotations" was the term Mia and Melissa used, both on their detailed account of the day for Tina (see Appendix C) and in their

interview descriptions of the time segment. The terms “groups” and “stations” were most often used by teachers to refer to the activities of the “rotation” time-frame during the enacted routine.

The teachers in Pod One used different names to describe the time segments throughout the day. They used names that did not necessarily conform to the listed names on the schedule. Children, too, had unique names to describe the time segments during the day’s activities.

Children’s names. When children described daily events, they often had names for the parts of the day that differed from those that were posted or named by their teachers. Children commonly used “carpet” to denote their circle time activity. One child used the term “carpet” for each time her class sat and regrouped in the circle area. Children did not use the label “thematic time” as a segment of their daily routine. When children did mention this time, the terms “carpet” and “cut stuff” were given for the time segment, its location in the room, and its activities. Several children interviewed simply did not include this time segment in their listed daily activities. One child, in detailing the day’s routine, termed this segment of the day as a time when “you switch classes.” Children also interchanged the word “play” for either center time or gross motor time. When children described the detailed daily schedule, they often were found to simply insert “play” into time slots corresponding to both recess and center time.

“There, there, there,” was one child’s description of the three parts of “rotations,” as she nodded toward the teacher stations around the room. A favorite snack served during “rotation” is a popsicle, and the snack was often used by children to refer to this time-frame. When asked what would come next, most children skipped mention of

“rotations;” however, one child correctly remembered the three parts and listed them in sequence saying, “popsicle, Mrs. J, and Mrs. C.”

I found that the names used by participants for the regular activities were inconsistent and often diverse. Children’s and adults’ names for the routine segments may lead to misunderstandings about the separate routines within routines that were observed in Pod One. This phenomenon may inform understandings of daily routines in prekindergarten more generally. I report findings in the next section that reveal mini-routines that each group developed within the master routine of Pod One.

Mini-routines

Mini-routines are the practices of the individual classrooms that are nested within the master schedule. Each classroom routinely enacted specific conventions during different time segments of the day. These differed from the other classes and seemed to give definition to each class. In an interview, Melissa called this phenomenon “a mini-routine within a routine” that added “the set and the consistentness” to group time. A surprising finding of this study was the definitive way in which each teacher had arranged or “set up” individual mini-routines within the master routine.

Mini-routines of the three groups

Mini-routines were evidenced throughout the day, but the morning circle time was the most ritualized and, thus, the most revealing of the disparate mini-routines. For Jeri, who used her morning mini-routine as an opportunity for children to practice writing their name, the morning sign-in ritual was an important part of the enacted mini-routine. Almost without exception, children from her classroom included this ritual in their description of the day’s activities. Jeri habitually “sneaks” in skill development and adds

fact-finding questions such as “what’s your address” to her mini-routines. She added these questions both when she began the day with sign-in and when she dismissed children from circle time to center time.

Mia and Melissa said that mini-routines allow them to “structure” their activities. The planning board depicted each part of their mini-routine. At their story time during “thematic time,” the chosen songs were similarly depicted on the mini board. Children were allowed to select these songs from choices teachers had prepared. Mini-routines for Mia and Melissa were, thus, followed in a ritualized and structured format that was visually depicted as it was enacted.

Caitlyn was the only teacher who frequently changed the order and content of her mini-routines. Although Caitlyn called her morning routines “ritualistic,” I did not observe the enacted routine to be consistent. Caitlyn often seemed to hurry through this group time segment, often interjecting “real quick” as she led the children through activities. Caitlyn admits she does not “like doing the exact same song or exact same thing every day.” One child remarked in an interview that Caitlyn forgot the good morning song and switched the order of “daily things,” meaning songs, calendar, and “question of the day.”

Mini-routines of children

Children’s recall of the mini-routines seemed to align with both the consistency and regularity with which their teachers enacted the activities. Children in Jeri’s group were aware and could name segments of morning mini-routines. They consistently mentioned “write our name” as the beginning of each day. One child listing the segments

of this mini-routine held up fingers as she counted down each of the activities that Jeri included every day.

Two children from Caitlyn's group were able to name the daily routine segments, yet they failed to list any parts of the morning mini-routine. Caitlyn was inconsistent with the sequences of her morning activities, and only one child from her group listed the events of this morning mini-routine. After prompting, she mentioned "songs," "do calendar," and "question of the day," but she did not give any particular order in her account. Perhaps Caitlyn's inconsistent reenactment of the mini-routine did not reinforce the children's recall.

Children in Mia and Melissa's group were seen referring to the picture schedule (Schmit, Alper, Raschke, & Ryndak, 1999) to select activities in mini-routines and to transition after center time. Master routine segments were likewise broken into pictured segments, and children could see the sequence as they manipulated the small pictures of each segment of the day.

I found that as the three classes proceeded through the daily master routine, separate mini-routines were completed as *routines within routines*. These findings illuminated the influence that individual teachers have in shaping a daily routine through mini-routines.

Summary

Findings reported in the case story are first presented chronologically to recount the entire day in Pod One as lived out at Reynolds Elementary, giving the reader a vicarious sense of participation in the schedule as enacted in this specific environment. The additional findings reported in part two of this chapter are presented in thematic

groupings to further describe both themes that are salient to the research questions and themes that were unexpected at the study's inception. The discussion that follows in Chapter V will refer to these findings and the broader literature, explicating understandings of the case of daily routine in Pod One and the more general instrumental case of daily routine in prekindergarten. Answers to research questions, links to other research, and suggestions for further study are also included in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V:

DISCUSSION

Revisiting the Research Questions

When I began this study, I thought the practice of a consistent daily routine would be well established at Reynolds and that I would observe the participants enacting this routine. In fact, there was not a single meaning for daily routine in the pod; rather, the enactment and perceptions of routines in Pod One represented a wide variety of understandings based on the participants' individual backgrounds and the children's levels of cognitive development. This study demonstrates that even though Pod One teachers maintained a consistent master routine, the significance and understandings that individuals held for the activities of mini-routines were frequently contradictory.

Individuals developed the routine in a special setting, and so Reynolds prekindergarten daily routine was unique. However, understandings gained from the case at Reynolds are instrumental to revealing the more general phenomenon of daily routines. In the following sections, I summarize the data analysis and revisit the questions that defined this study's purpose. The questions that guided my research and organize this discussion are:

1. What defines daily routine in a prekindergarten setting?
2. What influences the design of daily routines?
3. How do participants (adults and children) describe the daily routine?
4. How are daily routines enacted by participants?
5. How are daily routines learned by participants?

Defining Daily Routines

What activities make up a daily routine in prekindergarten? The activities in the daily routine of Pod One gave the schedule its meaning and ultimately gave meaning to prekindergarten. As Williams (2001) discovered, the “everyday activities within the preschool context” (p. 319) that constitute a prekindergarten day are complex, and though easily listed by participants, are given meaning only as they are enacted. The activities in Pod One were, for the most part, “teacher driven” (Solomone, 1999, p. 96), and children were learning to participate in the predictable patterns of activity that defined their routines each day.

In defining daily routines, I sought to discover the sequence and regularity of these activities. The enacted daily activity periods as listed on the Pod One master routine were almost perfectly predictable. By my fourth observation, the physical placement and activity of each participant was easily predicted in any given daily routine segment. I was not surprised by the staunch allegiance with which the teachers in Pod One followed the daily schedule. At this study’s beginning, I reference textbooks instructing preschool teachers that best practice suggests providing a consistent routine for preschool children (Shickedanz, York, Stewart, & White, 1977; Hatch, 2005; Katz & Chard, 2000; Kantor & Fernie, 2003). The teachers of Pod One had implemented a routine that maintained this consistency, following Jeri’s initial design for the morning, and adding changes this year in the afternoon “rotations.”

The schedule as enacted in Pod One seemed to have a life of its own, leading participants through the day as they completed the activities listed along its path.

Reminiscent of Nelson’s (1986) description of an event sequence as a “spatial-temporal

context” (p. 13), the daily routine in Pod One followed a path through time, spaces, and activities. Each day, teachers and children followed its mandated time-frames to complete activities as they moved along a mental time-map of the day. Teachers planned on this schedule and children were beginning to learn that each day would be the same.

Kantor (2001) states that preschool activities, though less *school-like* than later elementary school lessons, provide “social norms and expectations for behavior that children must know in order to be successful participants” (p. 27). The predictable daily routine and activities that defined the schedule at Reynolds Pod One served as a framework and oriented participants’ behavior each day. The Pod One routine was instrumental to understanding that a consistent and reoccurring schedule provides an environment where adults and children can exercise control over daily time-frames and enjoy predictability in daily activities. Next discussed are the mini-routines that each teacher had created within the master schedule.

I anticipated the discovery of the details of the master schedule in Pod One, but the mini-routines that each class had created became a persistent theme. The master routine that teachers created dictated the daily schedule, but it did not tell the complete story of the prekindergarten at Reynolds. Into the master routine, teachers had embedded mini-routines in which each team conducted its unique group activities. The individual mini-routines were a surprising finding, and I discovered that teachers used them to give individual expression to the master routine. Any variability found in the daily routine was inserted by the individual teachers within allotted time segments in classroom-specific mini-routines that occurred in predictable fashion each day.

