

5 Mentoring semogenesis: 'genre-based' literacy pedagogy¹

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Inspiration

The literacy research which I shall be focusing on here began in 1979, a few months after Bernstein's first visit to Australia in 1978. At the time, writing instruction in Australia was shifting from traditional to progressive pedagogy (towards 'process writing' and whole language programmes). Addressing a group of language in education specialists in Canberra, Bernstein (1979: 300–1) warned of the dangers of this reorientation:

As we move from the written word to the authentic word of the child, it is quite likely that the time dimension of the transmission is changing from the past to the present. If that is so, we must make very certain that the new pedagogy does not lock the child into the present – in his or her present tense. There is a danger that the new educational pull with its emphasis on the aural might well in fact do that unless we seek to understand systematically how to create a concept which can authenticate the child's experience and give him or her those powerful representations of thought that he or she is going to need in order to change the world outside.

In our research, however, we observed and documented that as far as progressive literacy teaching was concerned, children were indeed being locked into accounts of everyday personal experience (Rothery 1996; cf. Chouliarki 1997); and the less mainstream their background, the more locked in they had become – even more so, we felt, but could not document – than if they had received a traditional education. (Here and throughout the paper I am using *we* to refer to the critical mass of Hallidayan educational linguists in Australia whose work is cited continuously below.)

Our initial response to these developments is reviewed in Christie (1992) and Martin (1993). As far as my involvement has been concerned, the research has had three main phases of impetus – the Writing Project, beginning in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Sydney in 1979, and concerned with construing instructional discourse as genre; the Language and Social Power Project, beginning in the Metropolitan East Region of Sydney's Disadvantaged Schools Programme in 1986, and

concerned with construing pedagogic discourse (both instructional and regulative) as genre; and the Write it Right Project,² beginning in the same DSP region in 1991, and concerned with construing secondary school and workplace discourse as genre and register.³ Hasan and Williams (1996) survey a range of issues arising from this work, and Grabe and Kaplan (1996) contextualize the research from an international perspective. (See also Carter 1996, Hyon 1996, Richardson, 1994); for recent developments see Christie and Martin (1997), Martin and Veel (1998).

Challenging power

Our aim throughout this research was to open up access to genres, especially those controlled by mainstream groups – with the faith (considered naive by critics: cf. Luke 1996⁴) that this redistribution of discursive resources would involve recontextualizations by non-mainstream groups which would realign power. We did not attempt to prescribe the kind of social subject emerging from this programme (considered politically irresponsible by critics with a specific kind of post-colonial, post-patriarchal subject in mind: cf. Lee 1996). Bernstein (1990: 214) provides a grid, which I have adapted in Figure 5.1 to position the pedagogy we developed with respect to traditional, progressive and Freirean alternatives. As he outlines (1990: 213–14):⁵

The vertical dimension would indicate whether the theory of instruction privileged relations internal to the individual, where the focus would be *intra-individual*, or . . . relations *between* social groups (inter-group). In the first case . . . the theory would be concerned to explain the conditions for changes within the individual, whereas in the second the theory would be concerned to explain the conditions for changes in the relation between social groups. The horizontal dimension would indicate whether the theory articulated a pedagogic practice emphasising a logic of acquisition or . . . a logic of transmission. In the case of a logic of acquisition the focus is upon the development of shared competences in which the acquirer is active in regulating an *implicit* facilitating practice. In the case of a logic of transmission the emphasis is upon *explicit* effective ordering of the discourse to be acquired by the transmitter.

As the grid implies, our approach has been a visible and interventionist one (Painter and Martin 1986, Hasan and Martin 1989, Cope and Kalantzis 1993), with a relatively strong focus on the transmission of identified discourse competences and on the empowerment of otherwise disenfranchised groups in relation to this transmission. In terms of semogenesis (see Halliday 1993a, b, Matthiessen 1995, Halliday and Matthiessen in press), we concerned ourselves with three dimensions of change:

- logogenesis 'instantiation of the text/process' **unfolding**
- ontogenesis 'development of the individual' **growth**
- phylogenesis 'expansion of the culture' **evolution**

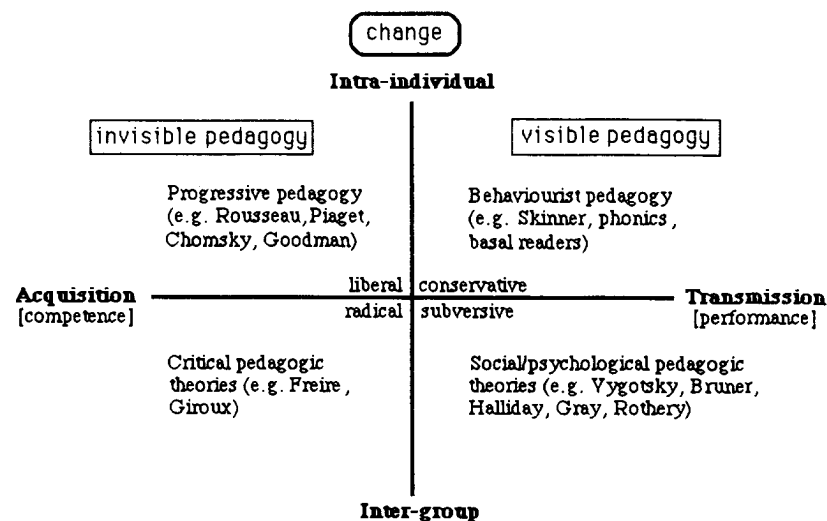


Figure 5.1 Types of pedagogy (after Bernstein 1990: 213)

Logogenesis is oriented to the unfolding of a text (e.g. Martin 1992, Christie this volume Chapter 6); ontogenesis to the development of an individual's meaning potential (e.g. Painter 1984, this volume Chapter 3, Halliday 1993a); and phylogenesis to the evolution of a culture (e.g. Halliday and Martin 1993). In Halliday and Matthiessen's terms, phylogenesis provides the environment for ontogenesis which in turn provides the environment for logogenesis; conversely, logogenesis provides the material for ontogenesis which in turn provides the material for phylogenesis.

With respect to this framework, intervention (which we might gloss hypergenesis) involves support during the logogenetic time frame (e.g. consultation with students with respect to revision; cf. Christie *et al.* 1992), explicit teaching as far as ontogenesis is concerned (e.g. scaffolding through models and joint construction; cf. Murray and Zammit 1992, Anderson and Nyholm 1996, Callow 1996) and language planning oriented to phylogenesis (e.g. revisions of state curricula and pedagogy to facilitate access to mainstream discourses; cf. Christie *et al.* 1991). An outline of this range of 'semocratic' initiatives is provided in Figure 5.2.

Control (reframing pedagogy)

the zone of proximal development . . . is the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. (Vygotsky 1978: 86)

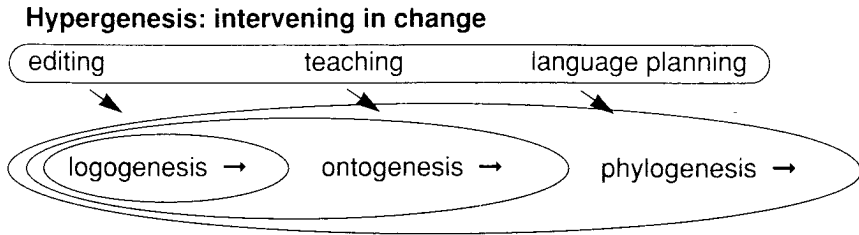


Figure 5.2 Intervening in the processes of writing development

The development of our pedagogy for teaching literacy involved a dialogue across approaches to guided instruction influenced by Vygotsky and Bruner, and studies of language development undertaken by Halliday and Painter. The Vygotsky/Bruner tradition was interpreted and exemplified for us by Brian Gray, initially with respect to his work with Aboriginal communities; Joan Rothery led the metropolitan Sydney team which elaborated this tradition in light of Halliday and Painter's findings.

Critical to this dialogue was the notion of scaffolding (to adopt the term introduced to us by Applebee and Langer 1983). Data such as the following, from spoken language development, were very influential (example from Painter 1993).

- Father: This car can't go as fast as ours.
- Child (4.8): I thought – I thought all cars could – all cars could go the same – all cars could go the same (pause) fast . . .
- Mother: The same speed.
- Child: Yes, same speed.

