

motivational technique is observable, the overall learning strategy (to constrict or expand student behavior) becomes evident.

**Interactive Distances.** Another dimension of the learning strategy in a classroom setting is the interactive distance between the teacher and students. To the degree that it is important to have two-way communication in the classroom, and to the degree that the instructional strategy values multiple learning styles among students, the teacher will make adjustments for differences.

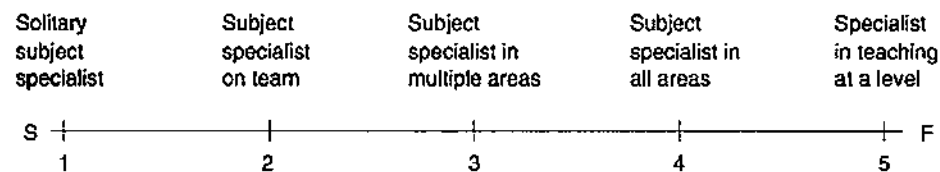
In his book *The Silent Language*, Edward Hall (1959) made observations about the appropriateness of certain distances between persons for certain activities. Some distances (15 feet and beyond) are appropriate for broadcasting; other distances (6 inches or less) are reserved for intimate moments. In a classroom setting, it is possible to observe whether the teacher makes adjustments in interactive distances during instruction or chooses to treat all situations alike.

**Questions.** What are some combinations of teaching behavior that reflect motivational theory? What advantage can be gained by designing a classroom that allows for teacher mobility?

**STAFFING PATTERNS.** Another indicator of structure versus flexibility in schools, in terms of instruction, is found in the staffing patterns observed. Two staffing indicators are the role of teachers in staffing and the organization of teachers in the school building. The descriptive continua in Figure 2.15 suggest the potential range of alternatives for staffing patterns in schools.

**Role of the Teacher.** In some schools, all teachers are hired and assigned on the basis of subject-matter preparation. Such teachers are perceived as solitary artisans with the highly structured task of teaching a subject to students. In other schools, a teacher may be hired as a subject specialist but assigned to an interdisciplinary team. A more flexible pattern would be to staff a school with teachers having two or more subject specialties. It might even be possible to have one teacher (as in the elementary grades)

#### Role of the Teacher



#### Organization of Teachers

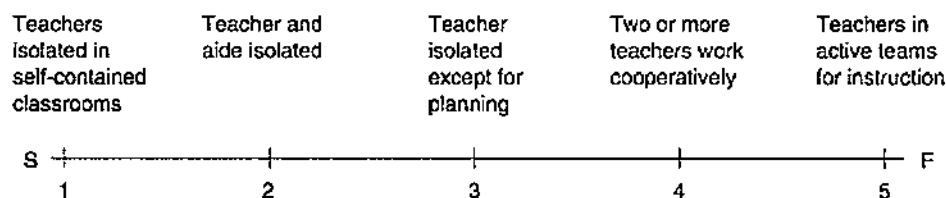


FIGURE 2.15 Types of Staffing Patterns (S = structured; F = flexible).

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responsible for all subjects, or to hire a teacher to teach students at a certain level, rather than specific subjects.

**Organization of Teachers.** Another staffing pattern is the organization of teachers in the building. Teachers may be isolated in *self-contained classrooms*, and they may or may not have instructional aides? Some classroom teachers meet in teams to plan activities. Sometimes teaching units are combined into new curriculum forms.

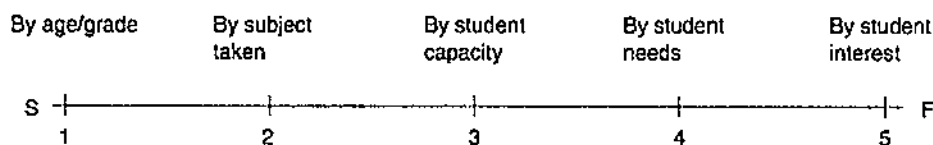
### Administrative Conditions

**ORGANIZATION OF STUDENTS.** The way in which a school organizes students can give an observer some measure of the degree of structure in the school. Two different measures of student organization are the criteria for organization and the grouping patterns found in the school. The descriptive continua in Figure 2.16 suggest the potential range of alternatives found in schools.

**Criteria for Organization.** Because most schools in the United States admit children according to age, students are grouped by age. Schools use a more flexible criterion when students are organized by subject taught. Still greater flexibility is evidenced in schools that group students within grades and subjects according to capacity. Even greater organizational flexibility is found in schools that group students by needs and by student interests.

**Grouping Patterns.** Besides criteria for grouping, the actual organization patterns of students can indicate the degree of structure or flexibility in the school. Perhaps the most structured situation exists when the size of the room determines the number of students present. A uniform number of students for all activities is also a highly structured condition. When a school begins to recognize that some activities should have large or small classes, a degree of flexibility exists. The greatest flexibility in the organization of students is represented by the assignment of students on the basis of tasks to be accomplished and the individualization of instruction, whenever possible.