Unlike the dictate of the shared master routine, mini-routines allowed teachers the flexibility to place their individual stamp of *how school goes* on the children's experience. These mini-routines served as the "contexts" (Graue & Walsh, 1995, p. 139) in which children learned about school and their roles in it. Details of the mini-routines were not listed on the master schedule. Yet, in the mini-routines, teachers expressed their values and philosophical stances and imparted these values to the children. The disparity between the mini-routines that followed an identical time sequence was surprising and revealed the teachers' preferences for certain activities.

Kantor (2001) discussed the "school meaning and interactional competencies" that children learn in the routines of preschool curriculum. The teachers in Pod One had stamped the expectations of their distinct mini-routines on their groups. By midyear, Jeri's prekindergarten students seemed well indoctrinated in a school routine in which adults made choices for children similar to those described by Graue & Walsh (1995). Her consistent, teacher-directed morning circle-time routine was well understood by children, perhaps because she reinforced its meaning every day.

Caitlyn described her daily routines in part as "chaotic," and she often rushed through activities. She said she often just "plays it by ear," leaving children unaware of what might come next in the schedule. Marcon (1999) describes three curriculum approaches, calling a "combination approach" classroom one that "blends aspects of didactic and child-initiated" models (p. 359). Findings revealed that Caitlyn struggled to include both models, and her inconsistent mini-routines may have been influenced by this dichotomous approach. The lack of consistency perhaps made it difficult for the children

in Caitlyn's group to learn the expected "school script" (Fivush, 1984, p. 1697), a finding that was instrumental to understanding the importance of consistent routines.

For Mia and Melissa, mini-routines assisted children in accomplishing the school schedule that the master routine dictated. They adapted the routine to fit the children's needs rather than asking children to adapt to the routine. According to Marcon's analysis (1999), children in child-initiated classrooms showed greater expressive and receptive language skills when compared to children in adult-directed or combination-approach classes. This effect would be a positive outcome for the children in Mia and Melissa's developmental preschool class for whom language development is a vital goal.

Moving through the daily routine, from the day's beginning to end, required a well-orchestrated dance by participants in which mini-routines provided unique interpretations of the schedule. In mini-routines, children acquired the knowledge of *how school goes* according to their individual teacher's perspectives. Each teacher functioned as a "conveyer of beginning messages" (Solomone, 1999, p. 98), as she initiated the prekindergarten children's initial scripts for school (Fivush, 1984). These findings were instrumental to understanding that it is not only the overarching master routines of prekindergarten classes that give routines definition, but also the mini-routines that are embedded in them.

Spaces and Places

Findings demonstrated that having a consistent place for activities to occur during the daily routine might be as important to participants' understandings as the time-frame in which activities occur. In a discussion of sites for early-childhood research, Graue and Walsh (1995) found that the "boundaries of children's experience" in institutionalized

settings such as daycare and school were limited (p. 144). The master routine's activities had very distinct boundaries, limiting children to the same places each day in Pod One. In fact, children frequently used the name of the place interchangeably with its activity. Terms such as "carpet" and "centers" had meanings that could imply either the location or the time-frame. By understanding the location for the activity, children seemed to demonstrate their knowledge of activities during each time-frame in the daily routine. These findings were instrumental to understanding that place as well as schedule is important to learning the meanings of school routines

Distinctive Features of Pod One

Graue and Walsh (1995) likewise, make clear the importance of understanding the nuances of situated contexts for study. There were distinctive features that differentiated and specifically defined the daily routine of Reynolds Pod One. First, the large classroom environment necessitated a predictable daily routine to ensure that noise levels and activities conformed across the space. The large number of adults and children in the room necessitated punctuality and discouraged the flexibility that other classrooms might enjoy. Also, sharing materials and equipment, especially during center time, required the entire pod to routinely participate in similar activities.

Another unique feature of Pod One was its plan for inclusion of students with special needs. Today, early-childhood classrooms frequently include students with disabilities (Duncan, Kemple, & Smith, 2000). Children from the developmental preschool group were integrated throughout the pod during certain daily activities, which also necessitated careful scheduling. Teachers were satisfied that the inclusion was

accomplished during “thematic time” and “rotation,” but these alterations to the routine seemed poorly understood by the participating children.

Finally, unique to Pod One was the creation of the daily activity segment termed “rotations,” during which the “mixed-up” groups of children rotated between teachers and activities. The “rotations” time-frame seemed challenging to everyone in the pod; as Jeri said, rotations felt like “shuffling them in and out.” Children rarely mentioned “rotations” in their descriptions of routines and seemed dependant on adults to keep them moving to a new area. The unique features of Pod One at Reynolds were instrumental to recognizing that “activity settings” (p. 149), as Graue and Walsh (1995) state, are situated and require that interpretations be filtered through the activities and motivations inherent in a local site. The following discussion turns to the creation of the daily routine to illuminate the elements that influenced its design.

Designing Daily Routines

What influenced the design of daily routines? The master routine of Pod One was a compromise necessitated by curriculum decisions, inclusion mandates, and the pod arrangement of the classroom. Based on the overall data, however, the conception and design of the routines seemed most influenced by the teachers’ philosophical stance and the exertion of power to implement it.

Influences from the setting

The co-constructed schedule of the master routine was a compromise necessitated, in part, by the classroom’s pod arrangement. Sharing the unique pod classroom required teachers to strive for conformity to the pod’s master schedule, as well as the overarching schedule of the elementary school. The physical design of Reynolds

Elementary necessitated that Pod One teachers schedule activities to coordinate with those of the rest of the pod. Illuminating the importance of room design, Yielding (1993) examined the relationship of the educational facility and the learning climate in three elementary schools in Alabama. Of the three schools, one shared the pod design of Reynolds Elementary. Yielding's ethnographic study found that the open spaces of a pod negatively affect the learning atmosphere and comfort levels of the inhabitants. This author urges teachers to become aware that "school buildings may do more than simply house the instructional program" (p. 5) and that they impact the climate of learning. The opinions of Reynolds teachers in Pod One seemed to corroborate the findings that Yielding reports.

Pod One teachers seemed to bear up under the pod design, but, I found that they actually demonstrated some of the classroom procedures that would be used in a more a conventional, self- contained room. The Pod One teachers did not allow the open classroom design to change their tendencies to operate independently of each other. The impact of the classroom design at Reynolds was instrumental to understanding that the physical location in which a daily routine is enacted influences its design.

Influences from special education and curriculum

I have previously noted that Caitlyn said it took a lot of "tweaking" to design the routines incorporating inclusion and "reverse inclusion," in which students from prekindergarten are sent to participate with special education peers. Both Mia and Melissa said that they just "came in learning" the routine as Jeri had designed it. However, they did insist that the inclusion of special needs students be a priority, exerting considerable influence when negotiating the redesign of this year's routine. Mia and

Melissa's push for more inclusion time for special needs students, combined with the mandate of the special education director to increase inclusion time, resulted in modifications to the master routine that added "thematic times" and inclusion in "rotations." Duncan, Kemple, & Smith (2000) discuss a need to increase the "repertoire" (p. 195) of teaching and guidance skills in classrooms that include children with disabilities. The case in Pod One was instrumental to understanding that inclusion of special needs students requires additional planning and attention when designing the daily routine.

Influences from teachers

More than any other factor, the teachers of Pod One impacted the design of daily routines. The philosophical stance of each teacher, the distribution of power to make decisions, and the teachers' education and experience combined to have great influence over the design.

Teacher philosophical stance

Teachers' philosophical stances proved to be an important source of information for understanding the factors influencing the design of the daily routine in Pod One. The impact of teachers' philosophies and teaching practices on daily life in the classroom has been well documented (Elkind, 2003; Epstein, Schweinhart, & McAdoo, 1996; Hatch & Freeman, 1988; Kantor, 2001; Marcon, 1999; Rogoff, 2003; Schickedanz, Stewart, & White, 1977; Solomon, 1999). Various authorities have named philosophical categories to explain teacher ontology. Elkind (2003) suggests empiricism, nativism, and constructivism as "philosophical rationales" (p. 1) from which classroom activity is created. In a study of Head Start classrooms, Marcon (1999) describes three distinct

models for preschool instruction: “child-initiated classrooms, academically-directed classrooms and combination approach classrooms” (p. 361). These three categories provide an apt description of the philosophical stances of teachers in Pod One. Macon’s (1999) study is useful in understanding various interpretations that the teachers at Reynolds prekindergarten placed on their daily routine activities.

I identified Jeri’s classroom as being “academically-directed” (Marcon, 1999, p. 372), since her emphasis on readiness and skills development drove her decisions about the daily activities and her individual mini-routines. Jeri’s class design echoed Marcon’s (1999) academically-directed model, and Jeri believed it would “best prepare young children for school learning” (p. 372), echoing the academically-oriented teachers in the Marcon study.

Theoretically, I found that Caitlyn oscillated between two visions of appropriate practice (which is discussed in Bredekamp & Copple, 1997) in prekindergarten. She was often indecisive about the appropriateness of adult-directed activity versus child-initiated activity (Marcon, 1999), both for designing children’s activities and for defining her role as a teacher. Caitlyn’s stance fit Marcon’s (1999) description of a “combination approach” (p. 372). Hatch & Freeman (1988) found that a similar “philosophy-reality” (p. 158) dichotomy exists for many kindergarten teachers who are trained in constructivist early-childhood methods but are teaching in programs emphasizing more didactic instruction. Caitlyn’s stance caused her to waver between the beliefs she developed during five years of teaching third grade and the child-centered constructivist approaches she learned in her university training and internship.