Understandings about the guiding role played by care-givers in spoken language development (see Painter, this volume Chapter 3) have been built into the pedagogy as a Joint Construction stage in which students and their teacher jointly construct written texts. The notion of **guidance through interaction in the context of shared experience** has remained fundamental.

This 'guidance through interaction' principle gave rise to a number of teaching models, which have been instantiated across a range of what Christie (1989, this volume Chapter 6) has called curriculum genres. I will consider just four of these models here. (See also Macken *et al.* 1989, Derewianka 1991, Martin and Rothery 1991; the latter two packages include video demonstrations for teacher training purposes.) The earliest of the models is presented in Figure 5.3, from the first stages of the DSP Language and Social Power Project. It comprises three main phases: Modelling, Joint Construction and Independent Construction. Modelling involves introducing students to an example of the text type in focus, discussing the function of the genre, and examining its structure, including relevant language features. Joint construction involves preparing for work

on another example of the genre, which will be jointly constructed by the teacher and students (with the teacher developing a text on the board, on large sheets of paper or on the overhead projector in response to suggestions from students). Independent construction involves students preparing for another instantiation of the genre, which they will write on their own; it explicitly encourages creative exploitation of the genre and its possibilities. The arrows pointing to the centre of the model and its circular design indicate that teaching can begin at any point, depending on the needs of the students. For example, some teachers found the Joint Construction stage unnecessary for some students, whereas for others, this stage needed to be worked through more than once before students were ready to write on their own.

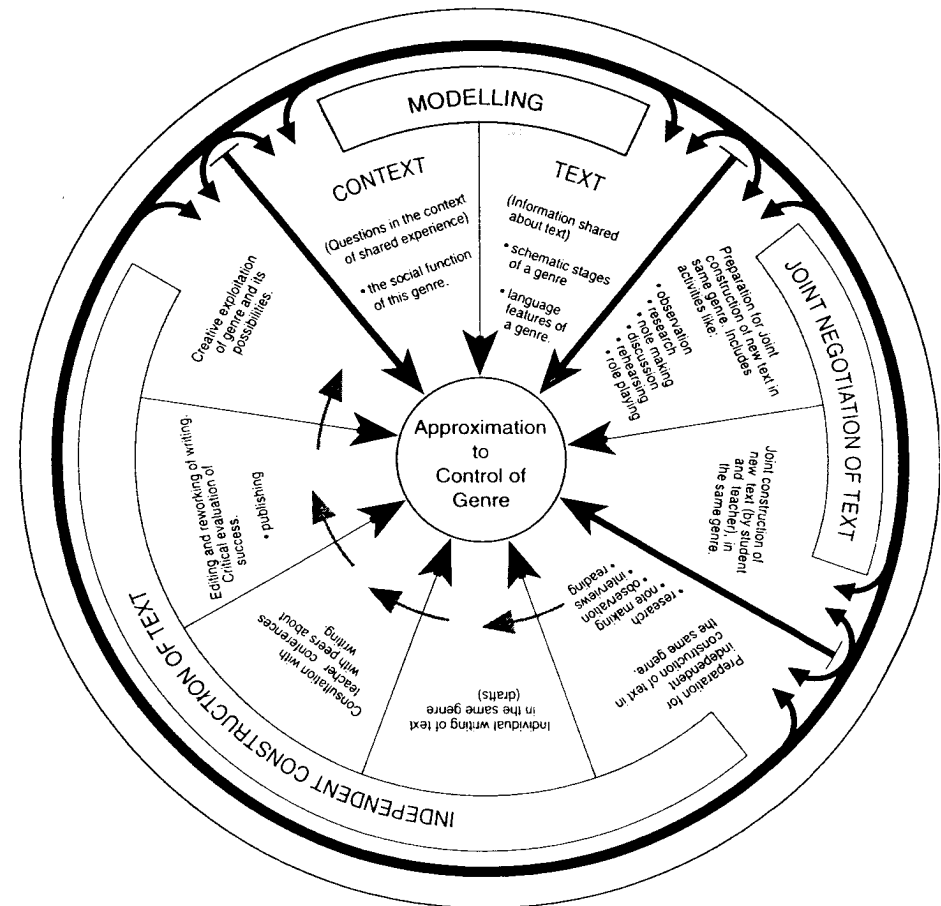


Figure 5.3 1989 DSP Primary Curriculum Model (Callaghan and Knapp 1989: 10)

Figure 5.4 is a later development of this model, and reflects the changing nature of the dialogue among Australian language and literacy educators at the time. Initial resistance to the pedagogy had tended to come from romantically inclined progressive educators concerned about its imagined debilitating effects on creativity. (Reid 1987 includes some representative contestation.) Our position was that creativity depends on control of the genre, and that without the relevant discursive capital, students cannot produce highly valued 'creative' texts – in narrative, or any other genre. Later, resistance to the pedagogy tended to come from critical theorists concerned about its imagined debilitating effects on non-mainstream discourses and the value placed on them by teachers and by students themselves (e.g. Freedman and Medway 1994, Lee 1996, Luke 1996, the New London Group 1996, Giblett and O'Carroll 1990 include some representative discussion). Our position was that students should

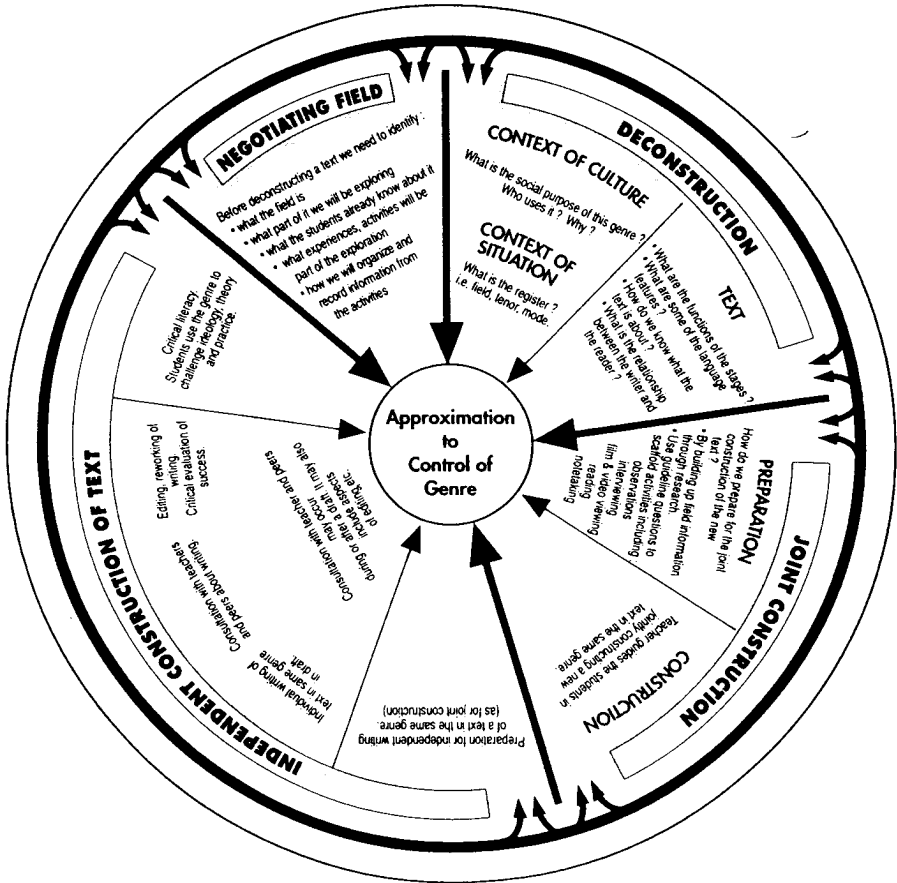


Figure 5.4 1992 DSP Primary Curriculum Model (Murray and Zammit, 1992: 7)

