How To Make A Video Recording And Transcript Of A Classroom Discussion: Some Suggestions

Making a Video Recording

- ☆ If only one camera is available, stand in the middle of the big square and turn around slowly.
- ☆ Do not try to "chase after" the student who suddenly begins to speak. You will be too late in most cases.
- ☆ Make some recordings before your first real recording in order to encourage the children to act naturally.
- ☆ When possible, use several (2-3) microphones.
- ☆ Make some preparations so that the students make as little noise as possible. Explain to them the problem of the non-selective "ears" of the microphone. Let them, for example, take off their shoes (to avoid shuffling noise), or let them put away their papers (unless required for taking notes).
- ☆ Write down information that is not recorded, but which may be of interest for later interpretation: for example, writing on the blackboard or students raising hands.
- ☆ Decide whether you will let the children know beforehand that the next session will be recorded. Both decisions have their advantages and disadvantages. Discuss the subject of videotaping in advance so that the recording is not a complete surprise to them.

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Making a Transcript

- ☆ Try to achieve a verbatim transcript. It will strike you how "bad" spoken language appears to be once it has been written down.
- ☆ Leave in the repetition of words and phrases, the incomplete words, the unfinished or halfway changed sentences.
- ☆ Number each speaker interaction so that the transcript may be easily referred to during transcript analysis.
- ☆ Designate where the speaker is interrupted or where several students speak at (almost) the same time (if understandable).
- ☆ Mark hesitations and pauses with an elipsis. (. . .)
- ☆ Mark deleted parts, (mainly in the case of a contribution that cannot be understood) with an elipsis within square brackets. ([. . .])
- ☆ Put additional notes between brackets and in italics; insert them into the transcript.
- ☆ When the transcript is used without the videotape, it is recommended that the transcript be edited to some extent. As long as the meaning will not be affected, some stylistic and grammatical adaptations may improve the readability of the text considerably. For example, Ashleigh's contribution (from Judy Kyle's verbatim transcript entry no. 19) could be edited this way:

  Verbatim: Um, if someone, let's say someone thinks that um something is right, then that, let's say an adult or something, and then uh there's someone, uh, a kid or something, they think that it isn't right. Like they, they think that their think is right. So I think if, if they, if they feel it's right then they should have the chance like . . .

  Edited: Let's say someone thinks that something is right. Let's say an adult or something. And then there's someone, a kid or something, who thinks that it isn't right. I think, if they feel it's right, then they should have the chance . . .

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