Marcon's (1999) "child-initiated" (p. 369) belief system described Mia and Melissa's theoretical stance. Theoretically, both Mia and Melissa seemed to value child-initiated activity as demonstrated by their mini-routine adjustments. Trained in special education, Mia and Melissa seemed concerned with the individual child, making adaptations for each perceived need. They instructed Tina, their assistant, to do likewise.

Like Marcon (1999), Rogoff (2003) discusses the effect of different styles of "organizing instruction" (p. 149) in American classrooms. She found that the design of classroom interchange is influenced by views of learning and participating. The Pod One teachers demonstrated diverse styles of interaction stemming from their philosophical stances, which influenced the routine's design. They added activities that reflected the academically-directed emphasis of Jeri and mini-routines that emphasized the child-initiated bent of Mia and Melissa, leaving Caitlyn conflicted in her "combination approach" (Marcon 1999, p. 359). The views of Pod One teachers are instrumental to understanding that the design of routines is influenced by teachers' philosophical stance.

Next discussed are the power divisions in Pod One. Philosophical stance of the teachers predetermined the routine's design. The routine was co-constructed, yet it retained Jeri's original design for the morning instruction periods. Along with philosophical stance of the teachers, the design and enactment of the routine was influenced by unstated divisions of power within Pod One.

Teacher power

An unexpected finding was the existence of a power structure in Pod One, which turned out to be the distinctive features influencing the design of the daily routine. I went to Reynolds expectant that the newly formed team of teachers would collaborate in

designing a daily routine that was agreeable to everyone. I found a power structure that limited possibilities for co-design that might have occurred. Buzzelli and Johnson (2001) review the educational literature to illuminate issues of power, authority, and morality in the classroom and examine their interplay in classrooms. They describe “tensions of morality and power” (p. 882) similar to those that seem to be evidenced as the teachers of Pod One designed the daily routine.

Who had the power to implement and enact the design of the master routine and why? Jeri’s longevity at Reynolds and, perhaps, her close connections to administrators legitimized her authority (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2001) in the classroom and seemed to designate her as unofficial team leader, even though Caitlyn had the official title this year. Although lacking formal early-childhood training, Jeri was chosen to be Reynolds first prekindergarten teacher. The master routine, which Jeri designed to fit within the Reynolds master schedule, had as its basis her first-grade teaching experiences and some reading in what Jeri called, “creative curriculums.” Jeri had honed her plans by trial and error during her first two years as the only prekindergarten teacher in Pod One. In fact, Jeri continued to lead weekly planning sessions, apparently valuing the role. Her power, though unofficial, permeated Pod One and its master routine.

The other teachers exerted different types and amounts of power in designing and enacting the routine. Caitlyn rarely exerted overt power in Pod One’s planning. She seemed conflicted (Hatch & Freeman, 1988) over having to change her former teaching strategies, yet she was glad to be in a more structured teaching role during “rotations.” Caitlyn acquiesced to Jeri’s power, limiting Caitlyn’s power to make minor changes in the classroom environment aimed at adding a home-like atmosphere.

Mia and Melissa exerted power through their changes in mini-routines as they sensed the needs of their unique group of children. Mia and Melissa did not overtly exert power. Even their mini-routine alterations were made surreptitiously and for their group alone. The master routine remained unchanged by changes made for their class.

The power to influence the design of the daily routine also proved to be crucial to the satisfaction that each teacher expressed with the design. The addition of the new segments of the master daily routine was a fulcrum this year for teacher curriculum discussions. Interestingly, both Caitlyn and Jeri claimed to have created the afternoon “rotations,” but for entirely different reasons. Jeri was eager to include “phonemic awareness,” a more “structured language time,” reflecting her academically-focused (Marcon, 1999) and teacher-centered philosophical beliefs. However, Caitlyn said the “rotation” was her “chaotic, but fun” idea. Mia and Melissa attributed “inclusion” as the goal of “rotations.” Teachers’ interpretations of the inception of “rotations” and who had the power to implement them were at odds.

The design of the Pod One daily routine illustrates the disparate values and power of the teachers in the classroom (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2001). If no other finding came from the data, this misalignment and its repercussions in practice are instrumental to revealing that schedule alone does not constitute the ways in which a daily routine is designed or enacted.

Describing Routines

One of the research questions led to an investigation of how participants recounted their daily activities through narrative descriptions. Bruner (2004) describes narrative as the way by which we design reality and create our unique story. Planning for

future actions becomes possible as we understand and are able to describe standard, routine, daily activities (Nelson, 2007). According to Bruner (1990), “locus and praxis are culturally inseparable” (p.81). Likewise, the words of the participants from Pod One revealed their knowledge of the routines they created and enacted in Pod One. Children were learning to tell their story of daily routines through participation, but their understandings were revealed by how they told the story. Pod One’s teachers and students often told about their day in ways that differed from their observed routines.

Teachers’ and children’s descriptions

How did teachers describe their daily routine? In interviews, teachers described an almost identical sequence of the lived-out master routine. Bruner (2004) calls this a “recipe” (p. 708) for how each day goes. The master schedule was, indeed, the overarching recipe for carrying out each day.

According to Bruner (2004), life is not how it actually happened but, rather, the interpretations placed on those occurrences. The common routine of Pod One guided teachers’ actions and influenced how daily routines happened. The teachers’ mini-routines expressed the interpretations each teacher placed on those occurrences. I found that the knowledge imbedded in the teachers’ narratives guided their actions in developing and enacting daily routines. Next I will discuss the descriptions of daily routines that children related in interviews.

Nelson (2007) suggests that children employ adult language as “resources for constructing their own knowledge structures” (p. 193). The teachers and children of Pod One told about the sequence of their daily master routine with interesting similarity. However, I found that children’s descriptions of the routine were consistently incomplete.

No child interviewed could comprehensively relate all the daily events of the Pod One routine. They frequently left out “rotations” and “thematic time” and did not use these names for the segments, perhaps suggesting that naming is related to knowledge of the activity itself.

Names for the daily routine activities

I found that the names participants used to describe time segments and activities were diverse and were not used consistently by adults or children. Throughout the day, teachers and children referred to the various activities and time segments with names other than the posted name, and their names were often unique to their group.

Jeri’s students could tell the routine segments in sync with her description of the morning routines. Children who participated in these mini-routines clearly shared a budding narrative reminiscent of their teachers’ story (Nelson, 2004) and demonstrated behaviors deemed appropriate in the context. Bruner (1990) noted, “what does not get structured narratively suffers loss in memory” (p. 56). Perhaps Jeri’s repetitive morning routines assisted her students’ memory of the mini-routine.

I found, in fact, that memory for a consistent routine could be enhanced by using a consistent narrative from adults in the pod, starting with using consistent names for routine segments. Bruner (2004) proposes narrative as a guide for behavior, setting a path for the future. Adults in Pod One’s prekindergarten spent much effort each day orally directing children’s behavior as they moved children from location to location and activity to activity. Teachers’ words became the guide that enforced the master routine in Pod One. However, the adults in Pod One were inconsistent with the names they used for

various activity segments, perhaps exacerbating children's confusion during certain parts of the daily routine.

The "ubiquitousness of narratives in the world of children" (Bruner, 1990, p. 81) was a very present phenomenon in the daily routines of Pod One. As teachers kept students on schedule, they thereby created a shared narrative of school routines (Fiese, Sameroff, Grotevant, Wamboldt, Dickstein, & Fravel, 1999; Reese, 2002). The similar descriptions of adults and children attest to the shared nature of the master routine. The narratives of the participants were instrumental to understanding the influence of being able to give either a personal or shared "account of what one thinks one did" (Bruner, 1990, p. 119) throughout the daily routine in prekindergarten.

Enacting Routines

In this study, I sought to discover what activities were included as participants at Reynolds enacted their daily scheduled activities. The daily enactment of these segments was the expression of a school culture. Pod One daily routines encompassed the roles participants played, and their built-in values as teachers ritualized the segments they deemed important (Bruner, 1990; Kantor, 2001). Routines also taught the set of expectations, implied or overt, that teachers enforced each day. Enacted routines instructed children in the "school ways" (Heath, 1983) that can inform their future ideas and feelings about school. First I will discuss the phenomenon of play as it came to life in the "social interaction" (Rogoff, 2003, p. 144) that gave it meaning.

Play in enacted routines

To explore the role of play in prekindergarten, I found that Pod One functions in contrast to what is regarded as best practice by mainstream early-childhood authorities

(Bredecamp & Coppel, 1997). Findings revealed that the Reynolds Pod One prekindergarten deemphasized child-initiated play activities and placed value on more academically-directed readiness activities.

Play has been defined by Fromberg (2002) as the “learning in early education that children control” (p. 95). I found that the segments of “centers” and “gross motor time” were the only times in Pod One’s master routine in which children carried out child-initiated plans. In Caitlyn’s and Jeri’s groups, these times were limited to outside, or gross motor time, and “centers.” Mia and Melissa’s mini-routines incorporated more play experiences daily, and adults in this group participated in child play more often than other teachers.

Schweinhart and Weikart (1997) report the long-term benefits of child-initiated constructivist play for young children. Their research emphasizes the importance of interactions between adults and children as they plan and carry out play activities. I found that adults do not consistently join children’s play in Reynolds Pod One prekindergarten classes. I found that the amount of time each teacher’s group spent in play versus more teacher-directed activity revealed the adult-directed nature of much of the daily routine of Pod One.