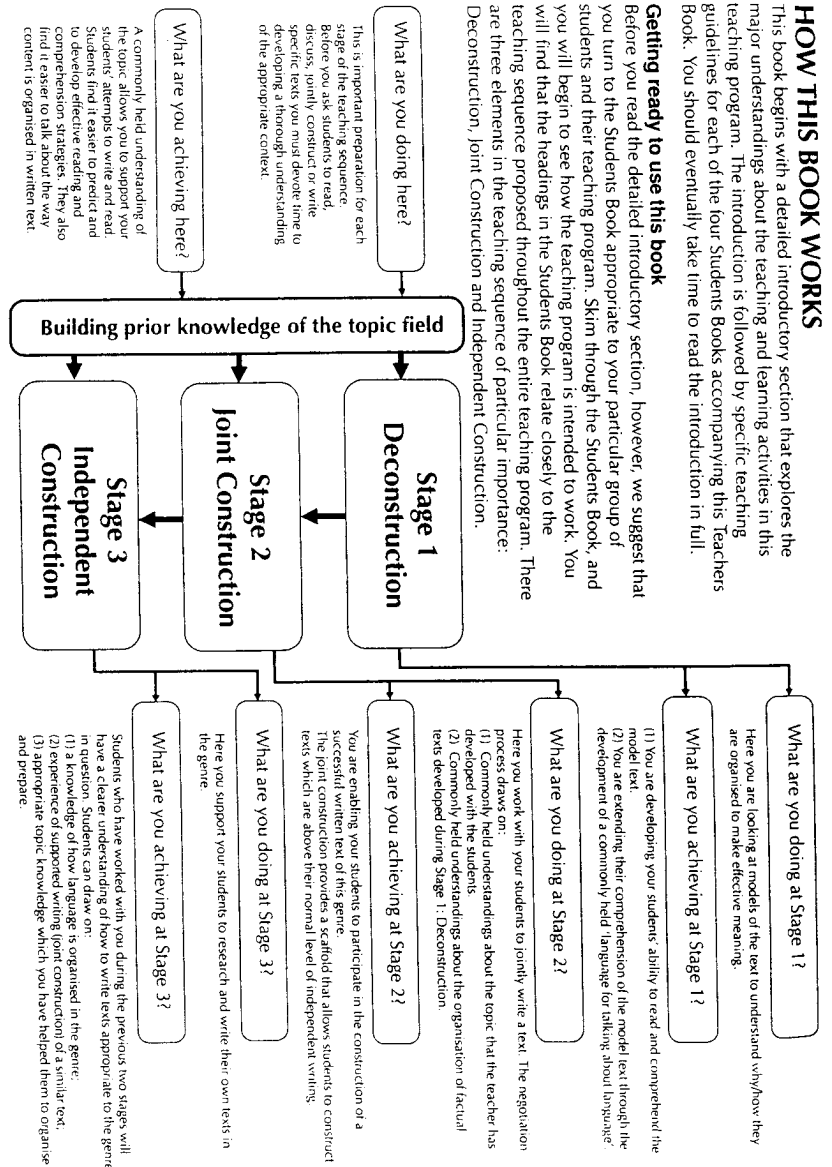


Figure 5.5 1992 HBJ Primary Curriculum Model (Christie et al. 1992: 2)

indeed be given a critical orientation, and that this depends on control of both the discourse under critique and the discourses used to critique (Macken and Rothery 1991; Martin 1991). The modifications in Figure 5.4 were designed to encourage a critical stance. The Modelling stage was renamed Deconstruction, in part with reference to the relevant French masters; and the final wedge of the Independent Construction stage was explicitly oriented to critical literacy ('students use the genre to challenge ideology, theory and practice'). For practical suggestions about critical literacy in hands-on DSP materials for primary school teachers, see Murray and Zammit (1992: 39-40), Anderson and Nyholm (1996: 37-8) and Callow (1996: 13-4). Fairclough (1992) contains relevant material on critical language awareness from comparable contexts in Britain.

Figure 5.4 also foregrounds the importance of building up the social context of a genre, before beginning work on deconstruction. We found this to be critical in multicultural classrooms where shared mainstream understandings could not be assumed. Thus the Negotiating Field wedge, which encourages teachers to start with what students already know about the relevant institutions and guide them towards realms of experience with which they are not familiar. A related emphasis on building knowledge of the field to be considered is found in Figure 5.5, from the materials prepared for teachers by Christie *et al.* (1992). Detailed suggestions for using the model across a range of genres are also found in Macken and Rothery (1991), Christie *et al.* (1990a, 1990b), Derewianka (1991) and Martin and Rothery (1991).

The pedagogy under review here was adapted for secondary school during the DSP Write it Right Project (e.g. Rothery 1994), as outlined in Figure 5.6.⁶ In this model, setting up the social context of the genre and building field knowledge are generalized across all stages of the model (Deconstruction, Joint Construction and Independent Construction). In addition, the goal of the model is explicitly oriented to both control of and a critical orientation to the discourse under consideration (for further development of the model in the direction of critical literacy see Callow 1996). Rothery's (1994) materials for secondary English include discussion of a range of responses to literature, including those based on Leavis, New Criticism and critical theory; the possibility of resistant readings of narrative in secondary school is discussed and explicitly modelled. For dialogue across the critical and functional linguistic perspectives inspiring this practice see Cranny-Francis (1993, 1996), Cranny-Francis and Martin (1993, 1994, 1995) and Martin (1995, 1996).

Alongside the distinctive types of scaffolding and interaction promoted by the pedagogy is a distinctive focus on the role of knowledge about language in literacy apprenticeship (cf. Carter 1990, 1996; Fairclough 1992). It was clear to us on the basis of ongoing research by Painter (1993, 1996, this volume Chapter 3; and see Halliday 1993a) that talk about language plays an important role in spoken language development. Accordingly, all stages in the pedagogy make use of explicit knowledge about different types of text (genres) and their stages, and as much information about the realization of stages as pre-service and in-service training afford; this

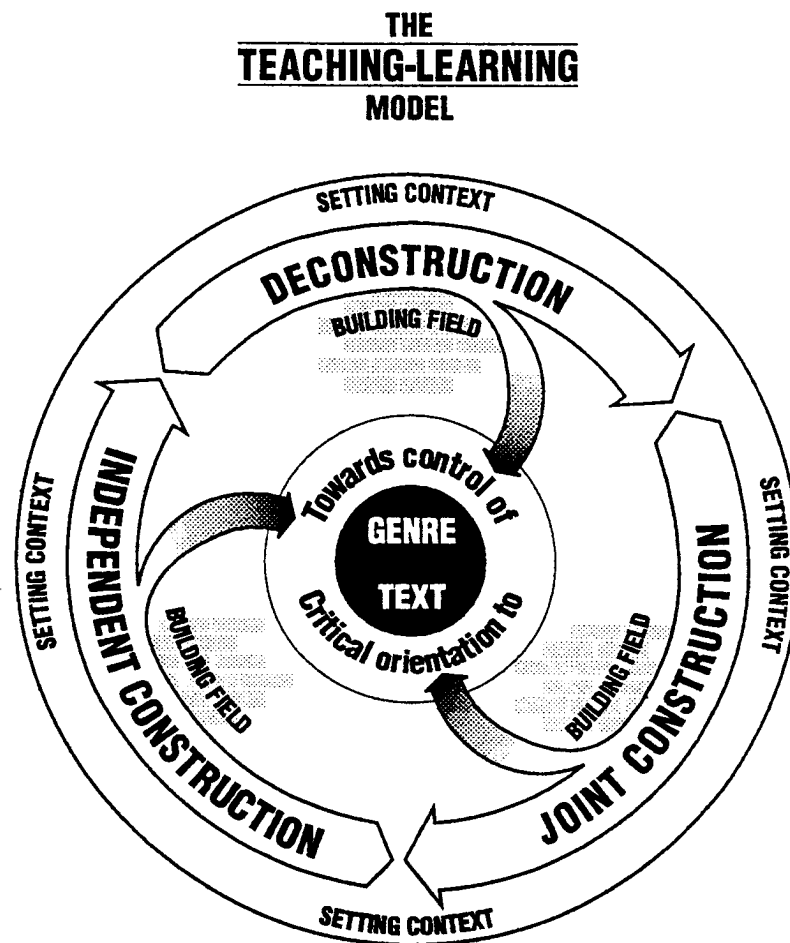


Figure 5.6 1994 DSP Secondary Curriculum Model (Rothery and Stenglin 1994: 8)

knowledge becomes part of the experience shared by teachers and students. Making this knowledge explicit and sharing it among members of the class helps put students on an equal footing as far as literacy development is concerned; it helps demystify the hidden curriculum of writing. Explicit shared knowledge also gives teachers and students a language for talking about texts during Joint Construction or consultation in the Independent Construction phase. This removes responses to writing from the realm of subjective reaction and places them within an objective framework in which students and teacher can work towards visible goals.