#### Criteria for Organizing Students



#### Grouping Patterns of Students

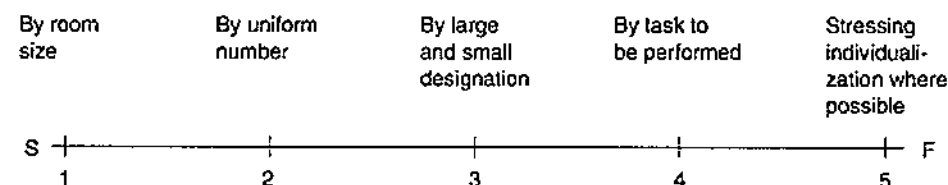


FIGURE 2.16 Ways of Organizing Students (S = structured; F = flexible).

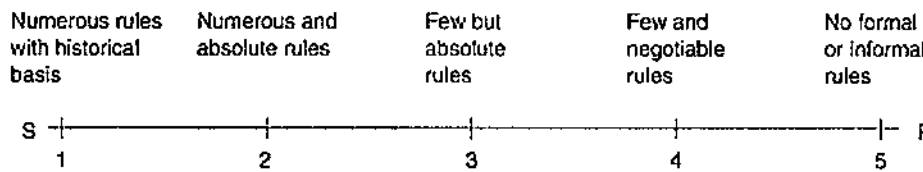


FIGURE 2.17 Types of Rules and Regulations (S = structured; F = flexible).

### Rules and Regulations

Within schools and within individual classrooms, rules and regulations vary. Perhaps the most structured situations are those in which an excessive number of regulations exist based on historical precedent. Slightly less structured is the school with numerous and absolute regulations. A more flexible condition exists when there are a few rules that are formal and enforced. When there are few rules and the rules are negotiable, or when no formal or informal regulations are stated, maximum flexibility is indicated. The descriptive continuum in Figure 2.17 suggests the potential range of alternatives in schools.

### Disciplinary Measures

Discipline techniques used in schools to influence student behavior cover a wide range of actions. In some schools, all infractions are given the same treatment regardless of severity. More flexible schools use a hierarchy of discipline measures for dealing with differing discipline problems. Sometimes, the pattern found in schools is to deal only with the severe or recurrent discipline problems. In schools where great flexibility is found, the pattern for discipline is sometimes unclear because of the uneven application of discipline measures. In some schools, no discipline measures are observable. The descriptive continuum in Figure 2.18 suggests the potential range of alternatives for discipline in schools.

### Reporting of Student Progress

The reporting of student progress in the most structured schools and classrooms is a mechanical process whereby students are assessed in mathematical symbols such as 83 or upper quartile. A generalization of such preciseness is a system whereby student progress in learning is summarized by a letter such as a B or U. Increased flexibility in reporting student progress is evidenced by narrative descriptions that describe student work and by supplemental reporting by other interested parties, such as the student or the parent. Maximum flexibility in reporting student progress is found when such reporting is

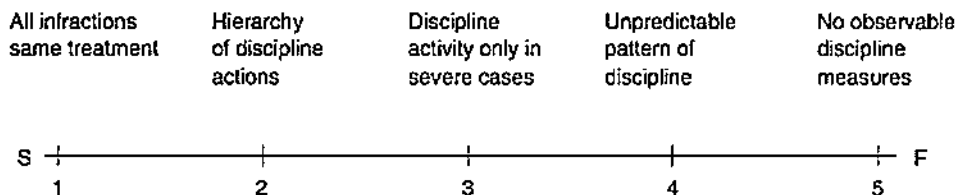


FIGURE 2.18 Types of Disciplinary Measures (S = structured; F = flexible).

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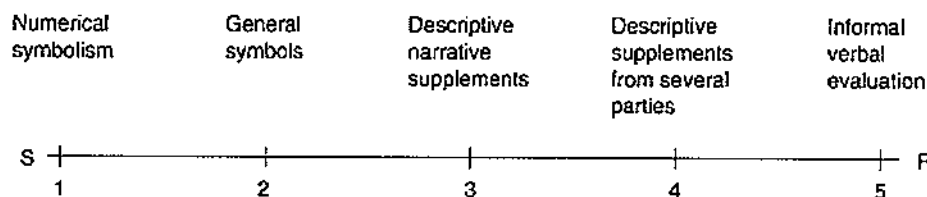


FIGURE 2.19 Ways of Reporting Student Progress (S = structured; F = flexible).

informal, verbal, and continuous. The descriptive continuum in Figure 2.19 suggests the potential range of alternatives for reporting student progress found in schools.