Studying children “in context” (Graue & Walsh, 1995) provided insight into their unique perspectives on play. I found that children had different perceptions about the meaning of play (Nelson, 2007) than their teachers. In interviews, children from each group unfailingly included the daily routine segment of “play,” meaning either center time or outside time. I found that children were familiar with “play” and always participated in this child-initiated time segment. Children most often listed “play” as

their favorite daily activity. I found that children's descriptions of the daily routine activities seemed to be related to their familiarity with the activities, their growing understanding of routines, and their active participation in the activities. Segments of the daily routine devoted to play were well understood and valued by children in Pod One, a finding that supports Fromberg's 2002 research.

Investigation of play in Pod One revealed some of the implied messages (Solomone, 1999) in routines. The value that adults placed on child-initiated (Marcon, 1999) play seemed to be an area where adults were issuing a different message from the value that children expressed. I found that children in Pod One may have received the message that play is unworthy of adult interest or participation. These impressions were instrumental to understanding that play can have many meanings for participants in a prekindergarten daily routine.

Rituals in enacted routines

I explored the segments of the daily routines at Reynolds to discover whether certain repeated segments were more highly valued than others, and, therefore, ritualized. Rituals can be defined as routines that have a symbolic meaning in addition to a practical component. Fiese et al. (2002) have defined the aspects of ritual as continuity, communication, and commitment. I found that the teachers of Pod One were consistent with the schedule, yet they gave heightened importance to certain segments of the enacted routine through their words and their decisions to include those segments each day.

I found that Pod One participated in several activities for which the teachers' emphasis implied ritualization. Teachers' heightened emphasis (Serpel et al., 2002)

distinguished daily routine from ritual and, for the teachers, seemed connected to affective meanings they wanted to create for their class group. The morning Pledge of Allegiance, for example, was an activity that children observed daily as they stood to recite words that were most likely meaningless to them. Likewise, adults included in the routines the other ritualistic daily enactments of calendar, daily sign-in procedures, and end-of the-day treasure chest that may have had meanings the children did not fully comprehend.

Child knowledge of these daily rituals, especially evident in interviews with children from Jeri's group, demonstrated the power that rituals had in helping children remember a time segment of the day (Bruner, 1990). For Jeri's class, the ritualistic "sign-in" procedure, followed by morning routines of breakfast, table work, and circle time, were very well scripted and the same each day. Before children could "go up front" to circle, they carried out these procedures. Children accepted the necessity of the ritual and acquiesced with little adult prompting, affirming the findings of Solomone's 1999 study. If ritual entails continuity, communication, and commitment (Fiese et al., 2002), then this procedure served as an official entry to school each day, ritualized and sealed by the signing-in.

The teachers' ritualistic enactment of certain portions of the routine placed special emphasis on those segments, engaging children in an effort to create a shared understanding (Serpel et al., 2002) of that portion of the daily routine. I found that the teachers chose to ritualize the aspects of the school day that corresponded with their values and definition of what school should be for the children of Pod One. Graue and Walsh (1995) note that children are "rarely allowed the luxury of refusing participation"

(p. 144) in the activities adults design. The children in Pod One engaged in rituals instituted by teachers, and these findings were instrumental to understanding that the rituals in prekindergarten may be influential in teaching children to participate in the accepted routines.

Roles in enacted routines

I investigated the roles that teachers play when they enact the separate segments of the routine. I expected that prekindergarten teachers might feel that different segments of the enacted routines would bring changes in the teaching strategies and the roles they played. Successful teachers in early-education settings have been urged to implement multiple teaching strategies and approaches to instruction (Hatch, 2005; Bredecamp & Copley, 1997), fitting the intent of the activities to the needs of the children throughout daily activities. The teaching strategies in Pod One were often academically-directed in Jeri's and Caitlyn's groups. The child-initiated (Marcon, 1999) time segments, including centers and gross motor time, were infrequently utilized as teaching and learning opportunities by these teachers.

Solomone (1999) noted that values and teacher expectations for behavior were embedded in the routines of a kindergarten day. Likewise, the roles teachers in prekindergarten assumed during the daily routine seemed to express the values that each teacher placed on individual time segments. Jeri stated definitively that her role did not change throughout the day. Her academically-directed style, indeed, kept children under her control. She desired that they respect her as "boss," and she rarely took on other roles, such as co-player (Fromberg, 2002). Jeri seemed to enjoy her traditional teacher's role during the morning circle routines and in groups during "rotations," perhaps because

leading the group felt more traditionally teacher-like and reminiscent of her previous elementary teaching experiences.

My data showed that children look to adults to see models of how to act during the various time periods of the day. This is a budding view of how schoolchildren act in relation to the adults in the environment. Solomone (1999) stated that children learn interaction patterns that infer “the teacher teaches and the students are taught” (p. 99). Similarly, Pod One teachers fostered an interaction pattern that may inform future school experiences. When adults valued compliance over autonomy, they assumed the traditional leadership role found in elementary settings and implemented routines that reinforced these values. When adults valued play and children’s initiative, they took on the role of co-player and facilitator, designing routines to foster these values. Bruner (1990) states that our cultural beliefs constitute the very “ontology” (p. 22) that we will ultimately do anything to preserve. I found that in Pod One at Reynolds, conflicting value systems are operating within the master schedule, and these values are revealed in the roles adults unfailingly assumed during each time-frame.

The roles and values of Pod One’s teachers influenced their choice of activities and the ways in which they interacted with children during those activities. For children, learning school-ways (Heath, 1983) includes learning new ways of interacting in groups and with adults whose expectations may differ significantly from those encountered in their home life. Knowledge of the roles and values played out in the routines of Pod One was instrumental to understanding the value-laden nature of prekindergarten routines.

Transitions in enacted routines

As I investigated the question of how participants enact routines, I discovered the importance of transitions and the cues that triggered them. A transition in prekindergarten can be defined as a time-period between routine segments during which participants move from one activity and place to another. External cues often signal children and adults to change both the activity type and the space in which activities occur (Guajardo & Best, 2000). The transitions observed at the start or end of a time segment in the master routine had shared meaning for all the pod's members. Some transitions occurred within the mini-routines of each class and were intended only for an individual group. The consistency of the transition's occurrence, the regularity of its cue, and the location of the participants seemed to influence children's understanding of and expectations for upcoming events.

Transitions that occurred in the master routine called for all participants in Pod One to regroup, changing both place and type of activity. Kliegel and Jager (2007) found that children as young as three years old can "utilize external memory aids to improve their event-based prospective remembering" (p. 45). External cues to trigger and remind Pod One participants were auditory, as in the dinging timer, and visual, as in Mia and Melissa's picture cues.

I found that teacher location was also an important cue. Children looked to see if teachers were in a certain location as a trigger for transitioning to the next routine segment. Jeri was consistent in going to her rocking chair as children went "up front" for circle time. Children were observed modeling this behavior while pretending to be the teacher. Pat went to the "Cozy Cafe" at the end of center time to begin early clean-up

and unintentionally cued children that center time was ending. These examples of prompts by teachers' locations might have been unintentional, but they seemed to function as an important reminder to children of the next activity.

The enacted daily routine included nine major time segments. Each progressive time-frame required children to stop and start activities as they moved to a new space in the room, and often, to work with a different adult. The enacted routine's transitions and the cues that triggered them were as much a part of the schedule as the listed activities. In later sections the implications of these transitions for children's memory development will be discussed.

Learning Routines

Building a script for school

Nelson (1991) uses the term "script" to describe the development of children's schematically organized event representations. A script entails "an ordered sequence of action appropriate to a particular spatial-temporal context and organized around a goal" (p. 13). Building scripts for school, the prekindergarteners in Pod One had begun to develop an understanding of their daily routine sequence as they enacted them each day using similar props, sequences, and roles.

Well-scripted events occur so habitually that participants never question roles, locations, props, or course sequence (Nelson, 1986). Data demonstrated that the children in Pod One were in the process of learning the script for the daily routine. They described two particular segments of this routine well: the consistent morning routine in Jeri's class, and "play," by which children meant either "center time" or gross motor time. Children's active participation (Fivush, 1984) in these parts of the routine and

teachers' narration of the events (Bruner, 1990) may explain why children remembered these activities so well and were able to tell about them.

In Pod One, the *way things go* at school was exemplified in Caitlyn's dictate of "carpet procedures." The teachers were imparting to children what Graue and Walsh (1995) describe as a developing competence in local settings, through required and expected behaviors. The routines informed children's behaviors by building their initial scripts for school. Each time segment of the day had a particular set of expectations and local meanings. Pod One confirmed Kantor, Elgas, and Fernie's (1989) description of preschool classrooms as "complex social and communicative environments" (p. 443). Indeed, in Pod One, knowing the daily routine meant knowing the rules for behavior, the location of the group, and the role to be played. Language used to describe the time-frame ultimately defined life as a schoolchild. The budding scripts these children are compiling may aggregate into a lifelong autobiographical story of school life, which will be shaped and reshaped throughout their school years (Fivush, 1984). Autobiographical memory develops over a lifetime as stories are told and retold, giving definition to a self-in-time (Nelson, 1986). The early stories of school may be the beginning of children's knowledge of what it is to be a schoolchild (Kantor, 2001). Through developing scripts for actions, children learn to plan based on previous activities and anticipate future events. The developing scripts for school of Pod One children were instrumental to understanding that daily routines build a script that directs activity and informs planning.