Ideally, to maximize the effectiveness of the pedagogy at issue here, teachers and students would share knowledge of both functional grammar

and generic structure. We found in our in-service work with teachers of disadvantaged students that generic structure was a useful way to demonstrate the importance of knowledge about language, since it made connections with teachers' understandings of the beginning, middle and end structure of many texts. Beyond this, Williams (1995) in particular has pursued the question of knowledge about grammar. In the following dialogue from his research, a group of Year 7 students are discussing the process type of one of the clauses they are working on from the story *Piggybook*:⁷

OK, 'hurry'.

Another material process.

'Was'.

'Was'.

'Was'.

I'm not really sure about that. I think it might be . . .

Yes, I think it's another material process.

No, it's either a relational . . . it could be a relational . . .

OK.

'Inside', hold it. 'Inside the house was' means, I think it is . . . I can't think . . . it . . . existential process. That could be that. I'll write that down because 'was' means that his wife was there . . . it exists. [working on *Inside the house was his wife*]

A year or so earlier, the same students had worked on the relation of functional grammar to the generic structure of the same story with their teacher Ruth French (grammar terms from Halliday 1994):

What we learnt about the grammatical patterns of Piggybook.

Beginning.

All the Goals Mrs Piggott did were to do with housework.

Only Mrs Piggott had Goals. This shows she is the only one doing something TO something else.

Mr Piggott and the boys only did things for themselves; they did not do work in the home. This is shown by the fact that they didn't have any Goals. They were the only characters that talked. They told Mrs P to hurry up.

Resolution

At the end, everyone did an action to something – to benefit the whole family, not just themselves. Everyone had Goals at the end.

Now the Goals for Mrs Piggott included more than housework.

[*She mended the car.* – imaged as Actor Process Goal]

The Goals had a big role in structuring the narrative. The pattern of Actors and Goals changes at the end. This makes the Resolution.

To date we have not gathered together the resources required for longitudinal studies which would fully explore the role that knowledge about language might play in our literacy programmes. Alongside its potential for demystifying the hidden curriculum of mainstream literacies, there is in addition the issue of making these literacies 'dangerous' for the mainstream children who at present learn them safely by osmosis – a sad waste of their possibilities as Bernstein (1990: 75–6) notes:

Children who can meet the requirements of the sequencing rules will eventually have access to the principles of their own discourse. These children are more likely to be middle class and are more likely to come to understand that the heart of discourse is not order but disorder, not coherence but incoherence, not clarity but ambiguity, and that the heart of discourse is the possibility of new realities.

We might ask ourselves, if this is the possibility of pedagogic discourse, why are the children of the dominant classes not demonstrating the possibilities of the discourses they have acquired? And the answer must be that the socialisation into a visible pedagogy tries, though not always successfully, to ensure that its discourse is safe rather than dangerous. In this way a visible pedagogy produces deformation of the children/students of both the dominant and the dominated social classes.

Negotiating text

In this section I would like to exemplify aspects of the pedagogy outlined above, and draw attention to selected issues. In particular I would like to discuss aspects of the register of the interactions between teacher and students with respect to tenor (the nature of guidance), field (moving into uncommon sense) and mode (modelling abstraction).

The students are in Year 6, in a working-class inner-city school with over 90 per cent of its students from non-English speaking backgrounds (a typical Disadvantaged Schools Programme school).⁸ Excerpts from the Deconstruction stage, on a second cycle through the model for the exposition genre (Callaghan and Knapp 1989), are discussed below. In this stage the teacher is commenting on general problems arising from the expositions written by the class in the Independent Construction stage of the first cycle and then reviewing and consolidating the general points she has raised.

Tenor. Of special interest is the nature of guidance through interaction during this Deconstruction stage, as the teacher scaffolds a rehearsal of the understandings about the structure of exposition she wants to emphasize. Let's look at a few examples of this – first of all a point about the relationship of the Introduction to following Arguments (see Figure 5.7 for the expository structure the teacher is elaborating here):

T: O.K. So she's very clearly given her three Arguments. Can everyone see that? And the very interesting thing is that she lets you know in the Introduction what those three Arguments are going to be. She hasn't told you what they're going to be; she's just mentioned them.

The teacher then continues, in the same turn, with a warning about including too much detail in the Introduction – this time using the strategy of pausing before the information she wishes to reinforce (transcribed as . . . *giving the reasons for the Argument*):

Can you see the difference? Because people started in that Introduction going on to the Argument. You don't mention (sic) it there; you only mention it. You don't go into the . . . giving the reasons for the Argument. Can you see the difference?

She uses the same strategy in a subsequent turn:

T: The other thing is if you mention an Argument in your Introduction, or your Thesis, you have to make sure it's in your . . . Arguments.

Further on, she pauses and the students fill in the news, which she reinforces through an affirming repetition – so that what she initially modelled on her own is now jointly constructed in an exchange:

T: So whatever you mention in your Introduction, you have to make sure you mention in your . . .

Ss: . . . Arguments.

T: . . . in your Arguments.

Returning to the warning about including Arguments in the Introduction, she withholds the news in focus several times – involving students in a kind of silent dialogue she invites through tags (*hasn't she?*) and questions (*she may end up what?*):

T: She's actually expanded on her . . . Arguments. Remember, you don't have to expand on them in the . . . Intro . . . duction. You just have to . . . mention them. She's virtually given away her first Argument, hasn't she? She's told you already in the Introduction, so when we get down here, she may end up what? . . . repeating herself, saying the same thing again.

By the end of the review, the students are making the relevant points on their own, at the invitation of the teacher, but without her co-constructing the relevant knowledge about language:

T: O.K. So there's a few things to think about. What are some of the things I mentioned you are going to try to think about when we do this one today? Filippa?

Filippa: Not to, um, put an Argument into the Thesis.

T: Good. Right.

T: Something else, to think about. Yes.

Linh: The Argument that you're doing has to be like the topic or Thesis that you choose.

T: Right. So you make sure you mentioned all your Arguments in your Thesis. Good.

What these examples demonstrate is the way in which the notion of guidance through interaction in the context of shared experience shapes the structure of each phase of the pedagogy as well as the cycle as a whole. They also demonstrate the way in which linguistic choices are mobilized to enact movement through a zone of proximal development as scaffolding is provided, then gradually removed. The teacher first models the points at issue, and then constructs them interactively with the students – first by adjusting information flow inside the clause (technically by withholding the tonic syllable signalling new information (Halliday 1994)), then by reconstruing her message as an exchange (Martin 1992), with the students supplying the withheld tonic in a turn of their own. By the end of the stage, the students construct the relevant points on their own in response to relatively open trigger questions.

Field. Excerpts from the joint construction stage of the cycle (for discussion see Hunt 1994) are provided in Appendices 1 and 2. At this point the students are building up the information they will need for jointly constructing a further model exposition. They have worked together in

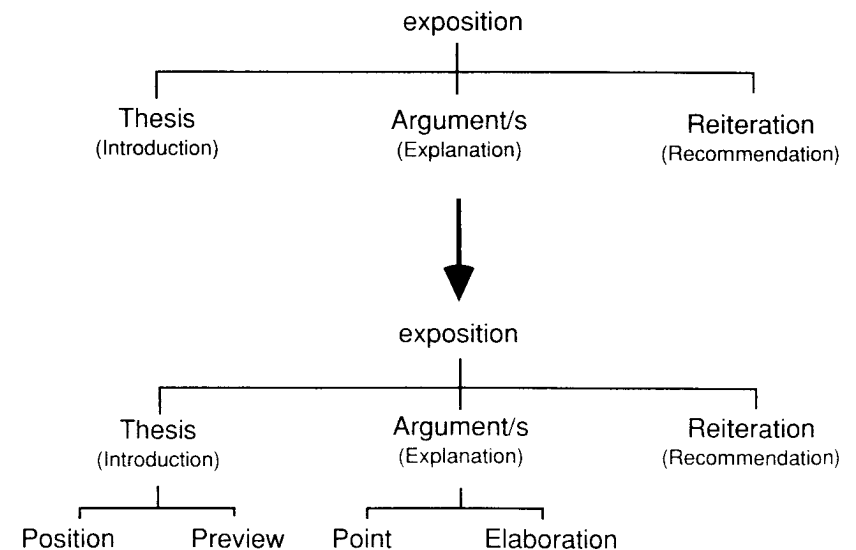


Figure 5.7 Expository structure discussed in Deconstruction phase

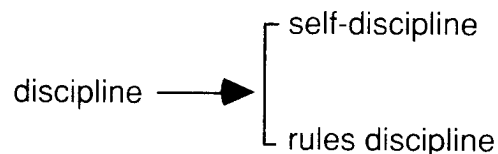


Figure 5.8 Types of discipline

small groups gathering ideas, and are now compiling these with their teacher. Of special interest here is the movement from common to uncommon sense as the information is organized. The teacher is moving the students from a collection of ideas towards a classification that can be used to arrange arguments in the exposition. As part of this process the teacher has distinguished two types of discipline (the relevant bit of taxonomizing is imaged in Figure 5.8).