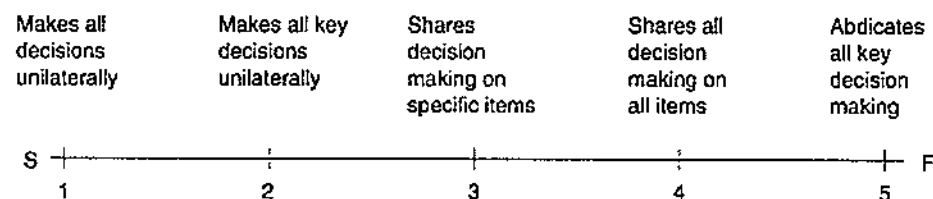
**Questions.** What is the purpose of any student control system? What adult behaviors are learned in school settings?

### Roles of Participants

**ADMINISTRATIVE ATTITUDES.** Administrative style, more than any other single factor, determines the atmosphere of a school building. How those in the school building perceive the administrator affects both teacher and student behavior. For this reason, clues about the structure or flexibility of a school or classroom can be found by observing the administrator. The descriptive continua in Figure 2.20 suggest the potential range of alternatives for administrative behavior found in schools.

**Decision-Making Role.** Administrators often assume one of five attitudes that characterize their pattern of interaction with others. At the most structured end is a warden who rules by intimidation. Closely allied to this model is the benevolent dictator who maintains absolute control while giving the impression of involvement. A more flexible posture for the administrator is to act as the program manager, reserving key decisions for the only person with the comprehensive viewpoint. Still more flexible is the collegial

#### Decision-Making Role



#### Medium of Communication

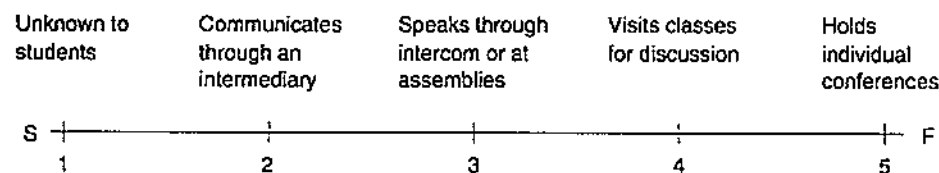


FIGURE 2.20 Types of Administrative Interaction (S = structured; F = flexible).

leader who shares all decision making with the teaching faculty. Finally, there is a leadership style that is nondirective or laissez-faire.

**Mediums of Communication.** A second interesting variable for studying administrative attitudes is the medium used to communicate with students. In some schools, the lead administrator is a phantom, known only by the presence of his or her portrait in the foyer. Such an administrator generally leaves communication with parents or students to an intermediary such as a vice principal. Another impersonal medium is the intercom, which is often used to communicate to students. Slightly more personal is a live address at assemblies. Finally, some administrators communicate with students by coming into the classrooms and sometimes even by holding individual conferences.

### Teacher Roles

The role of a classroom teacher in a school can vary from being an instructor who teaches a prescribed set of facts to being a multidimensional adult who interacts with students and others in the building. For the most part, such perceptions are self-imposed. A key observation can be made from teacher responses to the question, What do you teach? The descriptive continuum in Figure 2.21 suggests the potential range of responses to that question.

### Student Roles

Like teachers, students in schools hold a role perception of what they are and what they can do in a classroom setting. Sometimes such perceptions are self-imposed, but more often they are an accurate reflection of expected behavior for students. A question that usually receives a telling response is, How do students learn in this classroom? The descriptive continuum in Figure 2.22 suggests the potential range of responses to such a question.

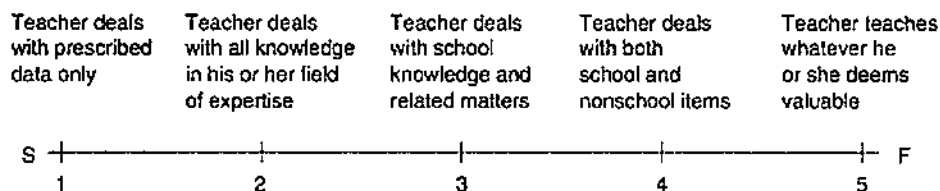


FIGURE 2.21 Teachers' Perceptions of Their Roles (S = structured; F = flexible).

### How Students Learn in Class

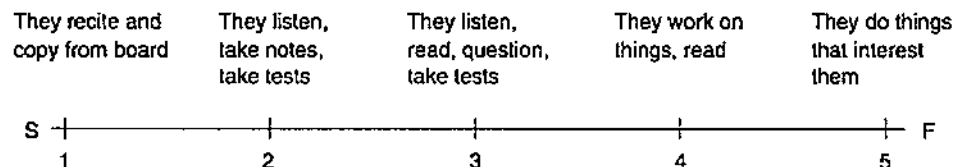


FIGURE 2.22 Students' Perceptions of Their Roles (S = structured; F = flexible).