Adult schemas

The concept of script is explained further by Fivush (1984) as a "spatially/temporally organized set of expectations about the actions, actors, and props

likely to be present during a given event” (p. 1698). During early childhood, the young child is experientially bound. He or she is said to be operating with partial knowledge, using scripts initially supplied by the adult (Nelson, 2007). I found that children’s memory for events and schedules was influenced by their involvement, teacher prompts and regularity of the event occurrence. The prekindergarten classroom provides the time-frame, school-specific materials, and adult-child interactions that build children’s scripts for school.

I found that children’s ability to plan for *how things go at school* builds under adult influence and direction as they compile predictable experiences each day in routines. These scripts direct behavior each day and become an outline for a lifelong autobiographical memory (Nelson, 2007). Predictable routines build scripts, but occasionally the routines take an unpredictable turn. I will next discuss how the participants of Pod One respond to counterscripts.

Counterscripts

Sometimes the daily master routine was not so predictable for participants of Pod One. Lucariello and Mindolovich (2002) use the term “counterscripts” (p. 91) to describe events that are somehow surprising, ironic, or incongruous relative to the expected routine’s daily happenings. Party days and field trips are perhaps the best examples of altered prekindergarten daily routines.

An understanding of what is usual, and therefore routine, is required before a child can understand the unusual. Since many of the children of Pod One had incomplete knowledge of the day’s schedule, party days were noticeably confusing. Adding to the confusion, party activities were situated within the afternoon “rotations,” the least

understandable daily segment for children. Children relied on adults to tell them the new routines on party days. One notable exception was a child from Jeri's class who remembered the previous holiday party and was able to describe this example for the routine of the party day.

Lucariello and Mindolovich (2002) assert the importance of general script knowledge for learning counterscripts. For Bruner (1990), the participant's narrative description forms the "working hypothesis" (p. 35) to explain "links between the exceptional and the ordinary" (p. 43). Learning the script of the daily routines in prekindergarten prepared children to learn counterscripts (Lucariello & Mindolovich, 2002).

Teachers attempted to help children understand counterscripts. Mia and Melissa added unique pictures to their picture schedule on party day and picture day to cue children to the novel events. During morning circle, Caitlyn explained the events that would occur on Valentine's Day, but since children had a poor general schema for the routine, this description did not help most of her children to place the party in the day's schedule. If children in Pod One prekindergarten had a clear understanding of their consistent daily routine, then the novel event might be more easily incorporated as a counterscript. The understanding of Pod One participants for counterscripts is instrumental to understanding how counterscripts impact daily routine in prekindergarten.

Memory and cues

Recollecting and prospecting

Guajardo and Best (2000) compare two types of memory: prospective memory, which involves "remembering to perform a future action" (p. 76), and retrospective

memory, or “recalling information” (p. 75). These two types of memory were demonstrated in the performance of the prekindergarten children in Pod One. First, children could partially recall the events of their script for the daily routine. Many children recollected the activities in sequence, listing each event throughout the day. Second, I observed children demonstrating projective memory as they remembered what activity would be coming up and prepared for the activity by relocating themselves in the classroom.

Retrospective memory for scripts is qualitatively different from episodic memory for specific events (Guajardo & Best, 2000). Episodic memory for an isolated event contrasts with the habitual recollection of actions in time defined by script knowledge (Nelson, 2007). A script is a general plan that allows for insertion of daily events in the common script for a commonly occurring daily routine. A Pod One child demonstrated a well-defined script for daily routine by answering “centers” when asked what followed morning circle time. The same child can, likewise, insert several activities (e.g., blocks and dramatic play) that might be accomplished during that specific time-frame. Other children were unable to name the sequence of the daily routine.

The Pod One prekindergarten children have varying abilities for retrospective memory related to the daily routine script. Nelson & Fivush (2004) describe the increasing complexity of script knowledge over the preschool years. The diverse levels of understanding in Pod One’s children may, as they suggest, be attributable to developmental differences or, perhaps, to the quality of prior experiences.

Guajardo and Best (2000) describe projective memory as the ability to remember to perform future actions. As scripted events become commonplace, the routine can be

reliably used to predict what comes next in a sequence and thus plan for future action (Bruner 1990). Individuals can be said to project themselves into the future to anticipate activity that will occur in advance of its happening. I observed the prekindergarten children demonstrating prospective memory ability as they sat on the carpet waiting for the next activity segment, circle time. For this time-frame, at least, the children in Caitlyn's and Jeri's classes were able to recall the familiar daily routine and predict the next activity. My observation of these children's prospective memory is a finding that supports the value of a consistent and well-scripted daily routine. These findings were instrumental to understanding that planning on the basis of knowledge of the routine can allow children to self-regulate behavior and participate in daily activities with less cueing (Guajardo & Best, 2000) from adults.

Understanding time

I found that children must develop a rudimentary knowledge of elements of time in order to remember the schedule of the daily routine. Understanding time is an accomplishment that progresses over the preschool years (Fivush, 1998; Nelson, 2007; Povinelli et al., 1999; Tomasello, 1999, 2003; Friedman, 2002). Children's budding knowledge of school-life is prompted by the predictable and repeated nature of daily routines. Knowledge of daily schedules precedes more complex knowledge of more distant occasions such as annual events (Friedman, 2002). The children of Pod One demonstrated the rudimentary knowledge of self-in-time when they described the flow of activity throughout the day's routine. The prekindergarten children had inaccurate ideas about clock time; however, they could order events in the familiar sequences of their daily activities.

These prekindergarten children were still in the process of developing an understanding of the order of daily activity in the school setting. They frequently left out activities as they related the schedule. The children's need to solidify knowledge of the daily sequences was overlooked by teachers in Pod One. Even Mia and Melissa did not frequently refer to their pictorial time schedule.

Friedman (2006) observes that children's ability to think about the occurrence of daily events in time develops "in the course of their use in day-to-day thinking about when events have occurred or will occur" (p. 355). In January, the children of Pod One were developmentally in the process of understanding the recurrent nature of the routine's time-frames. Daily discussion and thinking about the routine time segments and the events as they occur in the routine would have increased children's development of a school script and the embedded time concepts throughout it. Nelson (2007) states that a reorganization of thinking occurs during the preschool years as children begin to grasp a sense of a "continuing me" (p. 189) in the flow of life's activities.

I found that memory for daily routine began in predictable schedules and activities, and later served children as they were able to plan for the events of each day. The behaviors, roles, and activities of each day were embedded in the master routine. Children began to remember routines by sharing in talk about daily activities and by actively participating in routines. As the teachers assisted children in developing schemas for each day, they were developing a framework for life-at-school that will inform these children's future perceptions of their role in school. Discovery of children's growing knowledge of time was instrumental to understanding that routines provide a structure for learning about time sequences.

In the following section, I will summarize and discuss my discoveries that are pertinent to the instrumental case of daily routine. I will also discuss certain limitations to this case study's findings. Finally, I will conclude this discussion with questions that can guide future study of the phenomenon of daily routines in early-childhood settings.

Summary and Recommendations

The instrumental case: What I learned

The Reynolds prekindergarten routine was instrumental to understanding that a consistent schedule provides the framework for adults and children to give them control over time-frames and help them predict the activities of future days. This study of the Pod One prekindergarten at Reynolds also demonstrates that a daily routine is more than its published schedule. I found that Pod One at Reynolds had a consistent routine that all participants followed each day; however, an enacted routine entails more than its schedule. The case at Reynolds was instrumental to understanding that although the master schedule gave definition to routines, the embedded mini-routines provided insight into additional meanings held by the participants. A synchronized schedule, therefore, does not dictate consensus in how that schedule is enacted.

Not all of the mini-routines at Reynolds provided a consistent schedule of activities. The lack of this predictable routine perhaps made it more difficult for this group's children to learn the expected "school script" (Fivush, 1984, p. 1697). This finding was instrumental to understanding the importance of consistent routines.

I found that daily routines reflect the values and philosophies of their creators and enactors. Teachers find ways, such as the mini-routines at Reynolds, to interject their beliefs and values, shaping the enacted routines toward their particular philosophical

viewpoint. The activities included in the time segments may be reflections of teachers' philosophical predisposition for either adult-directed or child-initiated activity (Marcon, 1999), as at Reynolds. Teachers' ontologies determined the roles and values played out in the routines in Pod One affirming Bruner's 1990 findings. These enacted roles and their inherent values were instrumental to understanding the value-laden nature of prekindergarten routines.

Through this research, I have learned that adults in team-teaching situations are more likely to produce a co-constructed daily routine if they share philosophical stances rather than merely a time schedule. A daily routine that was truly co-constructed would reflect a shared-narrative (Fivush, 1984) of school life. Likewise, a daily routine reflects the culture, values, and ontology (Bruner, 1990) of its designers. The goal of inclusion and the choice of curriculum might dictate philosophical preference, yet the teachers' shared values concerning play and child-initiated versus academically-directed activity (Marcon, 1999) seem crucial. The teachers at Reynolds Pod One did not all share the same philosophical stance.

Buzzelli and Johnston (2001) suggest that routines in school are influenced by the values and morality of the teachers in each site. Findings revealing the misalignment of the philosophical worldviews of Pod One's teachers were instrumental to understanding that teachers find ways to interject their views in overt and covert ways in the design and enactment of a daily routine.