Nicole: Discipline.

T: Discipline. O.K.

...

Filippa: Good ideas on how to behave.

T: Right. Share with each other and in discipline. That can be what – self-discipline, so you can learn to look after yourself and control yourself and it can be discipline that other people enforce upon you – you have to learn to accept rules. So, it can be two sorts, can't it? Your self-discipline – that means you go home and do your homework at night, and you don't need someone to say, 'Hurry up; it's 4:30; it's time to do your homework.' You can just go in, do it yourself and look after yourself. And it can also mean discipline that's coming from ... other ... people – obeying the rules. If we have school rules, what do you have to do?

Ss: Obey them.

T: And you have to learn to follow them. When you leave school and go out and get a job, what will you have to do then?

Ss: Obey the work rules.

T: Obey the work rules. So you've got to learn to accept. If people ask you to do something usually there is a ... a reason. Sometimes it mightn't be good and you might discuss that, but you have to learn to accept. If someone says that is what's going to happen, sometimes you just have to go a ... along with it. You can, maybe discuss your way out if it, but sometimes you do have to do what they say. So I'll put *self* there, and I'll put *rules* there. Alright. So that means the two sorts of discipline. Right.

Finding general terms to operate as headings for their ideas can take quite a lot of work, and intervention by the teacher. But the generalizations at issue are critical to grouping ideas into paragraphs and referring forward to them in the introduction of an exposition. By the end of the phase, the students proffer relevant generalizations suggested earlier by the teacher (*So I have written down, 'Learn about a wide range of subjects.' These are just the notes*).

T: ... Now, let's try and get these into an order ... Who can see the main thing that keeps coming through the whole way through? Lisa?

Lisa: Learn about a wide range of subjects.

Mode. One of the great advantages of joint construction is that it demonstrates for the children the differences between spoken and written language as their oral contributions are scribed and shifted towards written mode by the teacher. In the excerpt below, the teacher is guiding the students towards a final sentence for the Preview section of the introduction to the model exposition; specifically, she is encouraging them to preview the ideas they have earlier collected under point 3 on the board. In spite of her encouragement, and that of their ESL teacher who has joined the session at this point, the students are stumped.

T: ... 3, we haven't really mentioned, um, we really need to mention something about socialising and, um, being a good place to be, friends and that. Can anyone give me a sentence just to finish that, so we can finish that Introduction? Something ... see where number 3s are, have a look at 3s and see if you can get that into a sentence. Who can organise that in a sentence. Can someone get that?

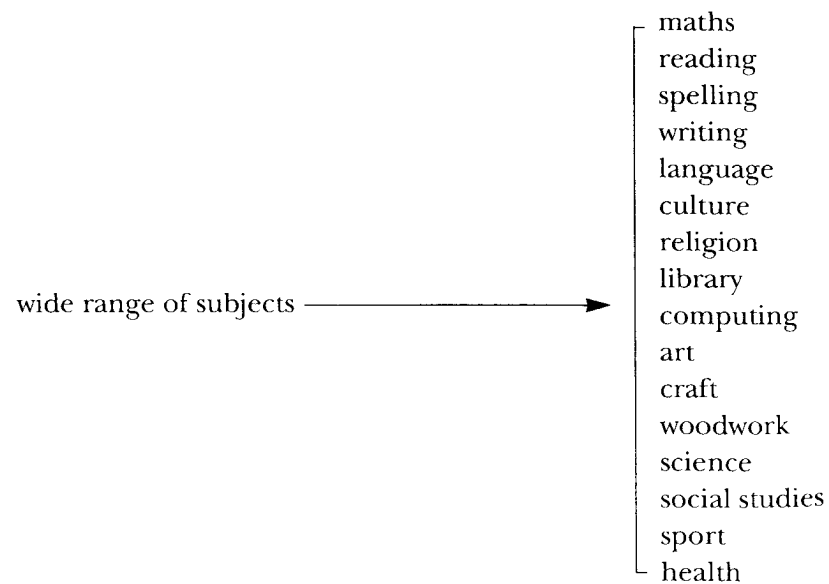


Figure 5.9 Kinds of subjects

Rana: Home?

T: No, we want a sentence, darling, just a sentence to sum up all of those things in 3; which we've got good ideas on how to behave, you have manners, sharing with each other, you learn to be responsible for your own things, you have discipline, um, it's fun, you play, socialise, all those sorts of things. Can we turn that into one sentence? Quick. Think about it. Come on!

ESL T: There's one word there you can put into a sentence that covers all of that. Learning to live with other people, work with other people.

Vu: Firstly . . .

T: No, we're not onto the firstlies, we just want to finish this. This is the Introduction and we just want to finish this last sentence so then we've concluded all things. Lisa. Come on, Nicole. Think. Quick. Look at the board and see if we can get that into a sentence. Right, yes?

Nicole: It, um, school also disciplines you.

T: It provides a social environment, doesn't it, where you learn all those social skills. Phalroth.

Phalroth: You learn to socialize and have fun with your friends.

T: O.K. So we can say [scribing] O.K. *Finally, it's a place where you learn to socialise and develop in a warm and friendly atmosphere.* Because, socialising means all those things: you're getting on with people, you can communicate, you can talk to them, you can understand what they're saying, and also, you develop a tolerance: you have to understand how somebody else feels and respond to them and they have to do the same for . . . you. O.K.

The reasons for their frustration have to do with grammatical metaphor (Halliday 1994, Halliday and Martin 1993, Rose, this volume, Christie, this volume), which Halliday has suggested (e.g. 1993a) is a resource which elaborates significantly as students of this age (12 to 13) move into a more abstract stage of literacy (symbolized in Western cultures by the shift from primary to secondary school). The teacher eventually rescues the children (*It provides a social environment, doesn't it, where you learn all those social skills*), introducing the heading socializing skills and scribing *Finally, it's a place where you learn to socialise and develop in a warm and friendly atmosphere.* At issue here is the question of what kind of 'thing' is the nominal group *socializing skills*, the point being that it is not really a thing at all, but an ability to act socially. In the students' spoken language, the meaning has to do with doing things – with acting in particular ways. But in writing, in order to sum up the points collected and to preview the arguments to come, doing is first reconstrued as a thing (*social skills*) and then worked as a verb (with the modifier *social* rendered as a process *socialize* by Phalroth, picking up the teacher's earlier *you play, socialise, all those sorts of things*, and then scribed by the teacher). Note the 'skills' cline from speaking to writing involved here: *you can do something, you are able to do something, you have the ability to do something, you have the skill.*

Here are some more examples of abstract written language, from later in the joint construction (relevant abstractions underlined):

So ultimately, this allows us to achieve a greater understanding of the world and increase our knowledge.

T: Alright. Now, secondly we really need to link that a little bit with the first paragraph. So what could we say? *Secondly, by achieving this*, what did we just achieve? Yes.

T & Ss: This knowledge.

T: We will be then what?

T & Ss: Be in a better position to . . . to get a job. And to pursue our . . . careers.

. . .

Nicole: *Secondly, after achieving this knowledge, it will then put all individuals who attend the school, in a better position to pursue their own career and job prospects.*

By the end of this second cycle of deconstruction and joint construction all students in the class were able to write an exposition presenting a range of arguments in support of a position on an issue. The following text exemplifies the control they have gained over the genre, addressing a local government concern.

