

PAPER 3: REVISION

The stimulus material is based on a research article

Sherman (1975) studied a phenomenon called group glee in videotapes of 596 formal lessons in a preschool. This was characterized by joyful screaming, laughing, and intense physical acts which occurred in simultaneous bursts or which spread in a contagious fashion from one child to another.

This study, then, concerned itself with the description and analysis of group glee. Information was collected concerning the occurrence of incidents of group glee, their location in directed lessons, the frequency and duration of the incidents, the manner in which the glee spreads through the groups, the way teachers respond to a gleeful group, and whether incidents of glee disrupt on-going lesson-related activities. Several categories of initiating causes of group glee were also noted.

Group glee was studied in 596 lessons taught by 36 student teachers over a period of 2 years. The children attended nursery school for approximately 3 hours either in the morning or the afternoon session 5 days a week. Both morning and afternoon groups contained 20 children with varied chronological ages (29-65 months), were integrated racially (one-half blacks), socioeconomically (yearly family incomes from below \$3,000 to \$75,000 a year), and sexually (one-half females).

Each day, three separate groups of children from each session were taken from the free play area to participate in the directed lessons which were held in a smaller observation room (2.2 X 2.7 m). Each lesson was scheduled for 20 minutes. A stationary videocamera with a wide-angle lens was placed in one corner of the ceiling so that it could videotape most of the floor space.

For the directed lessons, the children were divided into three chronological age groups but were still heterogeneous with respect to sex and race. Lessons contained a variety of activities such as story readings; simple construction; teacher demonstrations; cognitive grouping and discrimination tasks; singing, dancing, and other physical-motor exercises; role playing; and general discussions. When the focal activity was accomplished, the children were directed to leave the room and return to the larger free play area.

Group glee was studied by coding all incidents that occurred in the directed lessons. Codes were designed to obtain data which were ecologically descriptive of the phenomenon. Interrater reliability was established between two independent raters separately viewing the same 10 videotaped lessons. The percentage of inter-coder agreements ranged from 83 for a 10-category code (precipitator causes) to 100 for a three-category code (disruptive/non-disruptive glee) with a mean of 92.

The stimulus material has been sourced from: An Ecological Study of Glee in Small Groups of Preschool Children, Lawrence W. Sherman.

Child Development, Vol. 46, No. 1 (Mar., 1975), pp. 53-61 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1128833> (Accessed on 28/01/2013)

Answer the following questions:

1. To what extent can the findings be generalized from the above study?
2. Discuss how researches analyse data obtained using this particular method of research.
3. Explain the effect of triangulation on the credibility of qualitative research.