The impact of the classroom's pod design was instrumental to understanding that the physical location in which a daily routine is acted out is influential to the design of the routine (Yielding, 1993). As Graue and Walsh (1995) suggest, the context in which

participants are situated is unique and requires that interpretations be viewed through understandings specific to each site. Pod One's setting was instrumental to understanding that a "local context" (Graue & Walsh, 1995) is complicated and unique, and the daily routine is influenced by the particular contextualized features.

I found memory, both recollective and prospective (Guajardo & Best, 2000), to be involved in learning the daily routine. Providing a predictable routine in which children are active participants may support developing prospective memory during the preschool years. The developing scripts for school (Fivush, 1984) of Pod One children were instrumental to understanding that daily routines seem to build a script that directs activity. As with a predictable daily routine, projective memory develops, allowing children to plan for future action (Nelson, 2007). I have learned that understanding routines assists children in planning and accommodating upcoming activities in a daily schedule.

Cues, both intentional and unintentional (Guajardo & Best, 2000), assist in prompting children's development of prospective memory. I have learned that children respond to cues from their teachers and that often the teachers are not aware of the power of unstated cues for transitions and expected behavior. Similarly, I have learned that consistent places for activities, as well predictable time-frames, assist children in developing memory.

I have learned that children learn about school through the schemas of the adults in their environment, operating with an incomplete knowledge of the daily events in which they participate. They use scripts initially supplied by the adult (Nelson, 2007), while they master their own discernment of the events. If children are not active

participants in routines, they remember less of the routine sequence and rely on adults to “tells us what to do” and “do what our teacher says.” Children in prekindergarten are learning the meaning of life-as-lived in school. Their meanings for school routine may ultimately be based on these early schemas, and although some children are more aware of the script than others, most prekindergarten children can describe the roles, activities, and schedule of many parts of the routine.

Lucariello and Mindolovich (2002) use the term “counterscripts” (p. 91) to explain events that are unusual or contrary to the regular routine activities. Children in Pod One were still learning the routine, and only a very few seemed to understand those events that were contrary to the ordinary. The reaction of Pod One children when they were confronted with “counterscripts” was instrumental to understanding how making sense of unusual events is based on understanding the usual daily routine.

I found that Reynolds Pod One prekindergarten teachers perpetuated the culture of the elementary school in which Pod One was housed, raising questions about the frequent practice of placing preschool children in elementary school settings. A model of school and schoolchild begins to develop in prekindergarten routines. Children may internalize the model that their teacher presents when she reinforces her particular values and philosophy (Graue & Walsh, 1995). Children considered “ready” are those who have mastered the teachers’ expectations of knowledge and behavior at school. Teachers, likewise, ritualize certain parts of the routine, emphasizing the value of these parts through repetition and emphasis each day. When children submit to another’s ontology, it may color their future school experiences. For example, they may be encouraged to

expect adults to direct their learning experiences, rather than seeking out autonomous learning activity.

Narratives help build consensus in shared routines. As narrative ability increases in children, autobiographical knowledge is available because language, familiarity, and practice create a shared view of school. This shared view, in turn, informs future behaviors (Bruner, 2004; Nelson, 2007). I found that children's ability to express the activities of the routine is related to their understanding of each segment. Events included in children's narratives relate to their understanding of the activity and the frequency and consistency with which it is repeated. Children respond best to these repeated sequences. Considering the ritualistic nature of routines, teachers need to be aware of the powerful impact of these routines in both the overt and the covert messages they convey to children.

Young children are building autobiographical pictures of their place in the world (Nelson, 2007). Preschool children who were formerly engulfed in the life of family or daycare are becoming schoolchildren as they learn the school's daily routine and the messages inherent in it. What children are taught is what they become, and the daily routine is a powerful teacher, with messages that supersede the mere time-frames (Solomone, 1999) of the schedule. When asked what children remember about school, it is not only the schedule, but the words, social interactions, and circumstances that shape repeated days. This study suggests that some of the most powerful teaching (Solomone, 1999) is quite unintentional, and it is generated through the rituals, messages, and values in the daily routine.

Limitations

The greatest difficulty in this study of young children proved to be understanding their view of the routine activities (Graue & Walsh, 1995). The incidental interviews revealed children's knowledge in part, but I turned to teacher behaviors to understand what messages children were being given. In spite of many hours of observation and copious field notes, the difficulty in gaining data from children limits the conclusions I have been able to draw about their unique perspectives.

I have had many years of experience in preschool and elementary classrooms as a teacher and early-childhood program director. The social context of the classroom, therefore, was familiar territory, and my perceptions may have been limited because of this very familiarity. I, the observer, may have accepted certain practices as a natural part of the setting without questioning the appropriateness or intentionality of their implementation because they seemed an accepted practice in American schools. I sought to remain aware of these situations, such as requiring the children to walk in straight lines. However, my familiarity with preschool ways is a limitation in my observations.

An obvious limitation of this case study is the large and complicated pod classroom. To capture the complexity of action and participant understandings would take more time than the semester of weekly observations I was able to complete for this study. A naturalistic investigation of such a complex environment is merely a snapshot. The goal of the study of this specific site, however, was to understand the daily routine in prekindergarten, and this setting provided valuable data that were instrumental to learning about daily routine in prekindergarten.

Recommendations for further study

The findings of this study prompt suggestions for future study. Since the curriculum and activities of prekindergarten are shown in this study to be influential to the design of daily routines, I suggest further study to discover the similarities or dissimilarities in team teachers' philosophical stances as they relate to their design of daily routines. I focused on a pod classroom, where nine adults regularly interact with the children in three classes. Additional study of a classroom's daily routine in which only one or two adults were teaching might extend the knowledge of the influence of teacher philosophy during daily routine design.

The importance of verbal, auditory, and visual cues for behavior management, especially in transitions, was evidenced in this case study. In the present case, many of the cues were unintentional behaviors that triggered children's actions. Only Mia and Melissa used purposeful visual cues (Schmit, Alper, Raschke, & Ryndak, 1999). Additional research on the usefulness of visual and auditory cues might assist in understanding how they inform children's growing prospective memory and their ability to plan for daily activities. I also suggest exploration of the role of cues in transitions during daily routines and the use of consistent names and consistent labels for the routine segments in assisting children's recall of routine segments.

To fully comprehend the children's understanding of routines, it would be helpful to be immersed in their home culture (Heath, 1983) to know the antecedents of their perspectives on school routines. Future research might discover the ways in which home culture influences children's ability to assimilate to prekindergarten routines.

How is narrative construction related to memory for routines? My study was a preliminary look at the routine of one setting, and the narratives of its participants proved to be a valuable source of data for discovering their perspectives. My study suggests that prekindergarten classroom routines may provide scripts for future school years. A future investigation might discover discrepancies between the ability of the constructivist classroom and the more didactic elementary school classrooms to influence children as they create scripts for school (Fivush, 1984). Future study might also look into the concept of readiness for later school experiences that is developed in preschool routines.

Children in this study often described the time segments with name, location, and activity by the using the same word. Perhaps future research could examine how teachers use words for each time-frame and place. Future examination might allow the creation of a system of labeling time-frames that could assist children in understanding the time-frames and sequences. High Scope's curriculum includes a plan-do-review (Hohmann & Weikart, 1995) sequence for center time. This sequence may be related to the development of children's prospective memory of daily events. Future research could validate this practice for use in prekindergarten.

Conclusion

This study originated in my teaching practices in prekindergarten. My preliminary questions were not answered in the educational literature (Shickedanz, York, Stewart, & White, 1977; Hatch, 2005; Katz & Chard, 2000; Kantor & Fernie, 2003), initiating this study to discover knowledge that might be revealed by participants in a unique setting. The case at Reynolds Pod One prekindergarten was instrumental to understanding the embedded nature of daily routines and the developmental processes of memory and

culture that shape children's recall and enactment of routines. Interpretations of the narratives and actions of the adults of Pod One were instrumental to understanding the unique perspectives that the culture and ontology provide in routine enactment and design. Theory-based insights enabled further understandings of the case and were instrumental to relating the case at Reynolds to aspects of daily routines that underlie its enactment.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:
CONFIDENTIALITY RELEASE FORMS

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

I AM CONDUCTING A STUDY CALLED "Daily Routines in Prekindergarten and I would like to invite you to participate in the study. The purpose of the study is to examine the experiences of teachers and students as they participate in the routines of a Prekindergarten classroom.

If you agree to participate, I will visit your classroom weekly during the spring semester [January through March] 2007. I will take the role of an observer and low level participant taking notes, audio recording segments and lightly interacting with the students.

I will also conduct a tape-recorded interview with you late in the spring semester of 2007. I will ask you a series of open-ended questions designed to capture your thoughts on teaching in Prekindergarten. This interview will take approximately one and one half hours to complete and will be transcribed by me or by a typist who will have signed a confidentiality agreement.

I may seek your permission to copy or photograph documents in your classroom that help me understand your routines or class rules. I will ask to observe any training opportunities that you might provide to student teachers which could help me understand your classroom procedures and routines.

If you agree to continue you participation in the research project, I will ask you to assist in selection of at least 2 students with whom I will conduct interviews lasting approximately one half hour. Student interviews will also be tape-recorded and will occur in the natural setting of the classroom. Permission for these interviews will be gained from participating children and their parents.