Exposition for: Should an amphitheatre be built in Wiley Park? [Filippa]

I strongly believe that the amphitheatre in Wiley Park should be built for these following reasons, such as: it attracts more people to the area, shops and public transport will earn a larger profit, people will become more interested in Wiley Park, and it is suitable for all ages.

My first reason is that it will bring more people to our area because there are not many main attractions in our community and it can be something to remember our bi-centenary by in years to come.

Another point to mention is shops will earn more money, for example, the new restaurant which will be built with in the amphitheatre. And not to forget Public transport which will create more money for the government and will be more easier for the disabled to travel by if they wish to do so.

And last but not least it is not only for the grown ups but it is also suitable for children for example, there will be entertainment such as concerts, plays and shows. In my opinion from a child's point of view I think it's going to be fun and it's about time the council did something like this.

I hope I have convinced you that we should have a amphitheatre at Wiley Park.

This brings us to the issue of whether a pedagogy of this kind provides students with semiotic tools that can be adapted and redeployed in related contexts; or whether this kind of induction traps them in some kind of robotic posturing around a set of 'forms'. Consider then the following text, taken from a similar school, employing a similar pedagogy. The text is part of a unit of work focusing on local politics, with Jon Callow⁹ acting as literacy consultant. The class involved has been studying the way in which politicians promote their causes and on the basis of this work these Year 6 students have attempted to intervene in a local community issue. Their local pool has been closed down, due to structural problems; the

students launched a campaign for its replacement – including brochures to local residents¹⁹ and letters such as the following to the mayor of the municipality.

Dulwich Hill Public School [letterhead]

Dear Mr Cotter,

Allow me to introduce myself, I am Luka Marsi & I am from the Aqua Party and a student from Dulwich Hill Public School, & my class have been discussing and investigating the matter & cost, closing down of Marrickville Pool. We are very anxious to see it renovated & reopened.

Here are some of the reasons why you should make the opening an important issue.

Firstly, after a long hot summer, Marrickville residents appear no closer to reclaiming their local Swimming Pool. Marrickville Pool was the most used facility in Marrickville.

Secondly only 25% of students surveyed in our school can swim. More people could drown & would blame local politicians.

Thirdly we also need a local pool to cool us down when it's hot (A pool is a solution for this hot hot HOT weather!) Families have a local, fun, and healthy place to go swimming together.

Finally a local pool would be useful for poorer people, – because some BIG families aren't able to afford public transport to travel so far.

So according to the survey responses, we need a local pool for more swimming lessons (I agree with this) Thank you for reading my letter, & taking your time. I hope you will help us by renovating the pool, be very careful with all those expenses!

From a caring and concerned child
Yours sincerely
Luka M.

The expository structure outlined above is clearly visible in a text of this kind. But it has been recontextualized as a letter to a politician – including a self-introduction by the student writer, and a more personalized tenor than in the model jointly constructed above. Overall, although the municipality in question doesn't yet have a new pool, the students' campaign appears to have had some impact. The school's principal complaints from local politicians about the inappropriateness of students involving themselves in local affairs along these lines – complaints that were strongly rebuffed by the school.

It has always seemed to my colleagues and me that this kind of generic

recontextualization is the norm. Once guided into a genre students naturally rework the genre in light of their own subjectivity as new contextual pressures arise. It is the nature of semiotic systems, especially at this level of abstraction, to readily adapt themselves in this way. If the systems were more rigid, we would never be able to use them to renovate our society and get on with our lives. Lemke (e.g. 1995) provides a helpful discussion of the nature of dynamic open systems such as genre; for discussion of more and less categorical approaches to genre classification see Martin (1997).

Pedagogic discourse (towards a subversive modality . . .)

In his work on pedagogic discourse Bernstein (e.g. 1975, 1990) has developed the concepts of classification and framing as tools for situating modalities of pedagogic discourse with respect to one another:

Classification, here, does not refer to *what* is classified, but to the *relationships* between contents. Classification refers to the nature of the differentiation between contents. Where classification is strong, contents are well insulated from each other by strong boundaries. Where classification is weak, there is reduced insulation between contents, for the boundaries between contents are weak or blurred. **Classification thus refers to the degree of boundary maintenance between contents.** Classification focuses our attention upon boundary strength as the critical distinguishing feature of the division of labour of educational knowledge. It gives us, as I hope to show, the basic structure of the message system, **curriculum.**

The concept, **frame**, is used to determine the structure of the message system, **pedagogy.** Frame refers to the form of the *context* in which knowledge is transmitted and received. Frame refers to the specific pedagogical relationship of teacher and taught. In the same way as classification does not refer to contents, so frame does not refer to the contents of the pedagogy. Frame refers to the strength of the boundary between what may be transmitted and what may not be transmitted, in the pedagogical relationship. Where framing is strong, there is a sharp boundary, where framing is weak, a blurred boundary, between what may and may not be transmitted. **Frame refers to the range of options available to teacher and taught in the control of what is transmitted and received in the context of the pedagogical relationship.** Strong framing entails reduced options; weak framing entails a range of options. *Thus frame refers to the degree of control teacher and pupil possess over the selection, organisation, pacing and timing of the knowledge transmitted and received in the pedagogical relationship.* (1975: 88–9; italics original, bold added)

At a deeper level classification and framing are related to his deeper abstractions – power and control – as follows (including here the notions of internal and external classification and framing – indexed as ^{1c}):

classification strength (^C1^c) is the means by which power relations are transformed into specialised discourses, and framing (^F1^c) is the means whereby principles of control are transformed into specialised regulations of discursive practices (pedagogic relations) which attempt to relay a given distribution of power. (Bernstein 1996: 3)

From classification and framing Bernstein (1975: 116) derives his notions of visible and invisible pedagogy:

In terms of the concepts of classification and frame, the [invisible – JRM] pedagogy is realised through weak classification and weak frames. Visible pedagogies are realised through strong classification and strong frames.

which he further unpacks (1975: 119–20) as follows:

A visible pedagogy is created by:

- (1) explicit hierarchy
- (2) explicit sequencing rules
- (3) explicit and specific criteria.

The underlying rule is: 'Things must be kept apart.'

An invisible pedagogy is created by:

- (1) implicit hierarchy;
- (2) implicit sequencing rules;
- (3) implicit criteria.

The underlying rule is: 'Things must be put together.'

As Joan Rothery and I asked in 1988, what would an authoritative and empowering pedagogy look like that got off the pendulum and drew on the strengths of both the visible and invisible regimes.

How can we develop teachers who are authorities, without being authoritarian? How can we develop students who control the distinctive discourses of their culture, and at the same time are not simply co-opted by them but approach them critically with a view to renovation – to challenging the social order which the discourses they are learning sustain? . . . The major theoretical innovation of this paper is to try and begin to theorise a model of teaching and learning which uses explicit knowledge about language as the basis for double classification and double framing and to propose this as the basis for post-progressive developments in educational theory and practice. (Martin and Rothery 1988, first draft of this paper)

The strategy Joan and her colleagues adopted drew on a further dimension of Bernstein's work – the notion of pedagogic discourse as a rule for embedding discourses:

I will define pedagogic discourse as a rule which embeds two discourses; a discourse of skills of various kinds and their relations to each other (= instructional discourse; JRM), and a discourse of social order (= regulative discourse; JRM) . . . the instructional discourse is embedded in the regulative discourse . . . to create one text . . . one discourse . . . the regulative discourse is the dominant discourse . . . produces the order in the instructional discourse . . . the purpose of the device is to produce a symbolic ruler for consciousness. (Bernstein 1996: 46–50)

From the perspective of functional linguistics, we would in fact prefer the term **projection** to embedding. Following Christie (e.g. 1995, this volume Chapter 6) we would say that one discourse gives voice to another much as a reporting verbal or mental process frames a locution or idea (*She said/thought he'd left*); thus the regulative discourse projects the instructional one (generally implicitly, except for irregular disruptions such as the one in bold face below from the curriculum genre under focus here).