You should not experience any foreseeable risks because of your participation in the research project. Your participation is completely voluntary, and any results will not be shared with any other party without your written approval. Pseudonyms will be utilized for all names and locations, and your identity will be protected as much as possible in published reports of the research or in research presentations at professional meetings. Data will be stored securely and will be made available only to persons conducting the study unless you specifically give me permission to do otherwise.

While you will not be compensated directly for your participation, you may benefit from opportunities to reflect on your teaching practice. In addition, it may inform your planning decisions for future teaching practice.

Participant's Initials

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you would otherwise be entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

If you have questions at any time about the study or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in the study, you may contact me [Shari Lillestolen at 865 824 9493]. If you have questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Office of Research Compliance Officer at 865 974 3466.

CONSENT

I HAVE READ THE ABOVE INFORMATION. I HAVE RECEIVED A COPY OF THIS FORM. I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

Participant's Signature

Date 2-14-07

Investigator's Signature

Date 2-14-07

Dear Prekindergarten Parents,

What a wonderful school you have and how lucky your child is to get to join in the fun and learning in the Prekindergarten classes here at ____ Elementary!

My name is Shari Lillestolen. I am a graduate student at the University of Tennessee. I have been a Prekindergarten teacher myself, and have returned to study more about young children and the programs that help them learn.

I would like to observe the classes here at ____ Elementary to better understand the ways teachers and children go about their daily routines. Attached to this letter you will see a yellow form describing my project and asking for your permission for me to visit and observe your child as he or she participates in Prekindergarten. I will also ask some children if they would like to “tell about” their school day and tape-record their stories.

Please review the attached sheet and initial it to show that you approve of your child’s participation in this project. The teachers have promised the students a “sticker” for returning this form so please help them by returning it promptly.

Thank you for your help. If you have further questions you may contact me at the numbers or email below.

Sincerely,

**Shari R. Lillestolen
865-539-7229
srlillestolen@pstcc.edu**

Initials identifying child participant _____

Date_____

Child above noted gave permission for participation

Primary Investigator _____

Date_____



YES



NO

[Primary investigator will show this form to each child seated at a small classroom table during center time. The child will be asked “Would you like to work with me today and tell me a story about your classroom?” Primary investigator will point to the two faces and ask the child to circle or color the happy face if the *do* want to participate or to circle or color the frowney face if they *do not*. It expected that the child will respond to the faces emotions and they are not expected to read the words.]

APPENDIX B:
GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Teacher Interview Questions

1. **Background**
 - a. How long have you taught PreK?
 - b. Have you taught other grade levels?
 - c. How long have you been at ____ (school)?
 - d. Have you ever taught elsewhere?
 - e. What was your educational background?
2. Could you outline your daily routine or schedule-from day start to end?
3. How did this schedule come to be developed?
4. Who took part in the planning of the schedule?
5. What factors influenced the choice of activities you include?
6. What activity was easiest to decide upon? What was and most difficult?
7. What were outside influences on the order of the schedule? School times, PreK requirements, family needs....
8. Can you comment on transitions from one activity to another?
9. How is this year's schedule different from your previous years' schedules?
10. Do you think the children seem to have a good handle on "how things go" through out the day.
 - a. What helped them learn the daily routines? Practice? Special beginning of the year activities or teaching of procedures?
11. What child do you regard as having a good knowledge of the class procedures?
Is anyone still confused?
12. During parts of the day the children are in groups that include different children and teachers from that of their home rooms.
 - a. How and why did you decide to do this grouping?
 - b. Is it the same for thematic time as for afternoon activities?
13. What do YOU include that is unique from the other groups in the pod?
14. Talk about YOUR circle time routine.

15. Several of the children indicated they liked “centers” best. Why do you think this is so?
16. What is YOUR favorite part of the day!
What portion of the day’s activities do you value most?
Your least favorite part?
17. Do the different parts of the day’s activities change your behavior expectations for the children?
 - a. Does *your* own role change throughout the day?
18. Has the team planned the behavior management strategies together?
 - a. What about your rewards system, the “treasure box”?
 - b. How do team members inform each other after a discipline incident?
19. How do you plan for activities for new units?
 - a. Does the routine guide your planning in any way?
 - b. Are there certain centers that are “assigned” to each teacher for design and maintaining?
20. Talk about the role of the assistant teachers.
They often seem to anticipate the next activity in each day and prepare. Is this a plan that was worked out?
21. Reflect: If were setting up the ideal PreK, my schedule would include

APPENDIX C:
MIA AND MELISSA'S ROUTINE FOR TINA

Daily Routine

7:45-8:15 – Table time

- A - Greet parents, help kids with table time (ex. Working puzzles with the kids, helping them, etc.) , help kids sign in, get lunch count
- B - Greet parents, help kids with table time (ex. Working puzzles with the kids, helping them, etc.) , help kids sign in, get lunch count
- C - Assist kids with breakfast, then help with table time (ex. Working puzzles with the kids, helping them, etc.)

8:15- 8:45 – Circle time *Teachers A and B rotate jobs

- A - Lead circle
- B - Assist kids with circle (sit behind kids and help keep them engaged in activity)
- C - Clean up tables from table time, then assist kids with circle (sit behind kids and help keep them engaged in activity)

8:45 – 9:00 – Sensory

- A -
- B - All teachers play/engage with group at a sensory table (ex. Playing with the kids with the play dough, helping the kids take turns)
- C -

9:00 – 10:00 – Center time *All teachers rotate jobs

- A – Work with one child covering a goal (ex. Working with Damirreon spelling his name, etc.)
- B – Oversee centers
- C - Work with one child covering a goal (ex. Working with Damirreon spelling his name, etc.)

10:00-10:30 – Thematic time (story/music)

- A – Help get kids to their appropriate circle, sit with Jaden on days he is here
- B – Lead Circle
- C – Assist with circle by helping lead kids to circle time, join the circle time, help kids engage in story

10:30 – 10:45 – Art

- A – Lead art at horseshoe table
- B – Assist 1 group of kids with art
- C – Assist 1 group of kids with art

10:45-11:15 – Lunch

A – Lead kids to lunch

B – Assist kids walk in line, help them remember ducktails and bubbles

C – Assist kids walk in line, help them remember ducktails and bubbles

11:15-11:30 – Theatre

A –

B – All teachers teach appropriate play skills, watch or play with kids *Good time to take a break once the kids are settled

C –

11:30-12:15 – Recess

A –

B – All teachers teach appropriate play skills, etc.

C –

12:15 – 1:00 – Rotations

A – Lead science/snack

B – Help Grayson with the rotation time

C – Help with science/snack

1:00-1:15 – Dismissal

A – Assist with group

B – Lead group

C – Pack backpacks and line them up for dismissal

1:30-2:00 – Lunch

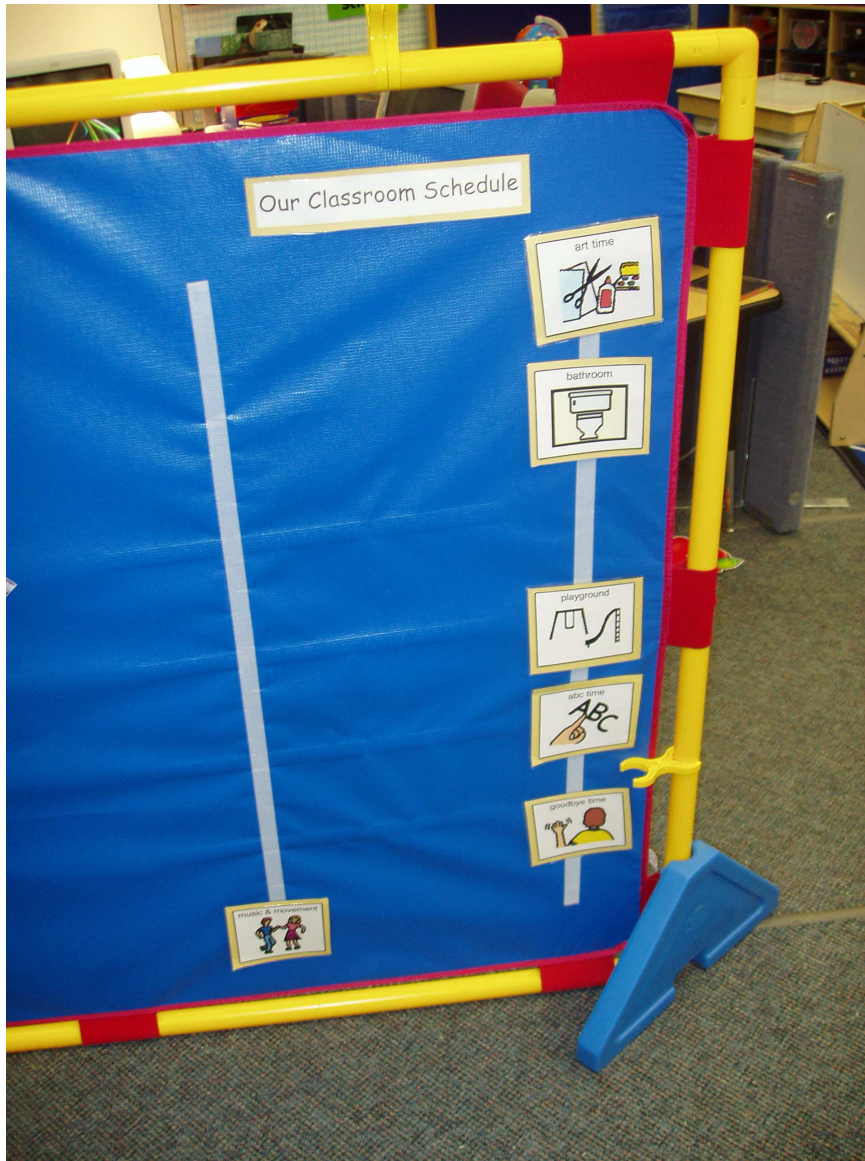
2:00- Planning time

A&B – paperwork, planning, set up for next day, IEPs, get books ready

C – Clean tables, get art cleaned and put away, get art out for the next day, help set out table time