T: . . . So let's go first of all . . . who, Mohammed, would your group like to start? Now, what we're going to do is – if you have an idea that's the same, we won't repeat it, alright? So we'll go through any new ideas; we'll jot down but we won't repeat everyone's ideas. [**Sorry, Vu! Goodness!**] No, we'll just read through them first and we'll jot them down. If you've got them linked, can you give them to me linked, if you've got them already linked up. O.K. What's the first one?

In these terms, one of our main pedagogic renovations was to suggest that literacy pedagogy could be enhanced by adding a second instructional discourse derived from social semiotic theory, and using it to project instructional discourse. In simple terms this meant introducing explicit knowledge about text in social context that could be deployed throughout the pedagogic cycle. An example of this would be the use of explicit understandings of genre when working on scientific knowledge (e.g. Veel 1997). More radically, we might imagine using this social semiotic instructional discourse to project a pedagogic discourse as a whole (as I am doing here now) – in other words, to project the regulative discourse in turn projecting its instructional discourse. This would involve teachers and students using knowledge about text in social context to deconstruct their schooling, as well as its contents – a project in which numbers of critical theorists appear to have some political interest. An example of this would be the use of shared understandings about language development to inform negotiations between teacher and students about the best way to teach control of abstract language in secondary school. The drift of these renovations, from the one we generally practised, to the one some critics urge, is outlined in Figure 5.10.

For a discussion of the range of knowledges about text in social context at issue in interventions of this kind, see Martin (1997). For us, the critical value of adding a social semiotic instructional discourse in this way is its power to make as explicit as possible what it is that is expected to be learned, so that as many students as possible can recognize it – and then learn it or choose not to learn it as they will. As Bernstein (1996: 32) has remarked, 'Power is never more fundamental as far as communications are concerned than when it acts on the distribution of recognition rules.' We wanted to redistribute these rules.

Our other main pedagogic renovation was to introduce waves of weak and strong classification and framing as appropriate to different stages of our pedagogic cycle. These are outlined in Table 5.1 for substages of

ID	instructional discourse
SSID	social semiotic instructional discourse
RD	regulative discourse

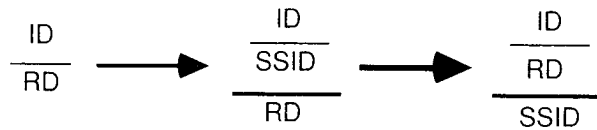


Figure 5.10 Deploying a social semiotic instructional discourse to project instructional discourse, or pedagogic discourse

Deconstruction, Joint Construction and Independent Construction. As inspired by Brian Gray's work with Aboriginal children in Traeger Park School in Alice Springs (see Gray 1985; cf. Rose, Chapter 8 this volume), the Deconstruction stage begins with weak classification and framing as teachers find ways of starting where students are at in order to open up the field and context of the genre. Framing and classification values strengthen when a model text is introduced, as the teacher authoritatively makes visible the structure and purpose of the text, including as much critical deconstruction as deemed appropriate. Joint Construction begins with weak classification and framing as students open up a new field, before strengthening these values as the teacher guides them into organizing the material; when jointly constructing text, the framing values split according to field (which the students control, proffering content) and

	Framing	Classification	[comments]
Deconstruction			
- setting context/field	-F	-C	starting where kids are at, including valuing their voice authoritative visibilizing, including critical literacy?
- modelling	+F	+C	
Joint construction			
- setting context/field	-F^+F	-C^+C	weaker for gathering ideas, then stronger for sorting kids controlling ID, teacher controlling SSID
- negotiating text	+/-F	+C	
Independent construction			
- setting context/field	-F	-C	return to kids' contexts, if possible beyond simulation control/evaluation, public accountability... renovation?
- writing	-F	+C...-C?	

Table 5.1 Waves of classification and framing in the pedagogic cycle

genre (which the teacher controls as guide). Independent Construction again opens with weak classification and framing as students open up another field, and with weak framing but relatively strong classification (since they are aiming for a specific genre) as they write a text on their own. The final stages of the cycle have always been designed to weaken this classification as students are encouraged to experiment creatively with the genre, or on the basis of deconstructing its politics to recontextualize it for alternative needs.

In our experience these waves of classification and framing, including double framing (both weak and strong) during joint construction, allow for both the incorporation and valuing of students' own voices during the negotiation and for critique where and when appropriate. We have not experienced the model as something that inherently devalues students' discourse and uncritically promotes mainstream discourses. Bernstein's comments on change in relation to his notion of pedagogic discourse are relevant to this issue:

The potential for change is built into the model . . . there is always pressure to weaken the framing . . . because, in this formulation, pedagogic discourse and pedagogic practice construct always an arena, a struggle over the nature of symbolic control. And, at some point, the weakening of the framing is going to violate the classification . . . although classification translates power into the voice to be reproduced, we have seen that the contradictions, cleavages and dilemmas which inhere in the principles of classification are never entirely suppressed, either at the social or individual level . . . (1996: 30)

not deterministic since in process of controlling the unthinkable it makes the possibility of the unthinkable available . . . and the distribution of power that speaks through the device creates potential sites of challenge and opposition . . . (1996: 52)

text is not something which is mechanically reproduced. The text which is produced can feed back on the interactional practice. There can be a dynamic tension . . . The text itself, under certain conditions, can change the interactional practice . . . change in classification and framing values. Here the text has challenged the interactional practice and the classification and framing values upon which it is based. (1996: 32-3)

I'll close this section with three anecdotes in relation to the issue of students taking control of the genres they have been taught. Early in our work with the Disadvantaged Schools Programme Joan Rothery and I were unofficially banned from working with teachers in NSW schools during a state election campaign. The then Labor government was promoting a traditional 'back to basics' (including traditional grammar) approach to literacy teaching; at the same time its Department of Education released a Writing K-12 syllabus based completely on progressive models (process writing, whole language, poetry and narrative across the curriculum, grammar at point of need, if at all). Mean-

while we were having considerable success with our genre-based post-progressive pedagogy in several schools. The class of Year 6 students I worked with at Lakemba Public School took it on themselves to protest by writing expositions to the Minister of Education on why genre writing was a good thing (allowing for one anti-genre exposition, on the grounds that genre writing had been scheduled during that student's favourite part of the curriculum).

The next year these students moved to secondary school and were faced with new writing tasks for which they were given no explicit instruction. The Lakemba students took it on themselves to teach the genres they had learned to peers and returned on at least one occasion to their primary school to work with their former teacher on the structure of book reports, which they hadn't encountered before. With their teacher, they worked out the genre in a way that satisfied the needs of their new institutional environment.

I have already mentioned the Dulwich Hill Public School's campaign to get their municipal council to replace their local pool. Here is part of the six-page (folded A4) brochure they distributed to local residents to gain support for their proposals. It is based on their study of political discourse (with typed headings and handwritten text; images not included here) and formation of their Aqua party.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SITS AROUND WHILE HUNDREDS OF KIDS MIGHT DROWN

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

- Marrickville pool has closed and we haven't got a pool.
- When summer comes! "WHERE'S THE POOL?!?!?"
- There's no pool SO! MORE PEOPLE DROWNING!!!
- Not enough people are learning to swim!!!

'... BUT I'M NOT AFFECTED!'

- When your kids whinge on a hot summer day... Are you going to travel miles to a pool? Help us keep Marrickville pool open now or hear your kids whinge for LIFE!!!!

OUR CONCERNS

- We are very concerned about the idea of Marrickville pool closing down.
- Re-open the pool before IT'S TOO LATE!!!
- We are very concerned about ALL the kids who won't learn to swim during the closing of the pool.

ACTION - NOW!

(What we want to happen)

- We need parents and kids to help write letters for the local Government.
- We want you to talk to your friends, neighbours and anyone you know to make them involved in the issue.
- WE WANT THIS NOW:
- Make MP bigger, better and cheaper.

- Re-open MP (Renovated)
- Make it safer for everyone!!!!!!

WHO ARE WE?

We are kids from DHPS and we care and are very concerned about closing down MP so help us re-open it to make it better for our FUTURE!!!

SURVEY RESPONSE

- 80% of the people surveyed used Marrickville pool.
- If swimming lessons were free or cheaper 100% of students surveyed would learn to swim.
- Only 25% can swim who have surveyed.
- Most children learnt to swim at Marrickville pool.
- Marrickville pool is the most used facility in Marrickville.

[photo of three smiling campaigners]

michelle

D.O.B. 12/2/84

AGE: 11

gareth

D.O.B. 4/8/83

AGE: 11

hien

D.O.B. 20/11/83

AGE: 11

Please help us keep Marrickville pool open, just help by donating some MONEY!!!

These and numerous other encounters with teaching genre have convinced us that deploying a social semiotic instructional discourse in the pedagogic cycle outlined above gives students tools for acting on the world outside – tools that have been denied most working-class and migrant students in both traditional and progressive literacy regimes.

Put your name and address on this form and send them in a letter to:
RE-OPEN Marrickville pool trust-fund,

Dulwich Hill P.S.

Kintore st

Initial Mr_ Mrs_ Ms_

Name: _____

_____ Address:

Suburb: _____

Donation Cash \$ _

Cheque _ 5\$ _ 10\$ _

Other: _

Democracy

Nothing has been more inspiring for us throughout our work than Bernstein's discourse on social class and education and the implications for social justice his words illuminate. And often, there has been nothing more moving.

Biases in the form, content, access and opportunities of education have consequences not only for the economy; these biases can reach down to drain the very springs of affirmation, motivation and imagination. In this way such biases can become, and often are, an economic and cultural threat to democracy. (Bernstein 1996: 5)

We have unleashed some affirmation, motivation and imagination from school to school. To fill the springs we will have to become more dangerous still.

Appendix 1

Joint construction
 – development of a new field - in groups
 – **jointly on board**

T: Right. O.K. Now, let's try and get these into an order so we can organise how many paragraphs or how many new ideas we are going to introduce. Can someone sort of help me work that out? Can you just move back, Lisa, so I can get over to this side to put numbers next to things. O.K. Who can see the main thing that keeps coming through the whole way through? Lisa?

Lisa: Learn about a wide range of subjects.

T: Right. This seems to be one of the most important things, doesn't it? So we can put say a '1' next to it. Where else does it come up again?

Lisa: With the one [?]

T: Right. So we can put '1' against that – that could all be part of the same ... paragraph, then, couldn't it? Somewhere else – the same sort of thing were we can link it together? Can you find any other links? Filippa?

Filippa: Use your education to get a good job.

T: Right. Now, would that be a new idea? Or is it the same, do you think? It all follows on; everything leads to help you to the next thing but you've got to try and organise it so you've got one complete. Remember that glue – trying to get that paragraph to stick together? We want to have a complete paragraph and then another complete paragraph. Do you think that one would work as a follow-up? After you've got your knowledge and you've applied all these skills, what are you going to be able to do there?

Safira: Support your family.

T: Support your family by what?

Safira: A job.

T: A job. So that would really be another paragraph, wouldn't it? That would be that paragraph, together, talking about that. Yes, Linh?

Linh: Good ideas on how to behave and how to live.

T: Um. Learn about a wide range of subjects and good ideas on how to behave. Yes, um, the only thing is, though, what's going to happen to this paragraph? It's going to be absolutely ...

Ss: ... long, huge.

T: Huge. So maybe we can almost have sub-paragraphs of the same thing. If we stick say all the education and learning in that paragraph, these are more socialising skills, aren't they? – getting friends, learning how to behave, following rules – they could all form one paragraph, couldn't they? So if we put good ideas, all friends, that could be all of 3. Instead of being bored at home – do you think that still relates there, or do you think that might go somewhere else? Have a think about that one. Where do you think it might go? Filippa?

Filippa: Number 1 ... before *so you won't be bored at home and you can go to school to learn*.

T: So you're saying that would do well in your Introduction. So you're putting that as part of your Thesis. Alright, so we could maybe look at that part in our *intro*. Put *intro* there next to that, so we could think about that. Alright. Um. Something else now, that, um, what would link with that? Yes.

T & Ss: Parents don't have to look after you.

T: That might link with that one, wouldn't it, do you think? Would they link together?

Ss: Yes.

T: Alright. So we could maybe link those together, about the parents and not staying at home. So would you still like to see that in your Introduction.

Ss: Yes.

T: Then you are starting off your reasons for why children should come to school. Alright. O.K. We can keep that there. Now, is there anything we've missed out? Any area we haven't linked into something? ...

Appendix 2

Joint construction
 – negotiation of new text

T: ... Filippa?

Filippa: I strongly believe that children should go to school for these main reasons ... um, and I'm going to list them all.

T: Sorry, say that again.

Lisa: For these main reasons.

T: For these main reasons. Who can think of a different word other than *main*?

Ss: For the following reasons.

T: For the following reasons. Who can think of another word?

Loukia: Listed.

T: For these listed reasons, um. Who can think of another word?

Filippa: For these reasons shown here.

T: For these reasons written here. O.K. Who thinks main reasons. Hands up. Quick. A show of hands. *Main. These listed.* I've forgotten what the other ones were. [unison: *following*] O.K. Looks like *following*.

Ss & T: For the following reasons.

T: For the following reasons. Now, trying to think, um, before we go on, before we

list all of them, we want to include those things that you mentioned for that introduction, don't we? So how can we talk about that? Who can think? *I strongly believe children should go to school for the following reasons.* Filippa.

Filippa: You could, um, learn a wide range of subjects and um religions and um . . .

T: Right. Who can keep going from that?

. . .

T: We've got to get down to the main reasons as well; we're going to have thousands of them. *I strongly believe children should go to school for the following reasons: education is free, it can fulfil your time, parents can work and they don't have to worry about you while you're at school.*

Siraj: You're getting educated for free.

T: Right. How can we put that into a general thing? What's the big one there in that one? What's it all about? What are you actually going to gain?

Loukia: An education.

Lynette: Knowledge.

Ss: Knowledge.

T: You're going to what . . . gain knowledge, aren't you? So that might encompass [Sorry, Nicole, I don't know whether you're helping.] You actually, what do you actually achieve? You actually gain . . . [unison] knowledge, don't you?

So, how can we put that into the next little phrase? O.K. We've got – your parents won't be worrying about you, you're at school. Who can give it to me in a sentence? [Just ignore him please.] Lisa. Can you give it to me in a sentence? About gaining knowledge.

Lisa: Which one?

T: *I strongly believe children should go to school for the following reasons: education is free, it can fulfil your time, parents can work and they don't have to worry about you while you're at school.*

Lisa: You can learn a wide a wide range of subjects.

T: Right. [scribes]

Vu: Knowledge.

T: Right. Which will give you a tremendous amount of . . . knowledge . . .

Notes

- 1 I am, as ever, deeply indebted to Joan Rothery, who worked with me on a previous version of this paper, and whose genius catalysed the pedagogy reviewed here.
- 2 Certainly not a title of my choosing, but used by DSP colleagues to secure funding for the research.
- 3 Tragically, as of 1997 the Disadvantaged Schools Program in New South Wales has lost its identity as an independent voice in the development of curriculum and pedagogy; long an embarrassment to state Departments of Education because of the enterprise and success of its various initiatives, the thorn has been removed.
- 4 For a penetrating deconstruction of the high moral ground assumed by critical theorists in educational debates see Hunter 1994.
- 5 He adds: 'It is a matter of interest that this top right-hand quadrant is regarded as conservative but has often produced very innovative and radical acquirers. The bottom right-hand quadrant shows a radical realization of an apparently conservative pedagogic practice . . . each theory will carry its own conditions of

contestation, "resistance", subversion.' (Bernstein 1990: 73)

6 It may seem that I am labouring the discussion of pedagogy here. However, as far as I am aware, as of 1996 extant critiques of the pedagogy (e.g. Freedman & Medway 1994, Luke 1996, Lee 1996) are based on fears about *imagined* implementations rather than consideration of the materials reviewed here – let alone classroom studies of the practice as it has evolved; this has tended to frustrate dialogue.

7 In this exchange the students undertake a successful collaborative analysis of a troublesome clause type – the existential clause with missing Subject *there*.

8 I am deeply indebted to Julie McCowage and the students of Lakemba Public School for their enthusiastic participation in the development of the teaching/learning cycle from which these texts arise.

9 Jon and I would like to thank the following teachers from Dulwich Hill Public School for their support in this project: Janthia Powditch, Lina Abeni, Annetta Tourta and Julie Ng.

10 The front page of the brochure reads: LOCAL GOVERNMENT SITS AROUND WHILE HUNDREDS OF KIDS MIGHT DROWN.

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