APPENDIX D:
MAP OF REYNOLDS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

APPENDIX E:
MIA AND MELISSA'S DAILY ROUTINE



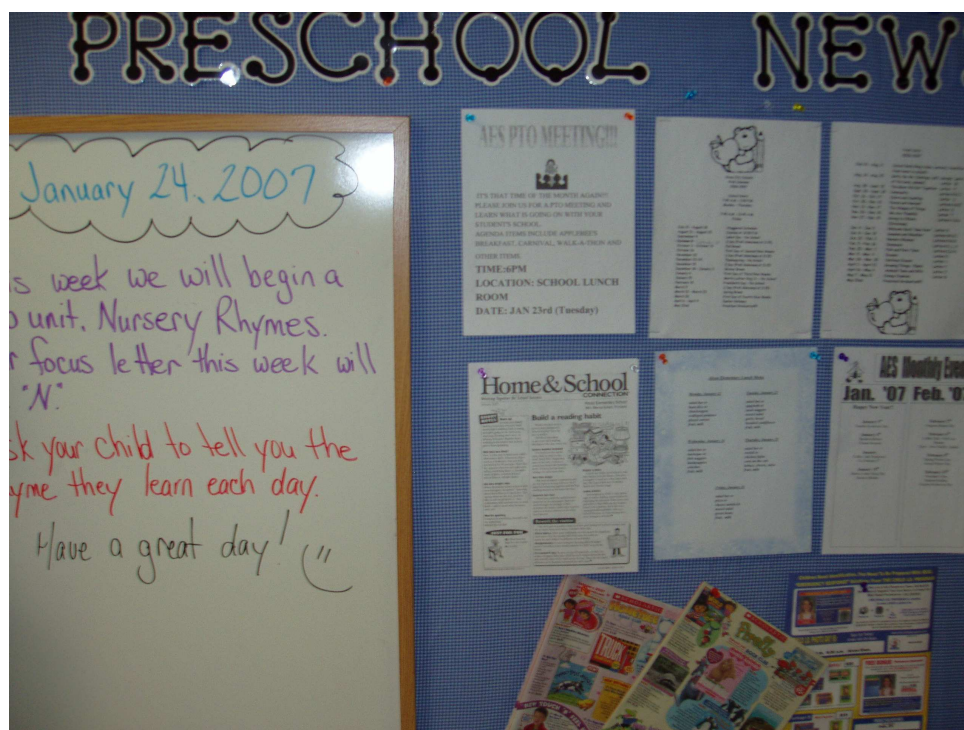
Mia and Melissa's Daily Routine

APPENDIX F:
MIA AND MELISSA'S MINI-ROUTINE



Mia and Melissa's Mini-Routine

APPENDIX G:
POD ONE'S POSTED MASTER ROUTINE



Pod One's Posted Master Routine

APPENDIX H:
COMPARISON CHART OF DAILY ROUTINES

Comparison Chart of Daily Routines

POSTED MASTER ROUTINE	JERI'S DESCRIBED ROUTINE	CAITLYN'S DESCRIBED ROUTINE	MELISSA'S DESCRIBED ROUTINE	MIA AND MELISSA'S ROUTINE FOR TINA	MIA'S DESCRIBED ROUTINE	ROUTINE RECORDED DURING FIELD OBSERVATION: 1/24//07
*7:45-8:00 <i>Breakfast/Table</i> *Time/Greetings	Greet (parents and children)	Parents bring children in	They come in	7:45-8:15 Table Time		7:45 come in/ <i>Breakfast/Table</i> work
	Write Name					7:55 Pledge/moment of silence
	Breakfast	Breakfast				8:00 Pat arrives
	Little Table Time Activity	Activity Time as Tables	Table Time or Breakfast		Table time Activities at each Table	
		Carpet (books, white boards, books, puzzles)				
8:15-8:45 Morning circle Time (Calendar, question of the day, story, etc.)	Circle Time (Jobs, calendar, question of the day, usually read)	Circle Time "all our daily things" (songs, calendar, question of the day, read a book)	Circle Time (good morning song, calendar, story and name thing)	8:15-8:45 Circle time	Good morning circle time (good morning song, calendar, reading names, story)	8:35 Circle time
8:45-9:00 Music			Sensory (trampoline, play dough rice table)	8:45-9:00 Sensory	Sensory (trampoline, play dough rice or sand, balls)	8:45 M and M Sensory time
(before dismissal to centers)	"Go over things"					
*9:00-10:00 <i>Learning Centers</i>	<i>Center Time "45 minutes"</i>	<i>Center Time "1 hour"</i>	<i>Center Time</i>	9:00-10:00 <i>Center time</i>	<i>Centers "1 Hour"</i>	<i>Centers</i>
10:00-10:50 Thematic Time	Our Little Thematic Time	"Group time/our thematic time" (book, some activity, hands-on)	Story Time (Story and music)	10:00-10:30 Thematic Time (story/ music)	Story Time (music, regroup)	Circles
		Art activity	Art	10:30-10:45 Art	Theme Art	
10:50-11:20 Lunch	Lunch	Lunch in cafeteria	Lunch	10:45-11:15 Lunch	Lunch	10:45 M/M lunch
		Afternoon story, music, movement	<i>Theater</i>	11:15-11:30 <i>theater</i>	<i>Theater/Kay's Garden</i>	11:15 <i>Theater</i>
11:20-12:15 <i>Gross Motor Activity /Music and Movement</i>	<i>Outside/gym</i>	<i>Gross motor time</i> (outside/gym, playground/tricycles)	<i>Outside/Gym</i> (gross motor/playground)	11:30-12:15 <i>Recess</i>	<i>Playground/Gross Motor</i>	11:15-11:30 J/C circles 11:45 <i>Outside</i>

POSTED MASTER ROUTINE	JERI'S DESCRIBED ROUTINE	CAITLYN'S DESCRIBED ROUTINE	MELISSA'S DESCRIBED ROUTINE	MIA AND MELISSA'S ROUTINE FOR TINA	MIA'S DESCRIBED ROUTINE	ROUTINE RECORDED DURING FIELD OBSERVATION: 1/24/07
12:15-1:00 Phonemic Awareness/ Science/Social Studies/Snack	Groups "phonemic awareness literacy –type things"	Rotate (Science, phonemic awareness, snack)	Rotation (Snack, phonemic awareness, science)	12:15-1:00 Rotations	Rotation (Phonemic awareness, science, snack)	12:15 first rotation 12:35 Second rotation 12:45 third rotation
1:00-1:15 Treasure box/Reflection of the Day	Closing Time	"Our End of Day" (discipline program, treasure box, gather back packs, good bye song, "what the class is in the mood for"	Wrap up , our goodbye song, and the songs we do at the end of the day then treasure box and go home	1:00-1:15 dismissal Wrap-up (good bye songs, treasure box)	Regroup (goodbye song, say good bye, treasure box)	1:00 Prepare to go home /treasure chests
1:15-1:30 Closing /Dismissal						1:15 Start dismissal out back door

*Italicized sections indicate child-directed activity times.

*Bolted sections indicate adult-directed activity times.

*Areas with no highlighted area are meals or transitional times.

VITA

Shari Lillestolen was born in Loudon, Tennessee, and graduated from Loudon High School in 1968. In 1973, she graduated from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor of Arts degree in education with an emphasis on early childhood education. After teaching in primary and private preschool settings, Shari began her graduate studies in 1987 at Maryville College in St. Louis, Missouri, and was certified in High/Scope curriculum. She continued graduate studies at the University of Tennessee, completing a masters' degree in curriculum and instruction in 1992. Additional training resulted in certification as Parents as First Teachers educator and site coordinator in 1999.

Shari's experiences include international experience at the Saudi Arabian International Schools in Riyadh. She has taught in both private and public preschools and elementary schools. Shari received a State of Tennessee grant in 1999, which provided her with the opportunity to initiate the prekindergarten program for the public school system in Lenoir City, Tennessee.

In 2003, Shari entered the University of Tennessee as a doctoral student. While at the university, she worked as a graduate teaching assistant in the Urban/Multi Cultural Program and supervised students in elementary and special education/early childhood dual-licensure programs.

Shari has made presentations at various local and regional conferences, including the Southern Early Childhood Association Tennessee Association of Educators of Young Children, and Knox Area Association of Educators of Young Children. Shari serves on the KAAEYC board to advocate for high quality early education.

Shari currently is an instructor at Pellissippi State Technical Community College in Knoxville, Tennessee. Shari teaches a variety of early childhood education courses for students seeking an applied associate degree. In addition to teaching, her responsibilities include designing programs, supervising practicum students, and staffing the early childhood and child and family studies programs. Shari also serves on a state early childhood education curriculum committee.